

Mark Gully  
Resignation

M. GULLY ✓

April 15, 1995

Dear Messrs Tkach, Tkach, Jr., Feazell,

I do not write this letter with joy but with sorrow. I have been in the ministry for 13 years and a member of the Worldwide Church of God for 22 years. I did not desire to write this letter to you. However events over the last months have forced a growing realization that I would have to resign as pastor of the Waco congregation. This is a gut-wrenching decision, and one that has not come without prayer and fasting.

I have come to the conclusion that for me to comply with this latest package of changes, along with those to come, would demand me to defile my conscience regarding what I believe God's word instructs. I have studied the material that has been sent out from headquarters and found that it does not dissuade me from what I have proved and lived by for years.

I do not resign because I am angry with anyone. I love the people here in Waco. Serving in the Church has been my life for my tenure as a minister. However, I cannot stand by and see material fed to the flock that I feel is wrong, without even being allowed to show where it is wrong. I cannot stand by while you will not allow discussion of this matter by the ministry before it is taught to the membership. I cannot stand by while this material is fed to the flock without their opportunity to be shown what we have taught about these arguments in the past. I feel it is wrong to explain away the former teachings of the Church by prejudicially characterising them as "legalism," "earning salvation," and "rule keeping." I feel it is wrong to not explain the part of gnosticism and its weird twist on the law of God in the discussion of the letters of Colossians and Galatians. We have written about these matters in our publications in the past. Why not show both sides of the argument?

I also feel that it is wrong for the ministers that are sent to a Church area from headquarters to soft-sell the new package by saying such things as:

"...sure we have need to honor the Sabbath."  
"...Mr. Tkach hasn't really changed anything."

I would hope that those who are going to preach this new message will clearly show the bottom line. The material you have sent says we are only holding services on the Sabbath because of our tradition--not because it is in any way commanded. It also says that our observances of the festivals are only traditions and can be changed to other dates. The Lord's supper can be observed various numbers of times in the year.

I hope that the indications of a-millennialism will be clearly spelled out to our members so they can know what the church's official position is (as per March PT article *A Vision of Victory*). In

this article, the following statement was made. "But Revelation does not offer--nor has it ever offered--a blueprint of future events." Clearly this applies to Revelation 20 regarding the saints ruling with Christ for a thousand years. How much of the church's former teaching will be relegated to symbolism? Please tell the membership, so that they have an opportunity to clearly evaluate the complete agenda.

I also hope that Christmas and Easter being acceptable observances for individuals as long as they are worshipping Christ, will be clearly explained to the membership (as per memo sent out by Mr. Tkach, Jr.)

I believe in the New Covenant. I have taught about the need for Christ to live in a Christian for years. But I don't think that takes away the validity of the Ten Commandments. I believe that a Christian will be moved to deeper obedience to these great, broad principles by the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. I believe this will move him to observe the Sabbath because "the just shall live by faith," "live by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God," and "shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind." It amazes me to see the reasoning that has gone on in order to teach that the Sabbath is not needful to observe. If it is acceptable for a person to work on the Sabbath because his family is hungry, then it is acceptable for a person to steal because his family is hungry.

The above shows some of my concerns, and illustrates my conclusion that we now hold convictions and understanding that are very different. I cannot teach those things that I do not believe. In addition, it seems obvious to me, from the number of speakers sent out from headquarters to speak in Waco, that you no longer wish me to shepherd and pastor my congregation.

I have studied the material sent from headquarters and will continue to do so, but at the present, I cannot continue my job as a minister in the Worldwide Church of God. I bear no ill will. I pray for unity and correct teaching by all.

Subject: Re: More questions

----- Message Contents -----

Below is the reply I got from HQ about a couple of questions I asked.  
Thought you would be interested.

i mark,

See answers below:

----- Reply Separator -----

Subject: More questions  
Author: Mark Gully at USFIELD  
Date: 3/9/95 10:13 AM

Several have asked the following. Please give an answer as soon as possible.

1. Do we still believe that Christ will return to the earth and literally establish a 1000 year reign over mankind? In other words, what are we teaching about the millenium? We will continue to teach that Christ is to return to establish his kingdom on earth. However, everything may not be quite as literal as we once thought.

2. According to the study material, the 10 commandments came into existence at Mt Sinai. What was right or wrong or good or bad before that and how do we know? The Bible does not say what commandments Abraham and other righteous men kept before Sinai. It is obvious there was a moral law which the 10 commandments were later based upon.