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WHAT IS "THE WORK"?? And to WHOM are You RESPONSIBLE in it?

An extremely important personal from
Mr. Armstrong!

by Herbert W. Armstrong

Monte-Carlo, 6/4/77

WE ARE IN the second generation—
one might almost say the *third*—
since this WORK of God started *in*
our time.

I say "*in our time*," because actually
Jesus Christ started "The WORK" with
His disciples during their training period
in 27 A.D., and in their Apostleship in 31
A.D.

But under the growing intensive persecution
from the great false church rising up, beginning
with ~~Simon the Sorcerer in 33 A.D.~~ "the WORK"
of proclaiming Christ's Gospel Message TO THE
WORLD deteriorated, then died out completely
before the end of the first century—so far as reach-
ing THE WORLD was concerned.

But I feel the time has come to give these facts
to the ministry worldwide, today—perhaps the
LARGEST ministry, backed by and serving the
LARGEST MEMBERSHIP in the history of the true
Church of God. I think you should have this basic

background constantly in mind and view all sub-
jects in connection with it.

By the time Paul wrote Galatians (no later than
59 A.D.) the churches already were turning to
ANOTHER GOSPEL. I will describe that "other Gos-
pel" later.

But I would like for all our ministers to have
well in mind the WHOLE picture. Pardon me for
once more saying that when you turn on a movie
on TV, or go to a movie theatre, entering some 10
or 15 minutes before the END of a 1½ or 2-hour
motion picture, not having seen what led up to it,
what you see at that stage of the play is ALL
CONFUSION.

We know that first of all, in the BEGINNING,
existed only the TWO super-GREAT and DIVINE
PERSONAGES, "The WORD," and GOD. They were
two personages, of ONE MIND—as all we should
be—but GOD was the HEAD in authority. And
note—"The WORD" never so much as remotely
started to question that AUTHORITY! ONE—and
one ONLY—was at the TOP. That is God's Pattern.

They designed and created billions of angels.

Then they created MATTER—the UNIVERSE—“the heavens and the earth.” Angels—apparently a third of all—were placed on this earth as its first inhabitants. God assigned a tremendous job for them to do—actually finishing the creation of the earth—and, in so doing, finishing their own creation, which could not be complete until their CHARACTER—either good or bad—was formed within them. Character cannot be created instantaneously by fiat.

They were composed of spirit, lesser than God, but possessing MINDS capable of receiving and utilizing knowledge—of thinking independently, reasoning, forming opinions, making decisions and choices. God instructed them in the way of righteous, holy, perfect character—the way of HIS LAW.

God set over them HIS GOVERNMENT, based on this law. To accomplish their purpose, it was necessary that they all work TOGETHER in peace, harmony, obedience to GOD'S *plan* for them, His way, and HIS GOVERNMENT. Think what misguided MAN has built on the earth. How much GREATER, had the angels built by GOD'S plans, living by His GOVERNMENT!

Once their mission was successfully accomplished on earth, they were in like manner to finish the creation of all planets of the UNIVERSE (composed, incidentally, of matter—the PHYSICAL UNIVERSE). It is ENDLESS—AWESOME. The assignment and rewards offered to the angels were amazing beyond our mental powers to comprehend.

On the throne of the earth, with the whole earth as his jurisdiction, was placed the super archangel, the cherub LUCIFER, to administer the GOVERNMENT OF GOD.

Remember, the GOVERNMENT OF GOD is the one basic central MEANS to EVERYTHING GOOD—to peace, happiness, joy—to accomplishment—to colossal achievements.

But Lucifer led his angels into REBELLION.

The GOVERNMENT OF GOD, as all governments, is based on a basic constitution and laws. The laws of LOVE. They are A WAY OF LIFE. GOD IS LOVE. Love is always OUTGOING—for extreme brevity I call it the way of “GIVE”—its violation is the way of “GET.”

It means GIVING to GOD obedience, reliance, gratitude, a return of His LOVE which HE gives us, adoration and worship. It means, toward others, an outgoing concern for their good and welfare equal to concern for self.

The super-great and powerful Lucifer turned his angels to the way I term “GET”—vanity, lust and greed, jealousy, envy, competition leading to strife

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and violence and destruction, resentment of authority, bitterness, hatred.

Thus the GOVERNMENT OF GOD was taken from the earth.

But no government must ever be WITHOUT A HEAD. Therefore, Lucifer, his name changed to SATAN THE DEVIL, *must remain on his throne UNTIL a Successor QUALIFIES to restore the GOVERNMENT OF GOD, and is INDUCTED INTO OFFICE.*

The fallen angels have become DEMONS. They, too, are confined to the earth UNTIL the KINGDOM OF GOD restores the GOVERNMENT OF GOD to the earth.

It is recorded in Isaiah 14:13-14, that Lucifer planned, apparently with his angels as a military force, to ascend to heaven and knock God off His throne. We have always assumed that occurred thousands of years ago, before Adam, but the context indicates it may apply to approximately NOW—corresponding to Revelation 12:7, which “war in heaven” we have assumed to take place in our time, or *very* near future. Isaiah 14:12-15 says they were cast back down to earth, as does Revelation 12:9, and succeeding verses show Satan and his demons persecuting the REMNANT Church (Laodicean), for the “Philadelphia” church is to be taken to a place of safety during the Great Tribu-

lation (Rev. 12:14; and Rev. 3:10). Revelation 12:17 shows Satan persecuting the "remnant" of the Church, which is the very LAST PART OF IT AS TO TIME, therefore, Laodicea.

Lucifer was disqualified, but, as SATAN, still remains.

Genesis 1:2 describes the chaos, decay and ruin angelic sin had brought on the earth. (Heb. *tohu* and *bohu* mean chaotic, decayed, waste and empty.) But Psalm 104:30 describes how (Gen. 1:2 plus), in six days God RENEWED the face of the earth, with the first heaven (earth's atmosphere) and created fowl, fish, animals—and MAN!

When Lucifer and the angels sinned, it left ONLY GOD (Elohim—God and the "WORD") who could be relied upon NEVER to turn from or violate GOD'S GOVERNMENT or its laws. But God must have said, "There just are not enough of me to do the job I have purposed on all the planets of the UNIVERSE.

"Therefore I WILL REPRODUCE MYSELF!"

The angels are composed of SPIRIT. Spirit is CHANGELESS. It NEVER CHANGES, once a creation is completed or set. When the character of Lucifer and his angels had been developed, completing their CREATION, and SETTING their character as EVIL, it can never CHANGE.

But MATTER is constantly CHANGING. So God formed MAN of the dust of the ground—MATTER. Yet after God's own image and likeness—FORM AND SHAPE—so that physical man, begotten by God's Spirit, may, by the resurrection, be *changed* (Phil. 3:21) into immortal spirit bodies, *then UNchangeable* in character.

If man sinned, HE COULD BE CHANGED! God could grant him REPENTANCE, He could turn from Satan's way of "GET" to God's righteous character of "GIVE." With the help of Christ and the Holy Spirit, we can overcome Satan and sin, GROWING in grace and the knowledge of Christ, developing within ourselves by receiving it from God, the very nature and character of GOD.

We become, through Christ, "partakers of the divine NATURE" (II Pet. 1:4)—even as we have been partakers of Satan's nature, which we have falsely termed "human nature." We were not BORN with "human nature." It did not come from God. (II Cor. 11:3; Eph. 2:2-3 "now worketh in"; II Cor. 4:4.)

God formed MAN of MATTER for the very purpose of making it possible to develop, IN THIS PHYSICAL LIFE, the righteous, holy, perfect CHARACTER the angels failed to develop. Even though we humans start off Satan's way, we can be brought to REPENTANCE—to CHANGE, and being matter, we are sub-

ject to CHANGE—able to be changed.

But mark this well—that CHANGE to perfect, righteous, Godly CHARACTER must take place while we are IN THE FLESH—*now*—for those predestined to be called *now*.

WHAT A FANTASTIC, OVERWHELMINGLY WONDERFUL PLAN GOD THOUGHT OUT AND DEVELOPED FOR HIS GRAND PURPOSE!

So God created MAN in His own image, male and female—Adam and Eve. Without having EXPERIENCED living under either the "GIVE" way, or Satan's "GET" way, Satan deceived Eve and cleverly led Adam into rejecting the "tree of LIFE"—God's way of "GIVE." He led Adam into stealing what was not his by taking to himself the KNOWLEDGE production of what is GOOD and what is EVIL.

Thus Adam cut himself and his posterity (HUMANITY) off from all contact with God.

God adopted a 7,000-year MASTER PLAN—6,000 years during which He said to man, in effect: "I gave you the choice. You have deliberately rejected my government, cut yourself and humanity off from all contact with me. Therefore I adopt, for the 6,000 years of 'the Day of Man,' a 'Hands off' policy toward humanity—except in such special cases as I shall deem necessary to my purpose to intervene."

So God assigned mankind, as a whole, to go "form your OWN kind of Governments, your OWN Religions, your OWN kind of life and society and civilization—CUT OFF from me."

Can we realize the world as a whole is CUT OFF FROM GOD?

But while Satan was so subtle that man did not realize it, man was NOT cut off from Satan, but rather was constantly swayed by Satan (Eph. 2:2) who was working IN human minds—swaying them into the ATTITUDE of "GET."

Fellow Ministers, it is VITAL that we realize we live in a world of man's development under the attitude and underlying motive of "GET." It runs through governments, religions, the professions, education, commerce and industry, all society—sports—everything.

We must THROW OUT OF OUR MINDS the Protestant idea that God is desperately trying to spiritually SAVE this world. Rather, He allowed man to CUT HIMSELF OFF from God and all contact with God.

Jesus said plainly "No man CAN come to me, except the Father draw him"—and predestination refers solely to those called NOW instead of later when the whole world will be "called."

Between Adam and the Flood, out of BILLIONS

of population, only THREE MEN had any contact with God—Abel, Enoch and Noah. Then there was Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, and later the nation Israel, but NO SPIRITUAL SALVATION WAS OFFERED THE NATION ISRAEL—ONLY MATERIAL AND NATIONAL REWARDS. The Holy Spirit was given ONLY to the prophets, and that to enable them to carry out their specially called MISSIONS.

From the time of Christ, ONLY THOSE PRE-DESTINATED TO BE CALLED NOW have been called. The world as a whole—its religions of MAN'S making—have been CUT OFF completely from God. The true Church always has been small, persecuted.

It is necessary, to really preach the Gospel, that you do preach this, until our people get it.

The GOSPEL—which means the ANNOUNCEMENT of the coming KINGDOM OF GOD, and NOT a soul-saving crusade—was SUPPRESSED before 70 A.D., and a DIFFERENT "Gospel" was proclaimed to the world which UTTERLY DID AWAY WITH CHRIST'S TRUE GOSPEL of the KINGDOM OF GOD.

Now I will go into that:

1) They did away with the KINGDOM OF GOD by falsely claiming THE CHURCH (Catholic—false) was THE KINGDOM. As soon as the Bishops of Rome were known as Popes, they assumed the title "VICAR OF CHRIST." This does NOT mean, representative of Christ, but "IN PLACE OF Christ." In other words, they have kicked Christ out and put the Pope in His place. Thus "Christ," in the person of the popes, had come at His second coming and was ruling all of Europe, which to them was "the world."

2) They taught that Christ DID AWAY WITH THE LAW. There can be NO KINGDOM without a basic LAW. There is none today—there never has been—there never could be. So, again, they gave the KINGDOM OF GOD Message a knock-out blow!

3) By adopting the "Trinity" doctrine, they made the Holy Spirit a third PERSON. God's PURPOSE is to REPRODUCE HIMSELF. To make BILLIONS of sons—all members of His GOD-FAMILY. The "Trinity" doctrine did away with being really BORN AGAIN—BORN OF GOD.

Fellow Ministers and Brethren in Christ, WE STAND ALONE in a world TOTALLY CUT OFF FROM GOD—in a world of its own making, made the "GET" way swayed by Satan, where Satan is the god of this world!

We have a MESSAGE to ANNOUNCE—not to talk people into—which is so colossal—so A W E S O M E—words cannot describe its GLORY!

But, finally, just what is "THE WORK"?

WORK ~~IS~~ announcing the GREAT COMMISSION.

And what is THE CHURCH? It is the "BODY OF CHRIST"—that body of human believers, who have turned from the "GET" to God's "GIVE" way—who have repented of SIN, which is transgression of God's spiritual Law upon which the GOVERNMENT OF GOD is based and who have received and are led by the Holy Spirit.

But ALL in the world are not being called to repentance—to make this change from "GET" to "GIVE"—to believe in Christ and receive His Holy Spirit at this time!! Only those PRE-DESTINED to be called now are.

Otherwise, NO MAN CAN COME to me," said Jesus, "except the Father which sent me draw him."

But WHY would God call some—the very few—now, while Satan is here, and require them to OVERCOME SATAN, even as Christ did, when the world as a whole is to be called LATER when Satan is BOUND, and the world is at PEACE, and CHRIST and the born children of God are RULING?

WHY do we have to live in a world with EVERY EVIL INFLUENCE swaying us—while THEY will be called with every GOOD influence working in them?

Remember, two influences mostly shape our lives and how they turn out—heredity and environment. Heredity will IMPROVE during the millennium when they are called. Environment is meant here to be every external influence after one is born. Today there are many influences that affect us—school life especially, where high school teachers, even males, often must walk through the halls two by two, lest they be victims of VIOLENCE going from class to class. Today TV influences the MILLIONS in "shoot 'em up" westerns, crime and detective pictures, illicit sex. Even the newspaper and magazines keep getting more and more "liberal" until more and more evil gains "public acceptance."

Do you ever THINK of the differences in the INFLUENCES that will be brought to play on children and teens, as between now under SATAN, and then, when God will CALL EVERYBODY, under CHRIST and the GOD-RULERS of that world?

WHY, then, has God singled out a VERY FEW of us, and called us NOW, when God is NOT calling the world?

He is calling the infinitesimal FEW now—the CHURCH OF GOD—because one or two men, ALONE, simply CANNOT carry out THE GREAT COMMISSION.

Jesus called a select FEW—twelve men and at least two alternates. He spent 3½ years teaching

and training them to ANNOUNCE HIS MESSAGE from God—THE COMING KINGDOM OF GOD. And He commissioned them: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel" . . . (GOOD NEWS of the coming Kingdom of God).

But they needed help. They did not go and solicit that help—beg people to "get saved." God ADDED that help. They did not go out on soul-saving crusades. They did not plead with and beg people to "give their hearts to the Lord."

Because the very first opposition the apostles met in proclaiming the GOOD NEWS was from Christ-rejecting Jews, at first they put great emphasis in their preaching on the RESURRECTION—because they were eye-witnesses of the fact Jesus was in fact the promised MESSIAH. They were 3½ years with Him before His crucifixion, and 40 days after His resurrection. But THEIRS was the Commission to carry the MESSAGE to the world.

One example of how they needed the backing of the CHURCH:

After Peter and John had been roughly handled and thrown in prison for the night for proclaiming this Message, they, being human, were naturally frightened. They went to the brethren for encouragement. The brethren PRAYED. God heard. And even the PLACE where they were SHOOK and they were filled with the Holy Spirit and given courage and power to go right on proclaiming that GOOD NEWS.

Those lay brethren did not take the Announcement Message to the world—the Apostles, and others, called and appointed as elders and evangelists, did. But they needed the CHURCH back of them—with PRAYERS AND FASTING—with tithes and offerings—with ENCOURAGEMENT!

They did not go out as "soul winners" persuading the public to "be saved" spiritually. Rather, the Bible says, "And the LORD added to the Church such as should be saved" (Acts 2:47).

Nevertheless, even the CHURCH was well organized. The GOVERNMENT OF GOD was placed in it.

The one thing uppermost—first in importance—in GOD'S MIND right now is RESTORING THE GOVERNMENT OF GOD TO THIS EARTH!

THE WORK IS: ~~the~~ the GREAT COMMISSION, announcing the soon-coming KINGDOM OF GOD, TO RULE THE WHOLE EARTH!

Restoration of GOVERNMENT OF GOD Starts in CHURCH!

But God has *started* His GOVERNMENT back on earth IN HIS CHURCH.

GOD the Father is at the Supreme HEAD, over Christ. Christ is the HEAD of the Church. The

apostles were next in authority, UNDER Christ, and PETER was first among the apostles. At the council in Acts 15 it was PETER who set the decision, made official by James, Pastor of the Headquarters Church at Jerusalem (Acts 15).

We read the order of authority: "And GOD hath set some in the Church, first apostles, secondarily prophets (there are none today), thirdly teachers," etc. (1 Cor. 12:28). And again, "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: till we all come in the *unity of the faith*, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ" (Eph. 4:11-13).

Government Is From the TOP Down

God the Father is the TOP. Under Him is Christ, Head of the Church. Under Him, and over the human Church is His chosen apostle. Others under him.

So God's Church today is organized on that pattern.

To whom, then, are you accountable? You ministers have been NOT elected by vote, but APPOINTED. And each has a superior over him. In all ordinary Church or organizational matters, you are responsible to the one immediately over you. BUT THAT DOES NOT MEAN THAT YOU ARE NEVER ALLOWED TO GO HIGHER if you deem necessary.

For example, we even go DIRECTLY TO GOD THE FATHER, in prayer. One man caused a big argument on that point in the Church several years ago. I forget the details now, but he claimed we were taking it over Christ's head, and doing despite to Christ to pray to the Father. If you will read the prayer that shook the house, in Acts 4:24-31, you will see all that is needed to prove we may go direct to THE FATHER in prayer. Note especially "thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed" (verse 27), and "thy holy child Jesus" (verse 30).

In like manner, let me once again stress that ANYONE of you ministers is free to write me personally, whether an encouraging letter, or a grievance or a complaint. But if it is a complaint against your own superior in authority, I advise you thus: Better PRAY sincerely and earnestly first—be sure your own attitude is right with God, and BE SURE OF YOUR FACTS.

On the other hand, rumors have come to me that some ministers in the field have been warned of punishment, or losing their jobs, if they write to

me. I will protect the identity of any minister who registers a complaint direct to me—you need have NO FEAR on that score. On the other hand, I will protect your superior with equal justice, for he must not be allowed to serve on his job in fear of unjust accusation. This is GOD'S CHURCH and we are supposed to be GOD'S PEOPLE, FILLED WITH His Holy Spirit of LOVE, PEACE, tolerance and patience toward one another.

The delegation of responsibility demands accountability.

I am determined, so far as God gives me to see and understand, that God's GOVERNMENT will be administered GOD'S WAY, as HE would have it—and NONE need fear, regardless of rank, as long as you do RIGHT. But better be SURE you are in the right. But GOD DOES GUIDE ME AND LEAD ME!

At the last Feast of Tabernacles, I asked all ministers to feel free to write me. Rumors do get around—we seem to be the "rumorest" Church—probably because Satan hates us the most, and plays on this human weakness. But rumors came to me that some ministers did not want to write because they felt they should not take up my time. And it IS well to use wisdom and judgment in *that!* Some, rumor has it, were *afraid* to write because they had been warned not to. I repeat, none has need to fear because of any such THREAT! When I say you are free to write me personally, you've got it on the highest human authority in the Church, and you will be protected. But I told you above my policy (God's) in upholding the man of superior rank. He must not live in fear of unjust recrimination. I don't want him to be in a position of fear.

But I will say that one of the first of the "field ministers" to accept my invitation and write to me was responsible for the great stress I have been putting on our preaching the GOOD NEWS of tomorrow instead of the BAD NEWS of Satan's world. This has turned the whole church around!

We must all be brothers in Christ, and by this shall others know we are the real people of God, if and when we have real LOVE one for the other.

Now before closing this, WHY are the few of us being called NOW, instead of *when* the whole world is called during the millennium?

In order to QUALIFY to restore the GOVERNMENT OF GOD to earth, Jesus had to QUALIFY by overcoming SATAN and LIVING the "GIVE" way, devel-

oping perfect, holy, righteous CHARACTER while in the human flesh.

Can we expect to SIT WITH HIM ON HIS THRONE (Rev. 3:21) unless we, too, overcome Satan, and build that righteous, holy character DURING THIS HUMAN LIFE? Revelation 3:21 and Revelation 2:26-27 apply to those called NOW, not those to be called in the millennium.

We are called to BACK UP THE WORK—and THAT is the WAY God has given us to develop that character, so we may RULE with Him.

But finally, just WHAT IS "THE WORK"? THE WORK
ANNOUNCING the GREAT COMMISSION—the Message of the IMMINENT KINGDOM OF GOD.

The one thing uppermost in GOD'S MIND right now is the RESTORATION OF THE GOVERNMENT OF GOD ON EARTH, through THE KINGDOM OF GOD, which shall go on from there, ultimately to FINISH the grand and glorious CREATION OF THE UNIVERSE!

In priorities in the Work, number one priority now is the Work I am doing, with the able help of Mr. Rader and Mr. Gotoh, around the world, opening doors heretofore closed to this Message—and yet it is the smallest department in the budget!

Also, since it does require the brethren of God's CHURCH to make this possible, it includes THE WORK of the MINISTRY among the BRETHREN, "till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (Eph. 4:11-13). Local ministers also do their part, as much as possible, in getting the Gospel to the world, locally.

The COLLEGE is NOT "The WORK." It was made NECESSARY to train personnel and ministers for the WORK. Imperial Schools WERE NOT "The WORK." I wish we could have kept them—they gave aid to the Work—as long as we could afford them.

But "THE WORK" is GROWING, and going ON—and WILL GO ON until our phase of it is finished!

THANK YOU, fellows—for putting your WHOLE HEARTS into THE WORK!

We're all in the MOST WONDERFUL WORK IN 1900 YEARS!

It's THE WORK OF GOD, and GOD is still on His Throne, guiding it!