

Church of God-21st Century
P.O. Box 893909
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December 28, 2007

Dear Brethren,

Much is happening in the world toward the future destruction of our country. Sadly, much is also happening in God's Church, and we need to be aware of the pitfalls, which could be heading our way to test our alertness to God's warning and Bible prophecy.

I warned you in my last letter to be aware of those who might mislead you, even though they profess to be ministers in the true Church of God. Some ministers have been preaching that if you do not belong to their organization, you will *not* make it to a place of safety. Brethren, don't you believe this!

God is the One who *determines* who will be taken to a place of safety. He warns us in Luke 21:36, "Watch you therefore, and *pray* always, that you may be *accounted worthy* to *escape* all these things that shall come to pass, and to *stand* before the Son of man."

Recently, one minister proclaimed that he is the *only true* minister of God, while other ministers are now preaching that their church is the *only true* church. If we truly believe the teachings we received by God's Apostle, Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong, that God's Church is a *spiritual organism*, then how can one *blindly* accept these statements? Brethren, sadly God's Church is now widely scattered and being *severely* tested! Are you on guard to avoid any attempts toward *spiritual destruction*?

It is clear that these ministers want to *exalt* themselves above their fellow ministers by appointing themselves *apostles*, arrogating to themselves titles, which God has not given them! Jesus Christ made it very clear that some ministers would do just this. He also said, "...for everyone that *exalts* himself shall be *abased*; and he that *humbles* himself shall be *exalted*" (Luke 18:14).

Mr. Armstrong ordained me an *evangelist* in 1953. I have *never* arrogated to myself any titles God *had not* ordained to me, his servant. *High position* or *exalted titles* have never been my goal. Mr. Armstrong *encouraged* me to work at getting a *master's* degree. I was quite content to *not* pursue any higher titles. Years ago, one minister continued to *badger* me with phone calls, promising me a *high position* if I would *support* his work. I was not looking for a *high position* at that time nor *anytime* after. Later, this same minister, *envious* of my accomplishments in God's Work, wanted to take from me my God-given *ordination* as God's minister! How will he be *judged* when Jesus Christ was the One who *inspired* Mr. Armstrong to ordain me?

Brethren, do you see what has taken, and is continuing to take place in the Church of God? I must solemnly *warn* you, as God has *commissioned* me to do, to *please* keep your eyes on Jesus Christ and not on human beings! Christ says, "I am the way, the Truth and the Life..."(Jo.14: 6). We must learn to be aware of these *pitfalls*, which could *destroy* our very salvation!

The Church of God-21st Century is not motivated to see how many brethren or ministers we can convince to *join* with us. Our goals are based on the Church's *commission*, to *preach* the Truth, *feed* God's sheep, *teach*, *encourage*, *exhort* and *correct* the brethren, thus, leading and guiding them during their high calling, and hopefully, ultimately, into God's Kingdom. Christ is the One who sends us whom He chooses. We do not *proselyte*, looking for huge numbers. Mr. Armstrong's goal was to *produce* "Rolls Royce's." He wanted Ambassador College to remain *small* so that each student could have their *needs* personally met and fulfilled.

Some Churches have *abolished* using titles for God's ministers, which God, Himself placed upon His servants through Mr. Armstrong. Is this *direction* what the Bible teaches? Not so! God's Word tells us, "And he gave some, *apostles*; and some, *prophets*; and some *evangelists*; and some, *pastors* and *teachers*; for the *perfecting* of the *saints* for the work of the *ministry* for the *edifying* of the body of Christ" (Eph. 4:11).

The Church of God-21st Century will *continue* to seek Christ's *guidance* in all that we do. As I have said before, "This is not the Church of Raymond F. McNair. It is God's Church, and we fully intend to keep it this way, looking always to our Leader, Jesus Christ"! I ask each one of you to take a *personal* account of your spiritual growth. Are you continually *striving* to remain close to God? Do you continue to *read* and *study* your Bible? Are you *obeying* God's Commandments? Are you *faithfully* supporting God's Work? Are you *servicing* those whom you know have need of your prayers and encouragement? Brethren, we have a very *high calling*, which we cannot take lightly.

On a personal note: I like to share with you encouraging letters, which I receive from time to time. I hope these comments will be as encouraging to you as they are to my wife and me.

One contact wrote: "I want to thank Mr. McNair for his *dedication*. I am so very *thankful* that he is allowing HWA material to be on his website. It is something that most ministers will not do. He is the *first* and *only* evangelist to do this. I greatly *respect* him for this. God has *spared* his life. May he do what God expects of him at this time.

"...I really appreciate his article dealing with *false shepherds*. Unfortunately, God's people have been very *hurt* and *confused*. We need leaders that are willing to work with others in correcting what God has expected of all of us. GOOD JOB!

"I hope and pray that God's people learn to work together as a *team* and start showing *brotherly love* regardless where we all are. Unfortunately, some of us have had some *negative* leaders that had a *different* agenda.... We must *focus* on the *positive*; we need to stay away from the negative.... A negative attitude is the attitude of *Satan*. I hope we learn this lesson soon!"

Another letter: "Of the original *seven* (God's number of completion) Evangelists ordained in the WCG, only *one* still believes that Herbert W. Armstrong fulfilled prophecy concerning the *End Time Elijah*. I do not want to *embarrass* Mr. McNair.... Rather I would like to point out ...that Mr. McNair is that ONE Evangelist that *still* believes."

Lastly, a COG-21 member writes: "...On a more personal note, we really *need* Mr. McNair to be healed and to give "one more warning blast" to the people of God in this end-time seventh era of the Church and its recording of history to be written. It is truly in a "*lukewarm*" state and many of the detailed technical truths of God are being *forgotten*. Even though God is here in this era by answering prayers and great healings, none-the-

less, the brethren are *losing it*, becoming *weaker*, even to the point of not knowing how to keep the Sabbath day *properly* or how to *dress* for services, etc.

“Can you still remember the *formalness* of God’s Church and college, *respect* for the ministers, duality of messages, not watered down doctrines and who and what we stand for? That yes indeed, we *represent* our Father, and His dear Son, as *ambassadors* for the Kingdom of God, and we shall *rule* in power and *splendor* before its throne here on earth. That we are not just a “good ole flock” who have merely *adopted* Jesus, but rather we have been *tried* and *proven* through many years of testing and trials, and have been *forgiven* of past sins so that we may *boldly* come before His throne of grace, seeking His face in help and healings in our time of need.

“Many people now in these churches *need* Mr. McNair to *finish* and *complete* his ministry and bring *balance* back to these original truths that are being *lost* and let us remember the poor brethren who are being *betrayed* by some in the ministry.

“Yes indeed, we need that last crying out, that *trumpet* for God’s elect, that is why, Mr. and Mrs. McNair, that we are praying for you both...and others who are praying for your “regained” *health* and *strength* for Mrs. McNair.

“But I see a grave *danger* now heading towards God’s people. Even now a “*false duality*” is being promulgated before God’s people. Many are being succumbed [seduced] to teachings, a false, “holding to the Truth” of Mr. Armstrong and his books, a powerful message and millions about to be *deceived* by one who claims to be God, *sitting* in the Temple of God, as in 2nd Thes.2. The remainder of God’s people have simply *fallen away*.

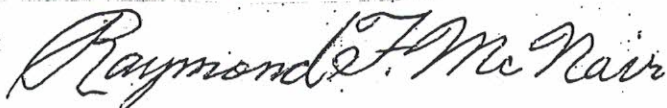
“How terribly *sad* all this is and yet it was *predicted* to happen. How *sad* it must have been in Paul’s day and yet we know that some small few survived...never let go, but remained *true* and *faithful*.

“So with that being said, we are so *grateful* to have been in your company as we *joyfully* spent so much time together...such precious time. So it is with *hope* we wait for your *healing*, now as never before.”

Brethren, how can one help but feel *uplifted* when reading letters such as these? I wish above all things that you brethren, will *continue* to do all that you can in *keeping* close to God, staying *alert*, and doing your utmost to *remain faithful* to God to the end. Current events tell us that time is *closing in*.

My wife and I send our *deepest* appreciation to all of you for your *cards*, *letters*, and *financial support* to the Church of God-21st Century.

Sincerely, in Jesus Christ’s name.



Raymond F. McNair

Church of God-21st Century

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November 10, 2007

Dear Brethren,

Please overlook my not being able to write much sooner. I am still *recovering* from my *infirmities* and will do the best I can in writing letters and articles to *feed* you brethren.

I hope all of you had a good Feast this year. My wife and I had several visitors to our home during the Feast, and appreciated these visits very much.

I am sure we have all heard about the terrible *fires*, which ravaged Southern California last month. These fires were the most *destructive* that California has ever experienced. Fortunately, so far as I know, *none* of these fires damaged the homes of the brethren.

It is very *comforting* to know God's promises, and to *realize* that at such times of destruction, His holy angels will *protect* His people. We are told in Psalm 34:7, "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about those who fear Him, and delivereth them." Can we realize how many times God *protected* us from any *danger* when we had no knowledge of it? Or when God *directed* us elsewhere in order that we could *avoid* a major calamity? God's promises are true, if we continue to obey Him.

Southern California received the *brunt* of the fires which *devastated* much of the areas near and around us, such as Malibu Canyon, Lake Arrowhead, Rancho Bernardo, Mt. Woodson, Ramona, and many other nearby towns. In fact, a fire *destroyed* an area, just minutes from the home where we once lived. One Church member and his family had to *evacuate* from their home due to the serious threat that the fires would engulf their home.

One cannot find adequate words in seeing the *suffering* and *anguish* which many homeowners experienced as they returned to view the destruction of their homes and their belongings. My wife and I continued thanking God many times for His *protection* and His promises to us, and to His people. I sincerely hope that you brethren remembered to do the same, as we should all do each and every day. As we continue to witness these *terrible calamities* on our country, we must remember to keep on our knees in *total gratitude* for God's special calling.

Brethren, we must not feel smug or self-righteous because we have God's protection. We need to develop deep *sadness*, *empathy*, and *grief* in seeing these people having to flee for their safety, and then *losing* all their possessions and many years of memories. As one woman expressed, "I will never take my comfort for granted again! Personal possessions somehow don't have that much meaning." Can we *relate* to her grief in what she has learned? Those who lost everything commented that the things that took so many years to plan and sacrifice for were gone in a matter of minutes! "You are *never* prepared for it," commented one homeowner who had to flee in seconds.

When asked what does one say to those who lost their homes, a guest on a TV program answered, "If you hang in there, if you help each other, if you share your love and your compassion...the most beautiful thing that we have as human beings [is] the ability to share our sufferings...compassion is the *birth* of love and love is the *possibility* of healing. ... The best way to alleviate your sufferings is to *help others* with their suffering. ... Loving kindness, compassion and tranquility, not to get overshadowed right now in this moment of crisis for what is happening, but to see such things are gone...and to help each other." Brethren, we must learn to *develop* this same attitude if we are to successfully face such calamities in the near future.

The reality of even more catastrophic events seems to be taking place now. Can we be reminded that perhaps one day we could be among those experiencing this same traumatic circumstance in our own *personal* lives if we do not wake up now? You have been warned time and time again by God's true servants, of what terrifying times yet lie ahead! Will we heed and take seriously what we are reading or hearing? These fires and floods, which have been occurring, are only a whisper of what is to come upon this earth and mankind. "And you shall hear of *wars*, see that you be not troubled, for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.... *nation shall rise against nation...famines...pestilence, earthquakes, beginning of sorrows...you shall be killed...you shall be hated...many false prophets shall arise...and the love of many shall grow cold*" (Matt. 24). Have there been enough warnings to God's people or must a serious calamity happen to us personally to awaken us?

Brethren, I have never seen such troubles afflicting our nation as has recently occurred here in Southern California, and the awful floods that have destroyed much of the southern coastal areas of the U.S. Just recently a 7.7 earthquake devastated parts of Northern Chile. Only twenty-four hours later another earthquake damaged the same area at a reported 6.8 magnitude aftershock! May God help each of us to realize the importance of these present events and the *seriousness* of our calling and act on what precious Truth we have been given.

On another subject: my wife and I have been receiving letters and phone calls from brethren in other branches of God's Churches who express they are not being adequately fed by their minister. These members feel *discouraged, confused, misled, and abandoned*. They either must remain at home on the Sabbath or drive the longer distance to attend a congregation where they feel they will receive spiritually uplifting and meaningful sermons.

And just recently, as I have been writing this letter, my wife and I heard of a family who had been terribly abused by their minister, spreading their *personal* trial to the Church and causing shame to the whole family. This should not happen in God's Church! We ministers should encourage and help the brethren with their personal issues, weaknesses and trials. We are to minister to the brethren, rather than trying to destroy their character or their family! May God help each of us in the ministry to wake up!

Brethren, due to these troubling comments, which I have been receiving, I feel it is necessary to include, along with this letter, an article, which I wrote for the Journal Church News some time ago. Some of you may have already read it, but it is well worth reading again. I am certain the majority of God's people have yet to understand just how God feels concerning the *treatment* (or mistreatment) by the ministry toward His people.

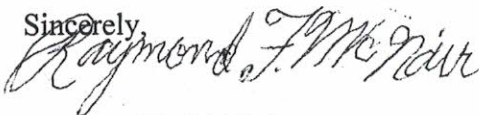
Many ministers today believe they are God' true ministers, yet they *lack* the *proper love, understanding* and *concern* towards helping the brethren.

I am enclosing Part I of this article, which I believe you will find *informative* and *interesting*. The remainder of this same article will be included in my next "Dear Brethren" letter. Please read it carefully.

May God continue to *protect* His sheep, His precious jewels, and may all of you continue to *serve* Him *diligently*. We are to "work out our own salvation with fear and trembling." Now is the time to take our calling more *seriously* than we ever have.

My wife and I remember you all in our prayers, and wish to again thank you for your loyalty to God and your support to the Church of God-21st Century. I wish to convey my appreciation to all of you for your many cards, letters and phone calls regarding my health. Although I am making good progress, I still need your prayers. Thank you, brethren.

Sincerely,



Raymond F. McNair

P.S. Also brethren, I would like to mention that someone on the Internet has *misstated* a rumor that, I, Raymond F. McNair, do not believe in God's government. I want to assure you that I *strongly* believe in and follow the government of God! Many of God's people are quite aware that Satan has his "*tools*" which he uses to *strike* at and to try to *destroy* God's *faithful* ministers. These workers of *unrighteousness* will write untruths regarding those who have proven to be faithful. Please be *watchful*, brethren, they walk about seeking whom they may *destroy*! They have their agenda, for whatever reason, but my *fruits* have proven to you that God's government is *foremost* in my teaching!

You May Be Shocked at God's answer...

Should You Trust "God's Ministers"?

By Raymond F. McNair

Before we answer the above question, we first need to lay a *foundation* which will enable us to understand the *biblical* answer to this query. Never before have there been so many cunning *deceivers, seducers and apostates!*

How can God's people identify such "evil men and seducers" (2 Tim. 3:13)? Many prophecies reveal that at the end of this age, God's people would become "scattered" by some of the very shepherds whom He ordained to *feed* and *protect* His sheep (Ezek. 34:1-21). Others who helped to scatter His sheep were self-appointed "ministers" who never had God's backing and blessing.

The Great End-time Apostasy

Never before, in the history of God's Church, have *so many* people become *so deceived* in such a comparatively *short time* of less than a decade. How could this unprecedented end-time deception have happened with such *lightning rapidity*? The success of this **horrendous apostasy** was due, at least in part, to *mass defections* in the ministry, but it was also partly due to the power of modern means of *communicating* and *disseminating* information.

At the time of Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong's death in January 1986, about **130,000** members of the Worldwide Church of God regularly observed God's weekly and annual Sabbaths, as well as other important laws and commandments of God. During the next few years after Mr. Armstrong's demise—while the Church stayed on track—the number of *commandment keepers* increased to about **150,000**, as faithful members continued to observe God's weekly and annual Sabbaths, along with other laws and statutes of God.

But, under *the new church administration* at Pasadena, faithful adherence to God's Truth and His ways was to be short lived. A *different spirit* and *attitude* quickly gained a foothold in the minds of the Church's leaders as they began repudiating nearly *every major doctrine* that had been taught by God's faithful apostle! Subsequently, many of God's laws and commandments—along with numerous other *biblically based doctrines* of the Church—were quickly *swept aside* in the ensuing *apostasy*. The octopus-like tentacles of deception immediately began choking the life out of many of the Church's congregations.

False doctrines spread like wildfire through its congregations as many of the biblically based teachings of the Church were swept aside. In their place, a flood of *strange doctrines*—previously held to be "pagan doctrines"—inundated and ravaged most of its congregations. Many thousands of the Church's members became *confused, discouraged, angry, or turned off* under this flood of *unbiblical, paganized doctrines!* Was this the "Great Apostasy" which the, nearly 2,000 years ago, the Apostle Paul had foretold would occur at the time of the end (2 Thess. 2:1-12)?

Today, it is doubtful if as many as **30,000** true, commandment-keeping brethren exist in the 300+ newly incorporated "Churches of God"—churches which sprang from the Worldwide Church of God. How could such an **apostasy** have swept away scores of thousands of brethren, turning them back to old pagan doctrines and *practices* which they once believed? We can only properly answer this question if we first consider that, immediately after the death of Mr. Armstrong, *two different categories* of "ministers" became apparent.

Many of God's people would soon learn that they could not *trust* those who called themselves "*ministers of God.*" Fortunately, those who "really knew" their God and His Word (Dan. 11:32), were able to discern *two distinct classes or categories* of those who professed to be "ministers of God": 1) **faithful ministers, and 2) false, "worthless shepherds."**

Faithful and True "Ministers of God" We can thank God that He has provided a number of *faithful ministers* who are truly **converted, Spirit-filled men of God**—ministers of God who serve as genuine "shepherds" of His flock. Their fruits reveal that: 1) They sincerely hold to the **true doctrines** of the Bible, as they were taught (2 Thess. 2:15). 2) They are deeply interested in and dedicated to "**feeding God's flock.**" 3) And they diligently endeavor to **protect** God's sheep from the many "wolves" and "deceivers" proliferating among God's people. The Bible had foretold that "*evil men and seducers [would] wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived*" (2 Tim. 3:13).

The Word of God commands His people to highly honour those *faithful ministers* who truly serve Him and His people: "**Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour,** especially they who labour in the WORD and DOCTRINE" (1 Tim. 5:17). Therefore, the brethren must be very careful *not to disrespect* those few faithful ministers who continue to diligently *nurture* and *protect* His people. It is a huge mistake to lump the **faithful ministers of God** together with the **false ministers of Satan**—who, as ravenous wolves, *devour* and *destroy* God's sheep. God's Word says genuine *love, respect, and honor* ought to be accorded to those comparatively few *true shepherds* who continue to faithfully hold fast to the *doctrines* and *practices* of the Word of God (1 Tim. 5:17-19).

Unmasking False Ministers

"Worthless Shepherds" Who Profess to be "God's Ministers" Literally hundreds of professed "shepherds" of God's *flock* have *forsaken* many of the *true doctrines* of the Bible, and now preach *strange, heretical,* or "**pagan doctrines**" in place of formerly held *biblical truths* (2 Tim. 4:3-4). Many ministers in this *second category* were never really *converted*—never were true "ministers of God." These "false shepherds" often rule over the sheep under their care with **rigor and harshness!** However, it is evident to the "wise" that those shepherds' fruits reveal **they care little or nothing for the flock of God!** They are much more concerned with perpetuating their own *power,* and *fleeing God's flock,* all the while leading the sheep down a path of *heretical teachings* and *apostasy*—to their own *ultimate destruction* (Ezek. 34:1-10)! The fruits of their lives clearly revealed they were *not really* "God's true servants." Instead, these **self-deluded men,** who were devoid of God's Spirit, wallowed in their own "doctrinal swill," while preaching unsound doctrines and indulging in ungodly, *immoral practices!* Their bad fruits proved that they were *not* in any true sense of the word "God's true ministers" (Matt. 7:15-23). Rather, they totally lack genuine *fruits* of God's Holy Spirit in their lives (Gal. 5:22-26); and as a result, it is utterly impossible for them to "fake" the fruits of a true "shepherd."! **Are such ministers to be trusted? In no way can they be called "true ministers of God."**

Today, there is an ever-increasing number of *false ministers*—whom the Prophet Zechariah called "**worthless shepherds**"—who profess to be *God's ministers,* yet have become *blind, lukewarm, proud, spiritually naked,* and utterly *wretched* (Rev. 3:14-22)! Invariably, such ministers either *water down* or *reject* the **fundamental doctrines** of the Bible (Heb. 6:1-6). They often *cast aside* "biblical Truths" which they believe are not all that important, rejecting those truths that may not be "convenient" to teach or practice. These *careless impostors* "**lord it over**" **God's people** (cf. Matt. 20:20-28), and contrary to Christ's clear instructions, they show little genuine concern for the welfare of "God's sheep" (Ezek.

34:1-5). God says, "Woe be to the **WORTHLESS SHEPHERD** that leaveth the flock..." (Zech. 11:17)! Many *former ministers* of the "Churches of God" have forsaken their *ministry*, abandoned their *flocks*, and have taken their hands off the "ministerial plow" (Luke 9:62). Should God's people have trusted those "ministers"?

Other ministers jumped the track in various other ways. Some of them, as God's servants, may have once possessed God's Spirit and faithfully taught His Word. But somewhere along the way, they became distracted by *worldly philosophies*, "cares of this life," carnal *pleasures* and *lusts*, eventually being overthrown spiritually (Matt. 13:18-23)! Even though such professed *ministers of God* may hold on to *some of* the doctrines of the Bible, and still possess a *spark of God's Spirit*, nonetheless, they are in serious danger of losing that small *spark of life*. Unless such *careless shepherds* truly repent, and "stir up the gift of God," they stand in mortal danger of *forfeiting their eternal lives*. And, sadly, they may also cause *others* to lose their *salvation* as well (cf. 2 Tim. 1:6-7)!

Jesus Christ Himself Sounded the Alarm!

Jesus Christ repeatedly warns His people to beware of *false ministers*. He is our High Priest, the "**APOSTLE...of our profession**" (Heb. 3:1). Why did Christ repeatedly warn *us*, His true disciples, to be on guard, lest we be deceived by the *false ministers* and *teachings* of this world? He knew very well the power of Satan and his servants to *seduce* God's people—if they weren't vigilant.

Early in Christ's ministry He said, "Beware of *false prophets*, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. **Ye shall know them by their fruits....** Wherefore, *by their fruits* ye shall know them" (Matt. 7:15-20). He also revealed that the *false ministers* would work miracles, or at least claim to, in order to deceive their followers: "Many [professing "ministers"] will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not *prophesied* in thy name? And in thy name have *cast out devils*? And in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from Me, ye that work iniquity" (v. 22).

During the closing days of Christ's ministry, in His Olivet prophecy, He gave numerous warnings against being deceived by those who would profess to be His ministers: "**Take heed that no man deceive you....** For *many* shall come in My name...and shall *deceive many*" (Matt. 24:4-5). Jesus then added, "And *many false prophets* shall rise, and shall *deceive many*" (v. 11). Finally, He also gave this solemn warning: "For there shall arise *false Christs*, and *false prophets*, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall *deceive the very ELECT*" (v. 24). Mark says these "*false Christs* and *false prophets* [work great] signs and wonders, to *seduce*, if it were possible, even the **ELECT**" (13:22).

Paul Warned the Brethren of Satan's Ministers

The Dynamic Apostle Paul This energetic Apostle repeatedly sounded the alarm. Notice Paul's warning to the *Ephesian elders*: "For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God. *Take heed* therefore unto *yourselves*, and to all the *flock*, over...which the Holy Spirit hath made you *overseers*, to feed the CHURCH OF GOD, which He hath purchased with His own blood. For I know this, that **after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.** Therefore *watch*, and remember that [for] three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears" (Acts 20:27-31). Paul realized some of those very elders would let their guards down and allow themselves to be used by Satan to *injure* and *savage* God's flock.

Notice Paul's solemn warning to the members of the Church of God at *Corinth*. He warned them to beware of false ministers who would beguile them into accepting false doctrines: "For I am jealous over you with a *godly jealousy*; for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a *chaste virgin* to Christ. But I fear, lest by any means, as the *serpent* beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be *corrupted* from the simplicity that is in Christ. **For if he that cometh** [posing as a *minister* of Christ], **preacheth another Jesus...** or if ye receive **another spirit**, which ye have not received, or **another gospel**, ye might well bear with him" (2 Cor. 11:2-4).

Paul feared that the saints at Corinth might be *deceived* by "another *Jesus...another spirit...or another gospel*," and turn away from the true *Jesus*, away from God's *Holy Spirit* and away from the **true gospel** and accept "**another spurious gospel**." If they did so, Paul knew they would surely lose their salvation. Such clever deceivers would make *fair speeches* and put on a good front, but at heart they had *sinister motives*. Paul, therefore, urged the Corinthian saints to be *on guard*, ever being *vigilant* lest they be swept away by another of the Devil's clever deceptions, carried out by Satan's own "ministers": "For such are **false apostles, deceitful workers**, transforming themselves into the **apostles of Christ**. And no marvel; for **Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light**. Therefore, it is no great thing if **HIS MINISTERS** also be transformed as the *ministers of righteousness*; whose end shall be according to their works" (2 Cor. 11:13-15).

Paul also gave similar warnings to the saints in *Galatia*, who were forsaking the true "gospel," and were embracing "**another gospel**." Paul says: "I marvel that ye are so soon *removed* from Him that called you into the grace of Christ unto **another gospel**: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and **would pervert the gospel of Christ**. But though we, or an *angel* from heaven, preach *any other gospel* unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be **accursed**. As we have said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be **accursed**" (Gal. 1:6-9). Clearly some who professed to be *ministers* of Jesus Christ were preaching a *strange, spurious Gospel*, and Paul said that by so doing, they brought on themselves a "curse" from God!

Later, when the Apostle Paul wrote the evangelist Timothy, he lamented the fact that all in *Asia* had fallen away from the true Gospel of Christ. He told Timothy, "**Hold fast** the form of sound words, which thou has heard of me.... That *good thing* [the Word of God] which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Spirit which dwelleth in us. This thou knowest, that **all they which are in Asia be turned away from me**; of whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes" (2 Tim. 1:13-14). And, as we have seen, Paul told Timothy that "in the last days *perilous times* shall come," then warned that "**evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse**, deceiving, and being deceived" (3:1, 13).

This great apostle further warned Timothy to "Preach the word.... **For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine**; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having *itching ears*; And they shall **turn away their ears from the truth**, and shall be turned unto **fables**.... But *watch*....do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry" (2 Tim. 4:2-5). Then Paul lamented the fact that "**Demas hath forsaken me**, having loved this present world..." (v.10). This stalwart apostle sadly witnessed many forsaking *God's Truth* and turning away unto *fables*. Since so many turned to *apostasy* in his day, why should we be amazed to see that many have apostatized in our time?

Peter and John Also Warned God's People!

The Apostle Peter Christ's chosen apostle to those of the "circumcision" gave numerous warnings concerning false ministers. He said: "But there were **false prophets**

among the people, even as there shall be *false teachers* among you, who privily shall bring in *damnable heresies*, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the *way of truth* shall be evil spoken of" (2 Pet. 2:1-2).

He then added, "For when *they* [the false ministers] speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure...those that were clean escaped from them who live in error. While they promise them *liberty*, they themselves are the servants of *corruption*.... For, if after they have **escaped the pollution of the world** through the knowledge of the Lord...**they are again entangled therein**...the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the *way of righteousness*, than after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment..." (2 Pet. 2:18-22). Peter said it was like the *dog* returning to his *vomit*, or like the *sow* returning to her stinking *mire* (vv.18-19, 22).

The Beloved Apostle John Christ's beloved *Apostle John* gave his readers numerous warnings concerning *false teachers* and their false doctrines: "He that saith, I know Him, and *keepeth not His commandments*, is a *liar*, and the *truth* is not in him" (1 John 2:4). He also said: "Little children it is the last time; and as ye have heard that **antichrist shall come, even now there are MANY ANTICHRISTS**.... They went out *from* us, but they were not *of* us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us.... Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is **antichrist**, that denieth the Father and the Son" (vv. 18:19, 22).

This Apostle of love also tells God's people that they must "try" or "test" each and every one, to see if they are of God: "Beloved, **believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God**: because *many false prophets* are gone out into the world" (1 John 4:1). John then adds, "Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of **antichrist**.... and even now already is it in the world" (vv. 2-3). John also says, "For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an **antichrist**.... If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed" (2 John 7, 10).

John reveals that he, like the Apostle Paul, was having to contend with some who, by their fruits, proved to be *false ministers*: "I wrote unto **the church**: but **DIOTREPHESES**, who loveth to have the *preeminence among them* receiveth us not. Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words: and not content therewith, **neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbideth them that would, and casteth them out of the church**" (3 John 9-10).

"Servants of God" Cannot Always Be Trusted!

Is it possible for a "servant of God" to be *faithful* for a while and later *turn away* from the Truth? It certainly is! In recent years we have seen many of the top leaders in God's Church fall for Satan's deceptive teachings, and then go into total *apostasy*. Those who were *seduced* by Satan have included many evangelist rank ministers and pastors, as well as hundreds of elders, deacons and deaconesses. The Bible is replete with many vivid examples of those who at one time served God, then later **apostatized** by turning away from God and His way. God's people must always be *on guard* since it is even possible for a *faithful servant of God* to fall into error, and then lead some of the brethren into sin, though he may later himself repent and get himself sorted out.

Aaron's Apostasy God called both *Moses* and his brother *Aaron* and communicated to them His words and His way (Exod. 12:1). When God told Moses that He intended to use

him to deliver the children of Israel from Egyptian bondage, *Moses* immediately made excuses, saying he was *not eloquent*. However, God would not let him "off the hook," but told him that his brother *Aaron* could serve as his spokesman (3:7-12, 4: 1-16);

Even though, in the main, *Aaron* was faithful to God, he let his guard down and did things that greatly displeased God on at least *two occasions*:

1) We are told that "**Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses....** And the anger of the LORD was kindled against them" (Num. 12:1, 9). Since Miriam was the instigator of the criticism, God punished her with "leprosy," but Aaron also had to suffer by seeing his sister afflicted for "seven days," before God healed her. Such an act of criticizing the man whom God had chosen, their own brother, greatly displeased God (vv. 2-16). Both of them must have learned a very valuable lesson—one which all of us would do well to remember.

2) Later Aaron showed weakness of character by going along with the Israelites when they said to him, "**Make us gods to go before us....** And they made a *calf* in those days, and offered sacrifice unto the idol..." (Acts. 7:40-41). Shortly after God had delivered the Ten Commandments to Israel (Exodus 32:1-14), Aaron acquiesced by making them a "golden calf" so they could worship their pagan gods. Though Aaron weakened and made a calf, when Moses saw what had happened, his anger burned as he asked Aaron, "**What did this people unto thee, that thou hast brought so great a sin upon them?**" (v. 21). Aaron gave Moses a flimsy excuse, but neither God nor Moses was amused. In fact, He became very angry at seeing the *Israelites' apostasy* so soon, after God had thundered His Ten Commandments from Mount Sinai; so He slew in one day "about 3,000 men" (v. 28). Later, Aaron appears to have regained his spiritual balance, and remained faithful to God and His commands during the rest of his life (Psa. 77:20, 99:6; Heb.5:4).

When Aaron's sons, Nadab and Abihu, later "*offered strange fire* before the LORD," a "fire from the LORD devoured them" (Num.10:1-2). As "God's ministers" at His sanctuary, they knew what they did was wrong; consequently, they had to pay for their *presumptuousness* with their own lives. God always holds "His ministers" responsible to carry out His instructions precisely as He instructs them.

Solomon's apostasy King Solomon, Israel's third king, began his reign in *righteousness* (2 Chron. 5, 6 & 7). When Solomon dedicated the Temple, God sent a miraculous fire to show His divine approval (7:1-3). At that time, He told Solomon He would bless him and his people *if* they would obey Him. Nonetheless, he later turned away from God and His way, married many Gentile wives, and built pagan altars for them to use in their worship of false Gods. Thus, *Solomon's apostasy* brought a great *curse* upon himself, his dynasty, and the nation of Israel: "But king Solomon loved many strange women.... And it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that **his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God, as was the heart of David his father....** And the LORD was *angry* with Solomon because his heart was turned from the LORD God of Israel, which had appeared unto him twice..." (1 Kings 11:1-9). So the LORD told Solomon that He would "surely rend the kingdom from [him] and give it unto [his] servant" (v. 11).

* * * * *

Part 2 and completion of this article will follow in the next "Dear brethren" letter.

Church of God-21st Century
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December 5, 2007

Dear Brethren,

Since my last letter to you, even more calamitous things have been happening in this world...floods, fires, earthquakes, etc. We need to be alert to the fact that we are going to see more catastrophic events occurring in various places before the return of Jesus Christ.

I wish to recommend to, a very important book, which I am now reading, by a former presidential candidate, Patrick J. Buchanan, titled, "Day of Reckoning," (How hubris, ideology, and greed are tearing America apart). He is repeating much of the same warnings we have been taught by God's Apostle, Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong.

In his book he describes the present condition of our country, America, and warns us, as did Mr. Armstrong, of future calamities, which will befall our nation if we do not wake up and change our course!

I wish to quote excerpts from this interesting book. He says, "America is in an existential crisis from which the nation may not survive.... The culture is collapsing and the nation is being deconstructed along the lines of race and class.... The dollar has shrunk to historic lows and is being abandoned by foreign governments."

Brethren, do we see what has been happening to our country as God's Word has warned us and prophecy is now being fulfilled before our very eyes? If God's warning message, inspired and written in His Word, does not move or shake us, can we then take seriously what one of our countries political figures is trying to reveal, and what could be one of America's last warning messages before sudden destruction appears?

In Ezekiel 5: 11-17, God is clearly sending a warning message to those who will listen. "Wherefore, as I live, saith the Lord God: Surely, because you have *defiled* my sanctuary with all your detestable things, and with all your *abominations*, therefore will I also *diminish* you; neither shall my eye spare, neither will I have any pity" (v11).

In verse 14, God warns, "Moreover, I will make you waste, and a *reproach* among the nations that are around about you, in the sight of all that pass by."

In verse 16; "When I shall send upon them the evil arrows of famine, which shall be for their *destruction*, and which I will send to *destroy* you; and I will *increase* the *famine* upon you, and will *break* your staff of bread."

Mr. Buchanan makes these *interesting* comments: "The **U. S. army** is *breaking* and is *too small* to meet America's global commitments.... The **[U.S.] dollar** has *sunk* to historic lows and is being abandoned by foreign governments.... All these crises are hitting America at once-a perfect storm crises.... Torn asunder by a culture war; **America** has now begun to break down along *class, ethnic and racial* lines.... The greatest threat to U. S. sovereignty and independence is the *scheme* of global elite to *erase* America's borders and *merge* the USA, Mexico and Canada into a North American Union.... The

Third World invasion through Mexico is a *greater threat* to our *survival* as one nation than anything happening in Afghanistan or Iraq.”

On page 246, Mr. Buchanan states, “The United States is *losing* its trade wars with China, Japan, Asia, the European Union, Canada, and Mexico, not because of any *inefficiency* of our workers, but because of the *ideology* of our intellectuals and the *greed* of our corporatists.”

Lastly, in chapter 5, Mr. Buchanan uses the title, “Who Shall Inherit the Earth?” He states, “If the American Century is over, what will replace it? And if Pax Americana has come to an end, who *inherits* the earth that America dominated? Who are the *claimants*? Who are the *pretenders to the throne*?”

Brethren, thankfully we, in God’s True Church know the *answers* and the *outcome* to these questions. We have been taught and *guided* into God’s Truth. We have the answers brethren, from God’s own Word, and from God’s true ministers, who are feeding His sheep and sounding the *warning* message before the *climactic doom* appears.

Who shall inherit the earth? It is plainly written in the pages of the most read book on earth, the Bible! Anyone can come to learn God’s message if they will only choose to read it. Matthew 5:5, “***Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit the earth.***” It is plain and clear!

Revelation 2: 26, “And he that overcomes, and keeps my works unto the end, to him will ***I give power over the nations.***” This clearly means *ruler ship* and *inheritance* in the Kingdom of God.

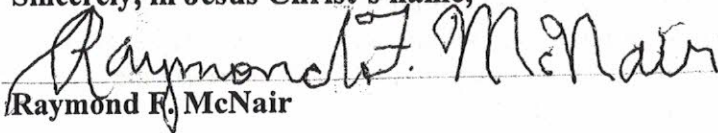
“He that overcomes, ***shall inherit all things***, and I will be his God, and he shall be my son” (Rev. 21: 7).

God inspired His Word to teach us prophecy among many things, as a *warning* to us of what is *yet* to occur due to the mass transgressions of our peoples. Mr. Buchanan is just *one* of the many who can *see* the *handwriting* on the wall. Are you able to see and understand God’s warning brethren? Are your eyes *opened* to see what is taking place in our midst before it is too late?

It is my prayer and hope that those of you who are receiving this letter will take this message *very seriously* and *personally*.

On a more positive note: this coming Sabbath I will be conducting a “blessing of little children” in my home. Mr. and Mrs. David Nelson will be arriving from Upper California for the *blessing* of their eleven-month-old son, Joshua. Matthew, their two year old, will also be here to make sure all goes well for his little brother.

Sincerely, in Jesus Christ’s name,


Raymond F. McNair

P. S. Enclosed you will find Part 2 and the conclusion to my previous article, “Should You Trust God’s Ministers?”

Continuation: Part 2

King Saul's Apostasy! Israel's first king, Saul, started out doing the right thing in God's sight (1Sam. 9-12), but he later turned away from God and was consequently rejected by Him because of his *apostasy* (chapters 13-15). King Saul had to pay a heavy price as a result of his rebellion against God (1 Sam. 15:1-31, 35)! *He lost his throne!*

Righteous King Josiah's Disobedience—and tragic Death! The Bible says King Josiah was a righteous King of Judah. Even though he was, in the main, an upright king, he died *an ignominious death* because of his disobedience to God's command *not* to do battle with Pharaoh. In about 600 B.C. Josiah disobeyed God, went out to fight against Pharaoh, was mortally wounded in battle at Megiddo, and was taken to Jerusalem, where he died of his wounds (2 Kings 23:29-30; 2 Chron. 35:21-24). The Bible also mentions that "a man of God"—who worked miracles and accurately predicted the future—was slain by a lion, because the "man of God" knowingly disobeyed God's Word (1 Kings 13:1-32)

New Testament Examples of Apostasy

The Apostle Paul mentions several persons who had previously served in God's ministry, but later forsook *their ministry* for various carnal reasons. Paul lamented, "**Demas has forsaken me**, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; *Crescens* to Galatia; *Titus* unto Dalmatia. Only *Luke* is with me..." (2 Tim. 4:10).

Judas Iscariot's Apostasy Judas Iscariot became covetous of money (He was the "treasurer" John 12:6; 13:29.), all of which led him to *apostatize*, later *betraying* Christ for 30 pieces of silver (Matt. 26:14-15, 20-25, 25-47). Not long after Pentecost in 31 A.D., "Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples [there were] about 120" and told them, "This scripture must needs have been fulfilled...concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus. For he was numbered with us, and had obtained part of *this ministry*. Now this man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out.... For it is written in the book of Psalms, Let his habitation be desolate...and his *bishoprick* ["overseer-ship"] **let another take**" (Acts 1:15-20). Judas, one of Christ's chosen disciples, after spending 3 1/2 years with Him, apostatized and turned away from the Truth. As a consequence, he lost everything, including his *ministry* and his own *life!*

Simon Magus' Apostasy The most notorious New Testament example of *apostasy* is found in the 8th chapter of Acts. We are informed that, after the Gospel was preached by Philip to the Samaritans, Peter and John were sent from Jerusalem to assist in ministering to those converts (vv. 1-8). However, one "convert" especially stands out—**Simon Magus**. When the Samaritans "believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized.... Then **Simon himself believed** also: and when he was *baptized*, he continued with Philip, and wondered, *beholding the miracles and signs* which were done.... And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostle's hands the Holy Spirit was given, he offered them *money*, saying, Give me also this power that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Spirit" (vv. 18-19). But Peter rebuked him sharply: "Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for **thy heart is not right** in the sight of God. **Repent** therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee," said Peter (vv. 20-21).

We are told that Simon "believed" (Philip's message regarding the "kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ"); was "baptized," and *marveled* at the miracles which Philip and the apostles were able to perform *in Christ's name*. [It was this "Simon Magus" (the

“Magician”) who subsequently went to *Rome* and was later hailed as a great miracle worker; and, in later years, since his name was “Simon,” he was mistakenly taken by many in Rome to be Christ’s apostle, “Simon Peter.”]

Both the Old and New Testaments give many examples of *servants of God* who *apostatized*, turning away from what they knew to be right, and had to reap costly penalties for their *apostasy*. And, since the death of Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong in 1986, the Church of God has seen many of its *ministers*—including leading *evangelists* and *pastors*—*apostatize* and begin preaching false doctrines! This resulted in incalculable confusion, accusations, anger, disillusionment, and grief in the people attending the “Churches of God”!

Why You Cannot Always Trust “God’s ministers”!

God’s Word reveals that we should *never* put our trust in any *man* or in any *church* or human *organization*. We should look solely to *God* and trust only Him and His Word. God’s people must learn to *try* or *test* all who claim to be “ministers of God,” and should only “follow [those who follow] Christ” (1 Cor. 11:1). Let us remember, however, that God Himself has ordained that His true Ministers fulfill a vital role in His Church by *nourishing* and *protecting* His sheep (Eph. 4:11-16). His faithful ministers also need to be encouraged and supported in their God-given tasks of diligently caring for God’s flock.

But we must also remember Christ’s words: “**Beware of false prophets**, which come to you in sheep’s clothing [but are in fact] **ravens wolves**” (Matt. 7:15)! Jesus said, “**But beware of men**” (Matt. 10:17). He also said, “**Take heed that no man deceive you**” (24:4). Furthermore, Jesus describes the utter depravity of the “human condition”: “**For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed EVIL THOUGHTS, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: All these evil things come from within, and defile the man, said Jesus** (Mark 7:18-23; cf. Gal. 5: 19-21).

Let us also remember Paul’s words to the “elders” of the “Church of God”: “**For I know [that] grievous wolves [shall] enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them**” (Acts 20:29-30). Paul also said that “**evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived**” (2 Tim. 3:13). Likewise, the **Apostle John** sounded the alarm in his epistles, in which he warned God’s people that many *false prophets* and teachers, and *antichrists*, would rise up and lead many astray (I, II & III John).

But someone will yet ask, “**Can’t we trust God’s true ministers?**” No, not in the strict sense of the word! For, as we have seen, the Bible gives numerous examples of “men of God” turning from the Truth—*apostatizing* and leading others astray; and in recent years *many top-rank ministers apostatized*, and led others astray! Furthermore, God’s Word reveals the basic weaknesses in all humans, plagued as we all are, by our own “human nature.”

At the time of Noah’s Flood, God revealed the utter weakness and wretchedness of humans: “**And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.... The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence...for all flesh had corrupted His way upon the earth**” (Gen. 6:5, 11-12).

Jeremiah says, “**Thus saith the LORD; Cursed is the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD**” (Jer. 17:5). He also declares, “**The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins...to give every man according to his ways, and**

according to the fruit of his doings" (vv. 9-10). Jeremiah also says, "O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (10:23).

The Apostle Paul states, "For we...worship God *in the spirit*...and have no confidence in the *flesh*" (Phil. 3:3). Paul also revealed the utter weakness and depravity of humans, who sometimes have the "will" to obey God but not the innate *strength* to do so (Rom. 7:12-25). Only God can "deliver" sinful humans from this sinful *human nature* that is inherent in all of us (vv. 15-25).

Remember These Important Points!

The Bible reveals that, on many occasions, the "servants of God" fell far short of the mark. Some of them completely *turned away* from God, going into total *apostasy*. Today, many claim to be "God's ministers" yet are *not* His servants at all, but are, in fact, the "apostles" and "ministers" of Satan the Devil (2 Cor. 11:13-15)! What does God say of these "false prophets"? And how can God's people *discern* between Satan's ministers and God's faithful ministers? God gives us the answer: "To the LAW and the PROPHETS, if they speak not according to this WORD [the Word of God], it is because there is *no light* in them" (Isaiah 8:20)!

Ezekiel 34 and Jeremiah 23 clearly show what God thinks of these "false pastors," who have *abused*, *scattered*, and *destroyed* His sheep. God thunders: "*Woe* be unto the PASTORS that *destroy* and *scatter* the sheep of My pasture! saith the LORD. Therefore thus saith the LORD God of Israel against the PASTORS that feed My people; *Ye have scattered My flock...*" (23:1-2). God then says, "*I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran: I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied. But if they had stood in My counsel, and had caused My people to hear My words, then they should have turned them from their evil way, and from the evil of their doings*" (Jer. 23:21-22). Since they did not preach God's Word faithfully, God again declares, "*Woe* be unto the pastors"!

We must learn to put our trust solely in God—not in *men*! In fact, we are *not* to even trust in *ourselves*! God again says, "*He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool*" (Prov. 28:26). And God commands, "*Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths. Be not wise in thine own eyes; fear the LORD, and depart from evil*" (3:5-7)! God's Word says, "*Behold, O God our SHIELD, and look upon the face of thine anointed.... For the LORD God is a sun and a shield: the LORD will give grace and glory: no good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly. O LORD of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in thee*" (Psa. 84:9, 11-12).

Should we humans put our trust in any *man*, *church*, or *human organization*? Or, should we trust solely in God Almighty, and in His Word? The answer should be obvious! We humans are *weak* and *fallible*. We often *falter*, *stumble* and *fall far short* of God's perfect standard of right and wrong. But "*God is [always] faithful,*" and He promises that He will never permit us to be tempted or tested beyond our ability to cope with the trial (1 Cor. 10:13). Neither will He ever "lie" to us (Titus 1:2). God solemnly promises, "*I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.* So that we may boldly say, The Lord is My Helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me" (Heb. 13:5-6).

Realizing *human weakness* and knowing *God's perfection*, we should always put our *real trust* in Him and His Word alone. We can only "trust" those who profess to be "God's ministers" *as* they follow God and His Word (2 Cor. 11:1). When we do that, our *real trust* is in Almighty God, *not* in humans!

Should we trust "God's ministers"? No, not really! If we have real understanding, our *real* trust is *solely* in God—not in *puny* human beings, who often go *astray*! We must all be on guard and "work out [our] salvation with *fear and trembling*" (Phil.2: 12).

* * * * *

Beware...a Serious Warning from God's Evangelist!

Throughout the history of God's Church, different ministers have *preyed* upon God's people. Their goal and interest is mainly after *money, power, or financial gain*.

This letter is addressed to the brethren at large, to *warn* God's people not to be *gullible* and not to let *reoccur* what happened in the 1840's, when thousands were told to get rid of their possessions. "For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ" (Jude 4).

Brethren, we should be willing to make *sacrifices* when necessary, but please *beware* of those who want to *pressure* God's people to give of their material possessions.

And you husbands must not *brow beat* your wives into any submission *not* according to God's laws. God *commands* you wives, that your husband is the *head* of the household (Ephes.5: 22). In Mr. Armstrong's 1985 Feast of Trumpets sermon, he instructs us, "God made the husband the head of the wife.... The wife is *equal* with her husband, she is a *human* being, same as he is, she is an *heir* of salvation, the same as he is, but he is the *leader!*" Husbands are not to be *dictators* even though God gives him overall *authority* over his wife and children.

My *warning* to you, brethren, is to keep your *eyes* on God and His Truth. Nowhere in the scriptures does God *command* His people to *forsake* all their possessions or to *sacrifice*, only later to find themselves in a *difficult* financial position. God's command *teaches* us to tithe and we will be blessed. Your tithes provide the *needs* of the Church. God does NOT require us to support a minister's *greed* to obtain the *largest* or most *elaborate* facilities. If God blesses you financially and you wish to give a *gift* or *donation* to His Church, then fine, you will be *blessed* for doing so.

It is evident to me that God is using *me* to *warn* and *protect* you brethren. We must not allow Satan to cause us to believe that when a minister asks for a *huge sacrifice*, that this pleases God. If we *blindly* follow his unreasonable *request*, we could later find that we are in *financial hardship*. Ultimately this could cause contention in the marriage or a serious break-up in the family.

It is my prayer that God will help each and every one of you *not* to make any *foolish* decision just because a minister has *pressured* you, or you *believe* that you are pleasing God, or that God is in it. Brethren, I ask you all to *please beware!*

In Jesus Christ's name,
Raymond F. McNair