

The Good News

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Should You VOW?

If you foolishly took a vow before conversion, is that vow still binding? Whom has God appointed to decide when a vow is binding?

by Herman L. Hoeh

YOU may be bound by a vow and *not know it!* Or you may be trying to keep a vow which God has never bound!

It is time we looked into the question of taking vows.

Many an individual, moved by an emotional sermon, has vowed never again to drink alcoholic beverages. Under the spell of the fiery sermon, women sometimes vow never to cut their hair again. Men, seeking to please God, have vowed never to cut their hair or shave their beards. Are such vows binding?

Under emotional pressure some individuals vow their tithe to a Church which they later find is not the true Church which Jesus founded! Are vows such as these, which are based on frauds, binding in God's sight?

Is the individual free to determine for himself if his vow is binding?

What Is a Vow?

First let us understand what a vow is.

Webster defines a vow as: "1. A solemn promise or pledge; especially one made to God . . . dedicating oneself to an act, service, or way of life. . . . 2. a promise of love and fidelity: as, marriage *vows*."

Now notice the Bible basis of vowing. "When thou vowest a vow unto God, *defer not to pay it*; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed. Better it is that thou shouldst not vow than that thou shouldst vow and not pay" (Eccles. 5:4-5).

Consider! Vows should never be taken rashly. God does not require us to make a vow in the first place. It is better not to vow than to vow and not perform it. But, if yours is a binding vow God requires you to perform it! Notice that in verse 4 a person who does not pay his vow is a "fool"!

Too many individuals make rash vows and wake up too late to realize they should never have made such a solemn promise. Many individuals are *not SPIRITUALLY MATURE* enough even to know the difference between a foolish vow and a wise vow.

Now notice Deuteronomy 23:21-23, from the Jewish Translation: "When thou shalt vow a vow unto the Lord thy God, thou shalt not be slack to pay it; for the Lord thy God will surely require it of thee; and it will be sin in thee. But if thou shalt forbear to vow, it shall be no sin in thee. That which is gone out of thy lips thou shalt observe and do; *according as thou hast vowed freely unto the Lord thy God, even that which thou hast promised with thy mouth.*"

Observe the significance of these verses. *It is a sin to break a binding vow* (verse 21). To make no vow is to avoid sin (verse 20).

Why is breaking a vow a sin? If you break a vow you have lied. Lying is a violation of one of the ten cardinal points of the law! That's how serious a broken vow can be! But now notice verse 23:

According to the original Hebrew text, *a vow must be FREELY taken* be-

fore God if it is to be binding. This verse in the King James Version is not properly rendered. The verse is not talking about "free will offerings," but about vows *freely* taken.

These verses make it clear that every vow *which God binds* on an individual must be kept. But not all vows are bound by God.

When NOT Responsible for a Vow

So important in God's sight is the matter of taking a vow that one entire chapter in the Bible is devoted to this very question! Turn to Numbers 30. Beginning with the last part of verse 1: "This is the thing which the Lord hath commanded." Here is a command of God. Notice what it says:

"If a man vow a vow unto the Lord . . . he shall not break his word, he shall do according to all that proceedeth out of his mouth. If a woman also vow a vow to the Lord, and bind herself by a bond being in her father's house in her youth; and her father hear her vow, and her bond wherewith she hath bound her soul, and her father shall hold his peace at her; *then all her vows shall stand . . .*" (Verses 3 and 4). Here we have the case of a young woman who is still residing with her parents. If she has taken a vow and her father does not disapprove, then her vows are to stand. She is bound to keep her vows.

But now consider verse 5. "If her father disallow her in the day that he heareth; not any of her vows, or of her bonds wherewith she hath bound her soul, shall stand: and the Lord shall for-

give her, because her father disallowed her."

Here we have the case of a *young girl who is not mature enough* to be responsible for taking a vow. If her father—at the time when he hears about his daughter's vow—regards it a foolish vow, he has the power and the authority to disannul it. In that case the young girl is not responsible for that vow. God forgives her for having taken such a rash vow. God does not require her to perform it. Here we have the Biblical example of a mature human being who has the power to annul the vow of a person not old enough or spiritually mature enough to be responsible for taking a vow.

Now notice verse 6. "And if she had at all an husband when she vowed or uttered ought out of her lips, wherewith she bound her soul; and her husband heard it, and held his peace at her in the day that he heard it; then her vow shall stand, and her bonds wherewith she bound her soul shall stand." In this case a wife has taken a vow. If her husband, upon hearing of the vow, does not regard it as a foolish vow then she is bound to keep her vow.

But *now* notice verse 8: "But if her husband disallowed her on the day that he heard it; then he shall make her vow which she vowed, and that which she uttered with her lips, wherewith she bound her soul, of none effect: and the Lord shall forgive her."

This is a very important verse. Notice what it means!

The Husband's Responsibility

If a wife takes a rash vow and her husband—when he first hears of it—disapproves of it, she is not bound to her vow. The husband is the head of the wife. God makes the man responsible for the vows of his wife!

Notice that in the case of the wife or the daughter, mentioned here in Numbers 30, a vow may be annulled AT THE TIME THE RESPONSIBLE PARTY HEARS OF IT. A vow does not have to be annulled at the time it is taken, but *at the time when it is heard* by the responsible party whose right is to make the decision whether that vow is binding.

Now continue with verses 9 and 10. "But every vow of a widow, and of her that is divorced, wherewith they have bound their souls, shall stand against her. And if she vowed in her husband's house, or bound her soul by a bond with an oath; and her husband heard it and held his peace at her, and disallowed her not; then all her vows shall stand, and every bond wherewith she bound her soul shall stand. But if her husband hath utterly made them

void on the day he heard them; then whatsoever proceedeth out of her lips concerning her vows, or concerning the bond of her soul, shall not stand: HER HUSBAND HATH MADE THEM VOID; and the Lord shall forgive her.

Now notice verse 13 especially. "Every vow . . . HER HUSBAND MAY ESTABLISH IT, OR HER HUSBAND MAY MAKE IT VOID." Notice! In God's sight it is the man's responsibility to establish or to rescind his wife's vow.

It is also the father's responsibility to establish or to rescind his daughter's vow. *Since the question of taking a vow involves the matter of responsibility, and since God is no respecter of persons, it is also the responsibility of the father to disannul or to approve HIS SON'S VOWS as well as those of his daughter.* Only when a boy reaches maturity does he become solely responsible for his own vows.

In the last portion of verse 14 God again makes it the man's responsibility to *confirm* his wife's vow. Many husbands, of course, do not recognize their responsibility. They have never been taught their responsibility in the matter of vows. Let us suppose, for example, that a husband who knew nothing about God's command in Numbers 30 *regarded his wife's vow*, at the time she made it, a *foolish vow*. He disapproved of it even though he did not know that he could rescind it. Later the knowledge of the truth comes to him. God opens his mind to see that it was his responsibility to rescind his wife's vow at the time she took it. Can he, at this later time, rescind it?

The answer is YES! Since it was his conviction that his wife's vow was foolish but he did not know he could annul it, then he may at that later date annul it once the knowledge of the truth is come. *He actually did so in PRINCIPLE when he first heard it. He is now merely FORMALIZING it!* But if he approved of his wife's vow at first HE CANNOT LATER CHANGE HIS MIND! His wife's vow is binding.

Ministers' Responsibility

Jesus gave His ministers the power to bind and to loose. This power includes the matter of deciding whether marriage *vows* are binding. Notice Jesus' teaching in Matthew 18:18, "Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

Not only has God made it a responsibility of a husband or a father to make binding decisions in matters of vows, but God also makes it a ministerial responsibility. God's ministers are Elders. They are called Elders because

they are *spiritually mature*. Most people are not spiritually mature. They are babes—not spiritually qualified to decide whether vows are binding. In many cases they cannot even discern if their vow is foolish or wise. God, then, makes it a ministerial responsibility to determine for those who are spiritually immature whether or not their vows are binding.

Even in the Old Testament the responsibility to make binding decisions was vested in the Elders and leaders of the community. Turn to Deuteronomy 17:8-11, "If there arise a matter too hard for thee in judgment . . . being matters of controversy, within thy gates; then thou shalt arise and get thee up into the place which the Lord thy God shall choose; and thou shalt come unto the priests the Levites, and unto the judge that shall be in those days, and inquire; and they shall show thee the sentence of judgment: and thou shalt do according to the sentence, which they of that place which the Lord shall choose shall show thee; and thou shalt observe to do according to all that they informed thee: according to the sentence of the law which they shall teach thee, and according to the judgment which they shall tell thee, thou shalt do: thou shalt not decline from the sentence which they shall show thee, to the right hand, or to the left."

God determines right from wrong. God reveals to his ministers, through examples in the Bible, when vows—or any matter of controversy—are binding. God, who is in heaven, has made it the responsibility of His ministers to make decisions for the people according to His law and the examples of Scripture.

Notice verse 11 especially. It is the responsibility of the leaders, the ministers, to act as God's servants and agents in determining whether vows are binding. If the ministers have determined that a vow is *not binding*, God then holds them—the ministers—responsible for having made that decision. The people are free from that responsibility. In like manner God holds the husband responsible for determining his wife's vow. His wife is free of responsibility when once the husband has rendered a decision. It is the husband whom God holds responsible. Or in the case of children, it is the father whom God holds responsible. The children are free from responsibility once the parent has exercised his responsibility.

The reason God makes certain people responsible for others in matters of vows is due to this important fact: most people are not spiritually mature enough to know when to vow and when

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"Around Ambassador"

*Here is news around the campus in Pasadena
from the student body president.*

by A. J. Portune

IN PASADENA, with the Sierra Madre mountains capped with new snow and the morning air filled with the crispness of winter, Ambassador students began the new spring semester.

Two weeks of welcomed rest from the routine of classes and the prospect of a "snow-line" field trip to the nearby winter snowland has given a new ZIP and zeal to the student body.

Each year at this time the students pile into buses for a day at the nearby mountains. Here in the southland, where snow falls only in the high passes and timberlands, an outing like this is a real treat. Snowballs, tobogganing, sandwiches, hot chocolate, bob-sledding and just plain sloshing—plus a real songfest going and coming on the buses—makes for an excellent beginning to the final semester.

Remember the talent show at the Feast of Tabernacles last fall? Well, those dimes and dollars you gave helped make this coming trip possible.

Ministerial Conferences

In the short two week semester break another annual ministerial conference has come and gone. Having all the ministers from the field "on campus" was a real blessing. Besides the jam-packed conference schedule, there were other scheduled activities to make these busy days even busier.

A report on the ministerial conferences will appear in the next issue of THE GOOD NEWS.

A high light of the conference was an evening for all the ministers at Mr. and Mrs. Armstrong's home. After a delightful buffet dinner, everyone enjoyed hearing an evening of splendid music. This evening was filled with many pleasant memories.

New Assembly Hall

Big news around the campus is the new *assembly hall!* It has been many years since all the students at College have been able to have their forums and assemblies in *ONE ROOM*. The growing student body long ago outgrew the main library room. For several years students have had to "overflow" into other rooms while others had to stand and peek around corners to see the speaker.

Last year, with the undergraduate student body up to 225 plus, even Ambassador Hall proved too small for weekly forums and assemblies. Students crowded

into two rooms for these occasions.

But, it's all past history now. For the past six weeks a crew of carpenters and student workmen have been remodeling a newly acquired building across from the lower gardens on Grove Street.

Mr. Armstrong, realizing the urgent need for an assembly hall, gave top priority to this project which is now complete. Ambassador College now has a fine temporary assembly hall for student forums, assemblies and other functions.

This new hall will accommodate up to 400 chairs and will be a much appreciated blessing for all.

Students & Alumni Going Overseas

With the work leaping ahead as never before, new overseas assignments are coming almost every month it seems. Robert C. Boraker, graduate student and head of the Letter Answering Department, has just been sent to initiate a much needed Letter Answering Department in London. He will augment the growing staff in England where the letters are pouring in from radio listeners and readers of the Readers' Digest. Nearly 4000 letters per month are coming from the Readers' Digest alone. Many letters need personal answers, and Mr. Boraker's years of experience in this Department will make him a valuable addition to the staff in London.

The office "down under" in Australia is also growing rapidly. The purchase of five ampex portable tape recorders for the reproduction of our own programs has required another full-time man for this special duty.

Mr. Charles Hefner—senior student—specially trained under Mr. Norman Smith for the past several months, has left by Pan American jet flight for the office in North Sydney. He will be responsible for the "dubbing" of all tapes for the networks in Australia. This is an important *full-time* job being filled by another Ambassador trained man. Even with the many students working, studying and training here at headquarters, the rapidly expanding work still requires more trained personnel than we seem able to supply.

Truly, it seems the harvest will always be more plentiful than the *qualified* laborers.

News Gathering Department

Another "first" is coming up in the News Gathering Department!

For the first time Ambassador College will have its own private *NEWS WIRE*.

The ever-growing import and scope of the *vital* News Gathering Department as the eyes and ears of God's work in these climactic times is becoming increasingly evident. To keep pace with the fast-breaking news stories a *direct* news wire from United Press International will soon be "clicking" out the news 24 hours a day. More *trained* students will be monitoring the news for those vital stories so significant to the unfolding of events of these end times.

To house the expanding facilities of this Department, a new three room office has been prepared and the whole Department was moved during the semester break. Besides the six full-time student employees in this Department, many students devote several hours a week of their free time for reading important publications and selecting important items to be preserved in our files.

Ambassador College Press Booms!

God's work is booming ahead in every direction. The phenomenal expansion of the work is being felt in every department. Ambassador College Press is no exception.

In 1958, according to count, 492,704 booklets were mailed from Pasadena. However, in 1959 the total jumped to 715,875 booklets—an increase of over 50%! This striking increase is an indication of things to come.

Continuing an increase of this scope, by 1965—in just five short years—the booklet volume will jump to 4,440,000.

Think of it!

Let's all pray that Ambassador College can supply the trained personnel for the mountainous task that lies ahead in this department and others in God's work.

Regular Good News Feature

Yes, Ambassador College at headquarters in Pasadena is throbbing with the busy activities of God's work. To keep you up-to-date on student activities and other important developments at Pasadena, this "Around Ambassador" column will be a regular feature of the "Good News" Magazine. We'll see you nearly every month with more interesting news and late developments.

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Herbert W. Armstrong
Publisher and Editor

Garner Ted Armstrong
Executive Editor

Herman L. Hoeh
Managing Editor

Roderick C. Meredith
Associate Editor

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Be sure to notify us immediately of
change of address.

Heart to Heart Talk with the Editor

SOME seem to think *God's* people never encounter difficulties, meet trials or tests, but are blessed continually with smooth sailing!

Because this great and important work of God, conducted through His called human servants, has had to survive a long and severe series of crises and tests of faith, a few used to conclude, "Well, if it has met with some trouble, and is in a crisis, I guess it isn't God's work after all. I guess God has deserted it." And then they proceeded promptly to desert it themselves, just when it needed their help the most!

Does the Bible teach smooth sailing for true Christians whom God is using? Did the men of God, whose lives pleased God, as recorded in the Bible, have only an easy time of it, or were they constantly meeting trials, tests, troubles of every sort—being continually forced to cry out to God for deliverance?

Listen to God's own instruction:

"MANY are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Eternal delivereth him out of them all" (Psalm 34:19).

"For I was envious of the arrogant, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. . . . They are not in trouble as other man. . . . Behold these are the ungodly who prosper in the world; they increase in riches. . . . For all the day long I have been plagued, and chastened every morning" (Ps. 73:3-14).

"We must through *much tribulation* enter the Kingdom of God" (Acts 14:22).

"All that will live godly in Christ Jesus *shall suffer persecution*" (II Tim. 3:12).

"If we SUFFER, we shall also reign with Him" (II Tim. 2-12).

"For as the *sufferings* of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ. And whether *we be afflicted*, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the *enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer*" (II Cor. 1:5-6).

But is God unfair? Does He hate Christians and punish them, while He loves the ungodly and prospers them? *Not at all!*

There is great purpose in the trials, tests, tribulations, and sufferings the Christian must endure. For these are the very means of strengthening CHARACTER—of developing fine, upstanding, strong Christians.

God does not *bless the ungodly* with wealth—they acquire it usually in one or both of two ways: by setting their heart and mind on acquiring it, and following through this purpose to the exclusion of all else, until without realizing it, the pursuit of MONEY becomes the pursuit of their god, destroying the soul; or by dishonest means.

But God does bless those who seek Him *first*—not always with great money wealth, but always, in the end, with material prosperity they never would have had otherwise. "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness," admonished Jesus, "and all these things (material prosperity in shelter, food, clothing, etc.) shall be added unto you." That is Jesus' PROMISE. God loves to see His servants prospering. So He says through David and John. He corrects and chastens every son whom He loves. He allows His true children to suffer much—to fall into troubles, difficulties, to face trials and tests for their strengthening. But if we *endure* these tests, hard though they may be—and if we seek *first* our God, His righteousness, and His Kingdom, putting material interests second in our hearts, then in His own due time God will always prosper His children even in a material way!

"But *we glory in tribulations* also: knowing that *tribulation worketh patience*" (Rom. 5:3). Therefore it produces GOOD in, and for us.

"My brethren, *count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations*"—alternate translation: "*trials*." "Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience" (Jas. 1:2-3).

"Beloved, think it not strange con-
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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Startled by Message

"I accidentally stumbled upon your program almost a year ago and was startled, delighted, and thrilled to hear God's truth as I had never heard it before. 'This is it!!!' I said to myself. 'Beyond a doubt these are the true prophets promised us in the last days to warn that the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.'"

Woman, Lancaster, Pennsylvania

"I Have Chosen God"

"Thank you so much for your inspiring messages which I hear over WPIT. Without them my day is incomplete. I've been reading and working trying to overcome myself. I've quit smoking, using lipstick, profanity, etc., and I'm earnestly trying to keep the Sabbath against much bitter dissent from my husband—an unbeliever. He's one of the evolutionists Garner Ted is talking about. I have chosen my course—now my husband says he will leave me if I continue this 'fanatic' way of mine . . . and take my 2 girls ages 2 and 6 from me when he leaves. He has offered all types of worldly bribes if I would turn my back on this and go back to the Presbyterian way of life. I said he was asking me to choose between him and God. Naturally I have chosen God . . ."

Woman from Pennsylvania

Enlarged Glands Healed

"I went to the Feast of Trumpets at Victoria, Texas, with a very painful condition of enlarged glands under my arms and asked Mr. Jon Hill to anoint me. I was healed instantly, and it has never returned."

Member from Texas

"Dear Mr. Armstrong:

"My twelve-year-old daughter has been a member of your Radio Church for about a year now. Her conversion occurred while staying with relatives in Grand Junction, Colorado. The influence of her new-found faith on her is an inspiration to me. It is my sincere desire to learn more of the belief so vital in her life. It was suggested that I send for two pamphlets in particular: 'Why Were You Born?' and 'Divorce and Remarriage.' I would appreciate them very much and hope to learn more through your radio programs."

Woman from Santa Rosa, Calif.

Editor's note: She hasn't been baptized but it is marvelous to note the change in this young person, and the way her light is inspiring others.

Your Part in God's Work

Thousands of you brethren have asked about this question. As Christ's own gospel encircles the world, the true answer becomes vitally important! You must KNOW—and ACT!

by Roderick C. Meredith

IS YOUR life literally filled with a dynamic, pulsating, driving PURPOSE? If not, WHY?

Your life *should be so packed* with interest and activity that you begrudge even the few hours which you necessarily must spend in bed asleep. Is your life that *exciting*? Is it full of that kind of *challenge*?

Whether you realize it or not, *your DESTINY* has been to be placed as a member of the most important *team* on earth! This *team* has the *most important job on earth to do*. Every single member is **VITALLY** needed! On offense and on defense, every position on this team is *important*.

There should **NEVER** be any "bench warmers" on this team. The rule book says that *every member must be an ACTIVE participant in the struggle*. Any member who lags too far behind or who quits will be *dropped* from the team roster. Victory *must* be achieved at all costs!

Christ's Body

The *body* of Jesus Christ is the "team" described.

The apostle Paul told the saints at Corinth, "Now ye are the *body* of Christ, and members in particular" (I Cor. 12:27). Except in Spirit, Jesus is not here on earth any more. The work He began *must* be carried on by others as *His human instruments*.

Jesus committed His work to His church to carry on. That is why Paul calls the church Christ's "body." It is the *organism* through which Christ can now carry out His work. To do this tremendous job, Christ's church must be totally *consecrated* to its calling. It must work with *dynamic ZEAL* and rely with implicit *faith* in the **POWER** of God Himself to remove otherwise impassable barriers.

You and I did not *ask* to be called at this crucial time, brethren. This is *God's doing*. We in God's Church cannot pat ourselves on the back for having had our minds opened to so much of God's precious *truth*.

On the other hand, we *dare not* shirk the solemn *responsibility* which comes with this knowledge. God has *called* us to be members of Christ's body—the *organism* through which the work of the gospel *must* be accomplished.

When *you* were baptized, your old "self" was symbolically *buried* in a watery grave. You acknowledged that Christ *paid for you*, and you *gave* your very **LIFE** to Him. If you are really converted, then "ye are **DEAD**, and your life is hid with Christ in God" (Col. 3:3).

You are no longer to think of your life, your time, and your talents as your *own* any more. Rather, you should regard them as *belonging to Jesus Christ*—who has bought and paid for your life with His perfect life. As the apostle Paul wrote, "For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (I Cor. 6:20).

Your body—your very *self*, then, should be given completely to God as an instrument through which He can work.

Have you ever thought of it that way? May God help you to do so if you ever intend to get into the kingdom of God! *You must prove your willingness to let God TOTALLY direct your life*.

Consider yourself, then, a member of Christ's *body*—a member of the most important *team* on earth.

Our Mission

In our day, Christ's church is called upon to *fulfill prophecy*. In describing the very *closing events* of this age just before His return, Jesus prophesied, "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come" (Mat. 24:14).

If we are Christ's church—His *body*, then we must yield ourselves completely to Him as instruments in carrying out this mission. In addition to this general commission, we must particularly warn *Israel* and other nations of their coming judgments for sin. And, when necessary, we must raise up churches and "feed the flock" who are already converted.

In carrying out this world-wide mission, a great many different kinds of talent must be employed, and a great deal of *sacrifice* must be made by each and every member of Christ's church. Some must sacrifice by giving their entire time and lives to this work. Others must give part of their time to active service, and employ the rest of their

time and talents in a manner which will aid further in carrying out the gospel.

Everyone in God's church must consider their part in the work of Christ as their highest calling—their *supreme PURPOSE in life*. Each must work, and study, and pray, and sacrifice *daily* to achieve this great purpose. The magnitude of this calling should *fill* every real Christian's life with a driving *purpose* and *zeal* in life.

Our *purpose* is to reach this **ENTIRE EARTH** with a vital message. It is the *only* message of real **HOPE** for a world which is on the verge of *total chaos*. Our mission is to act as *Ambassadors*—as representatives—of Christ, and to let Him use us in warning this world of approaching *doom*, and in telling them the *good news* of the world tomorrow.

If any member of Christ's body fails to bear his full share of the load, the accomplishment of this mission is impeded and delayed. If you are really in God's church and guided by His Spirit, you will recognize both the responsibility and the opportunity given you. How do you stack up to it? *Are you doing your full share?*

Important Jobs

As God opens more great **DOORS** for the proclaiming of His message, an increasing number of active positions in God's work continually open up to our young men and women who are being trained at Ambassador. But Jesus said, "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few" (Mat. 9:37). And the injunction to *pray* is more important today than ever: "Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest" (verse 38).

Yes, **PRAY** that God will provide the servants for His work! He *knows* the hearts of men—and He alone can *call* the ones with both the ability *and* the right spirit to fill positions in His ever-growing work. Are you praying as Jesus commanded?

Different Gifts

In Romans 12:1-8, the apostle Paul exhorts the saints at Rome, "Present your bodies a *living sacrifice*, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service" (verse 1). He goes on to instruct them not to become vain

over any spiritual gifts, but to remember that it was all "according as *God* hath dealt to every man the measure of faith" (verse 3).

Paul reminds them that they "are *one body* in Christ" (verse 5).

He then speaks of their various opportunities for service as *gifts*. *What are these opportunities for actively serving God?* Do we have these opportunities today?

Paul first mentions the gifts pertaining to the *ministry*. These involve a special calling of God and special training such as all of God's servants had. God has opened up Ambassador College in our day to provide the trained ministry needed in this world-wide gospel crusade by radio and the printing press. We should all *pray earnestly* that God will send here those whom *He* has called for His work.

Teaching is the next gift Paul mentions. As local churches are formed, elders who *understand* and can *teach* the Word of God are needed. Paul was inspired to write Timothy, "This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop (or elder), he desireth a good work" (1 Tim. 3:1). An elder must meet all the scriptural requirements, and prove himself worthy of this trust. He must be "apt to *teach*." But he may rejoice in being privileged to actively serve in the Church of God.

The next gift mentioned in Romans 12 is that of *exhortation*. This is a gift particularly employed by the ministry, but also should be exercised by the local elders, teachers, and even brethren who should be "exhorting one another" to be faithful as we see the day of Christ's return approaching (Heb. 10:25).

All these gifts mentioned here fit into the same pattern as those described in 1 Corinthians 12. But in this particular chapter (Romans 12) Paul is describing these functions of service to explain *how* we may present our bodies a "living sacrifice" as He commanded in verse one. Real Christians, then, are to devote their very *lives* as a *living sacrifice* in zealously exercising these gifts. These are the *ways* in which we can be active instruments in God's hands.

Now we come to another most important gift. It is also a precious opportunity for *active service* to God. It is a gift which many of you brethren have been *failing* to exercise when you could! It is a *VITAL* gift. It *MUST* be *understood* and *zealously employed* if we are to continue to be God's instruments in carrying His message to all the world!

The Neglected Gift

You brethren may not realize it, but even after we are converted most of us still have a *wrong* sense of values. This

is replaced only *gradually* by God's standard. We have to *study* and to be taught God's Word for a long time before we come to have the mind of Christ in viewing material objects and circumstances.

That is *precisely* why most of us have not understood and leaped at the chance to exercise the next gift mentioned in Romans 12.

Paul commands: "He that GIVETH, let him do it with simplicity" (verse 8). All modern translations show that "simplicity" should be translated *liberality*.

Yes, God inspired the apostle Paul to write that GIVING was a definite part of the spiritual ministry. He describes this opportunity for service as a "gift" from God. The *giver*, Paul says, is to be LIBERAL.

Why haven't most of you ever thought of it in this light before?

HERE'S WHY! The America we have all grown up in has been described as "the most materialistic nation on earth." In this capitalistic society, we have learned to lust for *money* and the *material things* money will buy. We almost unconsciously look with suspicion on any religious or charitable enterprise that calls on us to contribute, but doesn't offer an immediate *material* result in return.

Whether you realize it or not, *money*—and the *material things* it will buy—has become the GOD of most Americans. Many visitors from foreign nations notice this and remark about it.

And GOD knows it too! In Malachi 3:6-12, God speaks to the "sons of Jacob"—to America and Britain today—to you! "Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In *tithes* AND OFFERINGS" (verse 8).

Tragic as it seems, brethren, a few of you, who have actually been baptized and supposedly converted, changed, and filled with God's Holy Spirit, have been FAILING to heed this solemn warning to modern Israel! *Some* of you have failed to pay your *full tithe* regularly to the *only* work which is carrying Christ's message to the world.

Many of you have failed to give *offerings* according as God has blessed you. You have failed to obey God's command to give LIBERALLY.

Because of human tendency to worship money and regard it as your "security," many have failed to exercise their God-given "gift" of GIVING generously of their perishable material treasure that God's work might reach all of suffering humanity. You just haven't thought of this function as a special "gift"—a special *opportunity* and *responsibility* to *actively* serve God.

Should We Apologize?

Should God's ministers have to apologize for the necessity of telling you these vital truths? Should we feel like scoundrels for showing you what *God* says about the use you should make of your material wealth? Should we feel *guilty*?

Just who is *GUILTY*?

Frankly, brethren, although Mr. Armstrong knows he has to, he *hates* to have to write urgent co-worker letters asking for money for God's work.

But should he get out of the ministry to make money? Would this help God's work?

All of you brethren should well know by the "fruits" that God has *called* Mr. Armstrong to a job in this work which is growing so big it is more than he can *humanly* take care of. But who has God *called* to help provide the money which is so necessary in carrying out His work?

As God's work now reaches out to all inhabited continents with increasing power, Mr. Armstrong and *all* of God's servants in this work have *much more to do than can humanly be accomplished*. We feel *whipped* and *beaten* at times by the staggering load of work which we face each day. We have to ask God for more strength and faith to carry our load.

But beloved brethren, we *CANNOT* carry your load as well!

You must understand *your part* in exercising the "gift" of *giving* and the other gifts and functions you may perform in God's church. And you must ACT with *zeal* and *faith*!

So be cognizant of the *extreme importance* of exercising the gift of GIVING.

However, at *all* times perform *diligently* and *zealously* those functions which you can in God's work. God may be using your zeal in those duties as a gauge of what you *could* do if a greater responsibility were placed on your shoulders. Jesus said, "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much" (Luke 16:10).

It is our solemn RESPONSIBILITY to shoulder the financial burden of proclaiming God's message to all nations. But it is also our great *privilege*, if we will only understand Jesus' words, "It is more blessed to GIVE than to receive" (Acts 20:35). He set the example by giving His very *life* for you and me.

Here's How

But we are to present our bodies as a "living sacrifice." One way some of our more zealous brethren have *glorified* God in exercising the gift of *giving* is this: Realizing that their tithes and offerings (Please continue on page 12)

The Australian Office Open at Last!

Read how God was in charge of circumstances which led up to the opening of our office in the land "down under" at a most significant time!

by Gerald Waterhouse

Room Number 7 in the "MCL" Building, North Sydney, December 24th, 1959:

GREETINGS, brethren of the Church of God throughout the world in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour and the HEAD of this Church, from the land "down under"—Australia!

This greeting is being typed in the wonderful new office God opened up for us here in Sydney. In fact, this is the first work I am privileged to do in my new office and this is being done on a most significant date—December 24th!

This date was specifically chosen by God as the day in which He would open up this office to us! Why? Yes, why did God choose the 24th instead of the 23rd or some other day in this month? And, why was it God's will that this work commence from this place in December, the twelfth month?

These questions are important, you need to know the answers! The answers help to prove just how powerful and active the HEAD of this Church, Jesus Christ, is! Here is further proof of how aware God is of His Work and those of us through whom He is now working.

Why Relate This Information?

Brethren, do you know that God wants us to come to know more about the Body of Jesus Christ, His Church, and the work He is doing through it so we can come to trust Him more? Yes, so we may know more for which we can praise our Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ! This has always been true.

For this reason, Paul reported to the different churches those things which God had done through him. You can read how Paul rehearsed various deeds God had done through him for the churches in Acts 14:27 and Acts 15:4. In these accounts, Paul explained how God had done many things through him and had opened up a door to the Gentiles. As a result, the people came to understand more of the great God they were serving. And, since God the Father and Jesus Christ don't change, they want us to follow these examples. Consequently, you need to know the many times God has miraculously intervened to open this door in Australia and how these interventions have left a continual flow of SIGNS which placed His "stamp of

approval" on this very work of which YOU are a part.

What Kind of Signs Today?

God promised that signs would follow His true people today (Mark 16:18). But, since the conditions under which we serve are so different from the early New Testament Church, the signs aren't always the same. We are not going through wildernesses in which we are exposed to serpents as was true with Paul and others (Acts 28:3). Neither are we, at present, placed in circumstances where we would be exposed to poisonous drink, nor are we going about raising up the dead which would bring quick persecution on the church in this time when God is getting the Gospel out to the whole world as a WITNESS to all nations.

No! God isn't giving the signs to prove to the OUTSIDER that we are His servants. This was done more before the Scriptures were fully written and committed to the Church. Now, it is a matter of their believing what we proclaim is in the Bible BY CHECKING IT FOR THEMSELVES. The one thing God is going to require of everyone is to come to rely on His Word INSTEAD of on physical circumstances. Today, the whole world is relying on every external thing imaginable instead of on God's Word. Therefore, the signs God is giving today are not for the outsider but for us who have already proved from His Word that He *is* and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently serve Him.

God Controls Circumstances

In the past, I have heard Mr. and Mrs. Armstrong relate many of their experiences of how God made it possible for them to make a train, ship or plane at the very last minute or meet a deadline in spite of how hopeless and impossible it may have appeared. Little did I realize, when hearing these wonderful experiences related, that I, too, would have the privilege to experience things of a similar nature.

But, in setting up the Australian office, God had in mind ways of leading Mr. Ted Armstrong, Mr. Frank Longuskie and me through circumstances which would not only demonstrate His

might, power, wisdom and continual guidance but would also force us to learn to more fully rely on Him for our every need. God brings these seemingly impossible circumstances about to make us rely on Him and not on ourselves—to strengthen our faith! (II Cor. 1:8-10). At the very outset of our trip to Australia, God had a few such trials planned for us. Let me tell you about our first real big trial and how God delivered us through seemingly impossible circumstances and the great joy experienced by us once God had delivered us.

A Change in Flights Planned

Originally, we were scheduled to leave Los Angeles for Honolulu at 2:00 p.m., on November 9th. However, this would not have been significant numerically; therefore, God caused circumstances to arise which forced us to change our plans so that He could work out the wonderful numerical patterns as a sign to His Church that He is directly in control of things.

How did He bring this about? The answer is amazing! Here it is.

God saw that the Australian Consular Office in San Francisco did not issue us visas in time to make possible the scheduled flight out of Los Angeles. This happened in spite of all of our human efforts. Mr. Ted Armstrong made several long distance telephone calls to the Australian Consular Office in San Francisco, but to no avail. They would not issue us visas to enter Australia for business purposes until they received authorization from Canberra, the Capital of Australia, in response to a letter Mr. Ted Armstrong had sent them several weeks before. This authorization had not come in spite of the fact that Mr. Armstrong sent a cable which was followed by a long distance telephone conversation with an official in Canberra.

By Monday morning, November 9th, it was too late for the San Francisco office to notify the British Consular Office in Los Angeles to issue our visas in time to make our flight. We made a quick change in our plans. We boarded the first plane to San Francisco, to contact the Australian Consular Officials in person. If visas could be issued Mon-

day afternoon in time to catch a Jet flight out of San Francisco that evening, we still could connect with the same flight we were scheduled to pick up in Honolulu. This flight to San Francisco was made on faith. Mr. Ted Armstrong first called the Consular Office in San Francisco by telephone. They advised us not to come. They had not received authorization at that time.

However, we were determined. We were trusting God to work out circumstances. We knew that if this flight were missed it might be weeks before reservations for three could again be made for Australia.

In God's Plan, certain numbers have great significance. It seems incredible, but notice the amazing recurrence of God's significant numbers.

The flight to San Francisco left the airport in Los Angeles at 12:00 noon and the flight was United 624 which adds to 12. Why is the number twelve important?

The number 12 is used throughout the Bible by God in reference to *entering into* a growing work or project. There were the twelve tribes of Israel and the twelve disciples. Each of these groups of twelve was a group which God used in *commencing* a great work—the nation Israel and the Church. In this era of the Church, God caused Mr. Armstrong to purchase the Pasadena campus in the *twelfth year* of the broadcasting work, to *commence an expansion of this work* which is encircling the earth today! So, the number twelve signifies a *beginning!*

Very evidently, God wanted to show us that this initial flight from Los Angeles was to be the very *beginning* of a sizable work here in Australia. A great deal to follow will clearly demonstrate this. Right now, however, let us go on with what happened after we left Los Angeles at this vital hour of *twelve* and on a flight which added up to *twelve*.

When we entered the office of the clerk in San Francisco, about 2:45 p.m., she informed us that authorization from Canberra had arrived! Immediately, we thought our problem had been solved. However, the clerk informed us that it would be impossible for them to issue us visas that afternoon. We were told that Mr. Longuskie and I would have to have medical examinations by a recognized physician and have X-rays made of our chests by a specialist. Not only were we to obtain reports on these two examinations but we were also to produce the X-ray film. In addition, all of this had to be accomplished in time for us to be back in her office by 4:30 p.m. the same afternoon!

This appeared impossible. By the

time we had completed filling in several required forms, it was about 3:30 p.m. That left us only one hour to locate a physician, receive medical examinations, and find an X-ray Specialist who could take X-rays, produce a report and the films. The lady clerk said it would be utterly impossible. Believing this, she committed herself by saying she would process the applications if all of the requirements could be met and we were back in her office by 4:30 p.m. We were determined, trusting God to intervene.

We left the Australian Consular Office about 3:30 p.m. with the telephone number of a physician given to us by this clerk. Whether or not she deliberately planned this we don't know, but she gave us a wrong prefix to the number of the physician. But God intervened by enabling Mr. Armstrong to contact an operator who immediately gave him the right number!

God must have given us favor in this physician's eyes because he not only agreed to rush these medical examinations through but also informed Mr. Armstrong that he would contact a friend of his—who was in the same Medical Arts Building—who was an X-ray Specialist. If he could take us for X-rays immediately, we could go by there, get the X-rays, then come on up to his office for our medicals while the X-ray film were being dried and the reports made out. (It just so happened that this X-ray Specialist had just installed new machines three months earlier which dries X-ray film in *five minutes*; with the old machines, it took hours. This had to be the type specialist God would lead us to or we could not have had this requirement fulfilled within the one hour limit—providential?)

When these things were done, we had *only about ten minutes* to get out of the Medical Arts Building, through several blocks of pedestrians at such a busy time of the afternoon, and up to the fourth floor of the building in which the Consulate is located, in order to meet the deadline! Mr. Longuskie did some of his dressing—putting on his tie and coat—while on the run! We literally ran at every opportunity.

There is a good object lesson for all of us in this. We must strive to enter the Kingdom of God. That means there is a lot we must do ourselves and not just expect God to do it all for us—God does for us what we are unable to do for ourselves. We must have the zeal of the Eternal motivating us at all times. We must get this Gospel out to this entire world within just a few more years.

There is no time to just wait until everything is nice and convenient and

then "walk through the door."

By the time we reached the Consular Office we were breathing very rapidly!

BUT, with God's help, we made it on time!

It was exactly 4:30 p.m. What would normally take several hours or days—to get appointments with two leading professional men, get X-rays with film and reports, get written medical examinations, etc., in a strange city where most people have to wait for hours, quite often, just to see a physician—God made possible in just one hour! Brethren, do you see God's hand in this? That clerk thought it would be impossible!

She had a look of astonishment on her face when she saw us return and heard the words "we have everything completed and here with us" come from us! Since she had already committed herself, she had to process our applications or "lose face."

You can imagine, I am sure, the great joy and happiness we shared afterward and how we could praise God for what He had done.

On Our Way at Last

At about 1:30 a.m., November 10th, we were finally aboard a Qantas Airlines Boeing 707 Jet, heading for Honolulu, Canton, Fiji and SYDNEY! The long-awaited time had arrived, it was now apparent that God's time had come to open up an office in Australia. When we left Los Angeles, we were not absolutely sure that God was going to make a way possible for this trip to materialize. We were just going *on faith* and if God showed us through circumstances that the trip was to be deferred for awhile, a trip back to Pasadena would be made where we would wait until God opened up the way by seeing that visas were issued.

However, God knew from the outset that He was going to open up the way for us to acquire visas and be on our way by the morning of the 10th. We know this *now* as we look back on the events as they transpired and see that God set the *pattern of twelves* through our flight from Los Angeles to San Francisco (by making it possible for us to leave at exactly 12:00 noon and on flight 624—a number which totals twelve—) instead of on the flight from San Francisco to Sydney.

Because of our limited understanding of what God's will was, we thought the flight from San Francisco was the initial flight. Actually, it was not until we arrived in Sydney and looked back on our trip that we discerned the flight out of Los Angeles was the real *beginning* of the trip.

God Delays Flight

God *governs* this universe and its inhabitants! He inspired Solomon to write, "The king's heart is a stream of water in the hand of the Lord; he turns it wherever he will" (Prov. 21:1 RSV). As we look back on the various delays our plane had, we can see that God was causing men to do just what He had purposed. The plane was delayed about two hours in London due to fog before we boarded it in San Francisco. After we were aboard, there were several more delays. When we landed in Honolulu and had regained our scheduled time, we expected to board the plane again and continue our flight.

But, time kept passing until there was an announcement made that the plane would be delayed. Repairs were necessary on the radio antennae. Finally, they managed to complete the repairs and we were on our way—after about a four or five hour delay.

Our next stop was on Canton Island. We had a brief stop on this coral reef in the Pacific. Here, we went out on a pontoon pier and became so absorbed in the various fish we could spot in the beautifully clear water that we remained a little longer than we realized. Because of this, *we* were almost the cause of *another* delay! We made it to the plane just as an announcement was being made for the missing passengers to come aboard!

From Canton Island, our next stop was at the Nandi Airport on the Island of Fiji. This was a very interesting place and we were taken on a short sight-seeing tour in the vicinity of the airport. This seemed to be a special trip which isn't ordinary practice of the airlines. And, after the short tour, we were given additional refreshments—they were *needed*, as Fiji is *very* warm and humid.

Later, when the passengers had drunk their refreshments and were becoming very restless by not hearing a call to return to the plane, there was an announcement made to the effect that the plane would be delayed approximately *fourteen hours* due to difficulty with some of the landing-gear apparatus! In order to repair the landing gear properly, Qantas Airlines was sending a mechanic from Sydney to do the job. Because of the time it would take for him to reach Fiji and perform the work, we would not be able to leave before 7 a.m. the following day. As a result of this delay, Qantas was very busy providing us with an afternoon meal and finding hotel rooms for all of the passengers in the nearby towns.

After a few frustrating circumstances,

we were sent by taxi to the Lautoka Hotel in Lautoka, a city about forty miles from Nandi.

In this city, we spent a very interesting evening and night before returning to the plane the following morning at 7 a.m. It was at this hotel in Lautoka that a very amusing incident occurred which some of the brethren in California heard related by Mr. Ted Armstrong after his return from Sydney. When we were finished with the main course of our dinner and were looking over the menu for a dessert, Mr. Ted Armstrong noticed that one item listed was called "angels on horseback." Just to see what sort of dish they would serve under such a name way out in the Pacific, he decided to order these "angels on horseback." When he was served, we were so amused at what we saw that we had to laugh! For on his plate, we beheld this fantastic concoction—"angels on horseback"! What were they?

They were little clam or muscle-type sea animals, similar to an oyster but darker, wrapped in bacon! The looks of this hideous concoction and the expression on the face of Mr. Armstrong when he received this instead of what he thought might be some sort of an ice cream and fruit dish was more than can be described on paper. Suffice it to say that it was all so comical to us that we had to take these "things" up to our room so Mr. Longuskie, the "official" photographer, could take *pictures* of them to show some of the brethren back home! And, in the process of this picture taking (which we were really enjoying), a native maid came in to take down the mosquito netting. She almost didn't stay to perform her job when she beheld Mr. Longuskie stretched out on the bed with his camera *on top of the trash can* which was turned *upside down* on the bed—to steady the camera for a long exposure shot—*taking a picture* of these "angels on horseback." They were on a small table under a lamp beside the bed. Had we been able to take a picture of the expression of this maid when she entered (In Fiji the doors to the rooms were covered with drapes and the employees were very informal about coming into the rooms—this lady just came in without knocking—it might have proved just as interesting as the "angels on horseback.")

Australia at Last

On the morning of the *12th* of November, we left Nandi at about 7:30 a.m. for Sydney, arriving here at about 9:30 a.m.—the flight took four hours, but there is a time change of two hours between Fiji and Sydney.

Yes, on the *12th* of November, a date *worked out by God* so that this amazing *pattern of twelves* could continue. Little did we realize when these delays were occurring that they were being brought about by Almighty God. However, as we took a retrospective look, we could see that these delays must have been *God's doing* or the perfect *pattern* would not have been worked out.

God does see fit to work out many incidents *according to a numerical pattern* to give us more assurance He is with us in what is being done—especially, when it is a work in a new area. We don't go around looking for numerical patterns, but when they are noticed it is surely comforting to know God is with us in what is being done.

Before explaining the events as they have occurred in Australia, I want to say right here that things were done quicker and in a far greater manner than I had even imagined, much less expected. But, you will see as these events are related that God goes far beyond what we expect. That is why He inspired Paul to write, "Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" (Eph. 3:20).

The day after we arrived, we had an interview with Mr. R. K. Harris, the Superintendent of Country Broadcasting Services for Amalgamated Wireless Australasia (AWA)—the company through which we acquire radio time. From Mr. Harris we learned many vital things to help us better understand the situation here in Australia, as well as about reputable concerns which we could contact. God seems to always make it possible for His servants to meet *just the right people* to make possible the furtherance of *His Work!* Too, by the time we arrived, God had opened exactly 12 radio stations to six nights a week broadcasting—another pattern to better demonstrate God's wisdom, power and guidance over His Work as He carries it out through us on this earth.

Following this first full day of activity in Sydney, we were privileged to keep our first Sabbath in Australia, the first one kept in Australia by any of God's people from His Headquarters!

The two following weeks were filled with activity. We were blessed with a new automobile, a Holden Station Sedan, which is absolutely necessary to carry out our work here, and a car that couldn't have been purchased so easily had we not had Mr. Harris of "AWA" as a business reference. During the second week, God moved swiftly in

bringing us to just the right building in which He had chosen that His office be established—"The Mutual Life and Citizens' Assurance Company Limited," referred to as the "MLC" Building.

I was almost staggered when we first came to this building as I saw the many, many advantages it offered that I didn't know even existed in Sydney. Advantages which I saw were vital to effectively carry out God's Work over here and ones which were not so conveniently situated for us when in London. Right here, I saw that many hours could be saved by being located in such a nice building, situated close to a post office and a bank—both *just across the street* from the "MLC" Building! Not only did we have a post office and bank ideally situated but we also had a garage in the basement of the building which would solve our problems of coping with the critical parking problem existing here.

Another great blessing in being given this building is that it is out of the very heavily congested business district of Sydney, just across the harbor; yet, we can easily reach the center of Sydney by train in about ten minutes. Our office space was opened to us in the 12th month and on the 24th day of that month (2x12)!

Mr. Ted Armstrong arrived with us on November 12th and he left us on November 24th (2x12)—he was in Australia exactly 12 days! And, to show his work in coming to Australia was completed or had been brought to perfection, God worked it out so that he arrived back in Pasadena from Hawaii on December 28th (4x7)—a pattern of 7's! Could these amazing patterns be just coincidental?

We went to the post office in North Sydney, requesting box number 111. We learned, however, that this number was taken by a business which would probably not want to give it up. Too, we learned that they don't pronounce it "one, one, one" over here as we do in the United States but, rather, "one, double one." Because of this factor along with knowing box 111 was taken, we were trying to decide *which number* would be most suitable when, all of a sudden, a clerk called us over in a most enthusiastic manner, explaining that he had a box number we would probably want and one which would be very easy for people to remember—box 345! Several things must have flashed through Mr. Ted Armstrong's mind, for he readily accepted the box—such things as, this is an easy number to remember and it *adds up to 12*. After we left the post office, we continued our discussion of what we thought the

size of the work over here might be, when, all of a sudden, it seemed to come to all of us that God had given us this box number—a number which adds up to 12—as an indication we are entering into a sizable work here in Australia! Let us all pray that this is exactly what God *was* showing us!

It was just a few minutes after this on the 24th of November, and just a short while before Mr. Ted Armstrong was scheduled to leave for Honolulu that we started discussing numerics while eating our last meal together. During our discussion, some of these very things about which I am now writing *started* to come to us one right after the other. It wasn't that we were thinking along this line and trying to figure something out during the twelve days Mr. Armstrong was with us. It just seemed that God kept our minds off these things until the *very last moment* and then let us see their significance.

Brethren, can your minds fathom the greatness of the Head of this Church, Jesus Christ? Can you see how *active* He has been in establishing this Australian work? These numerical patterns have been but a small demonstration of God's concern for His work *and for us* as we strive to let Him use us. Yes, Christ is concerned about fulfilling His Father's commission of getting the Gospel of the Kingdom of God to this whole world, as a *witness* to all nations, THROUGH US, before the end of this age comes! Through ALL OF US! I say *all* of us because *you* are a vital part of this Body through which Almighty God is working! *Your* prayers, tithes, offerings and good examples are vital

to this work! You must recognize *your part* and be busy performing it! Prayer is a vital *work* each one of us must be busily performing *day and night* until we are finally in God's holy Kingdom!

My last Sabbath in Pasadena, California was one in which I was privileged to give the sermon. My sermon was on "PRAYER" because I was very conscious of how much the prayers of the entire Church meant to the success of this work God was sending us to open up in Australia! In this sermon, I read where Aaron was required to take "his hands full of sweet incense beaten small" when he entered the Holy of Holies to appear before God (Lev. 16:12). This was a type of the heavenly things (Heb. 8:4-5). This "sweet incense" which Aaron took before God pictured the prayers of the saints as they are offered up through Jesus to our Heavenly Father (Rev. 5:8 and Rev. 8:3). This shows us that as saints of God we must be praying people! But what kind of prayers are they to be? They must be "sweet" or offered up with thanksgiving and joy (Phil. 1:4 and 4:6). And, in addition to being offered up with thanksgiving and joy, they must be "beaten small"—that is, in detail, covering all the needs of the Work of God, and thanking God in a joyful manner for those things He has done for His Work and for all of us. Are you doing your part in fulfilling this responsibility God has committed to you as a member of the Body of Jesus Christ?

A few days after we were here and had witnessed how God had led us to just the right people—how we were given favor in the eyes of those with whom we dealt—how an office and home were opening up, Mr. Ted Armstrong turned to me in our hotel room one evening and said, "The people back home are really taking heed to your sermon. They are really offering up prayers which are beaten fine."—He went on to say, "They are really praying for all of our needs over here, the results prove it!" Yes, we three can truly see what it means to have a praying church behind us when we go to distant areas of this world to carry out the work of God! It is very reassuring to have this confidence of mind when one is in a place where he is constantly in need of the interventions of Almighty and All-powerful God.

PLEASE! Don't YOU ever be one who *fails* to shoulder *his part* of this great load we have been called to carry! Let us forever keep in mind what God has done for us. *Let's remember how mighty are His WONDERS* (Dan. 4:3).



Garner Ted Armstrong and Gerald Waterhouse on pier in lagoon on Canton Isle on their way to Australia.

Question Box

Your questions answered in these columns! Your opportunity to have discussed those problems pertaining directly to members of God's Church.

How Should a Christian Woman Obey Her Unconverted Husband?

This question has troubled many women who have been called to a knowledge of the truth *before* their husbands have been called. They are faced with a tremendous problem which may cause much needless worry and anxiety until the plain teaching of the Bible concerning this subject is understood.

In Ephesians 5:22-23, we read: "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: . . ."

Does this apply to you if your husband is *unconverted*?

Here is the Biblical answer. "Likewise, ye wives, be in *subjection* to your own husbands; that, IF ANY OBEY NOT THE WORD, they also may *without the word* be won by the conversation of the wives" (I Pet. 3:1).

If your husband doesn't understand the truth, you must not try to convert him by constantly repeating your belief and by insisting that he listen to the broadcast or read the literature. That will only drive him further away from the truth. Rather, you should wait until he questions you concerning a certain truth. Then you should be prepared to give a convincing Biblical explanation.

Peter further instructs Christian women: "Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a *meeek* and *quiet spirit*, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner in the old time the holy

women also, who trusted God, adorned themselves, being in *subjection* unto their own husbands" (I Pet. 3:3-5).

Certainly, controversies will come up in families if they disagree on religion. In such a case, the wife must obey God rather than her husband. For example, if the husband wishes his wife to break the Sabbath day by doing the family shopping on Saturday, or by attending a football game or movie with him, she should refuse to do so. However, she should explain in a very *kind* way that the Sabbath is the day God commanded us to keep holy. She should, in such a case, *obey God rather than man*. Yet, she should *always* be submissive in attitude toward her husband and obey her husband when his authority does *not* conflict with the higher authority or law of God.

Remember, the wife should be in subjection to her husband *even though he may not be converted*. Though he may never be converted in this life (I Cor. 7:12-16), yet if she obeys him and respects him as the Bible commands, he will in turn love and respect her. As a result, he may be won over by her good example. He may be inspired to want to obey the truth when he sees the life she is living. (I Pet. 3:1). In any event, her constant love and respect, and her cheerful recognition of her husband's rightful place as head of the house will result in them both living a happier and fuller life together at this present time.

All of you wives need to respect and submit to your husbands as the Bible commands. This is God's *way*—the *Christian way*. Most women have not understood this subject, and much unhappiness has resulted. Ask God to help you honor your husband as you should.

turned His tithe over for the work of His ministers in His Church. Any false church which masquerades as the True Church of God and requires the tithe of its people is obtaining that tithe under fraud and false pretense. Such a vow is fraudulently obtained and not binding. Tithes should be paid to God through His true called representatives.

But suppose you vow to donate a certain sum of money, as an offering, to a youth center. Is such a vow binding? There is nothing directly stated in the Bible forbidding the building of youth centers. Your donation may do some good for young boys and girls who might otherwise become delinquents. Perhaps now that you understand far more of the truth you would not have made the donation in the first place, but since your vow was not in itself sin, you are bound to keep your vow. (Compare this with the principle in Psalm 15:4, last part.) Now let us take another example.

A young man finds that the fellows with whom he has kept company drink beer to excess. After becoming interested in religion he decides he will never again touch beer. He makes a vow to that effect. Is such a vow binding? If the young fellow is away from home, earning his own living and is responsible directly to himself, that vow is binding. Of course, if he were a young fellow at home and his father was responsible for the family, then it could become his father's decision to rescind the vow. But if the father did not disapprove when hearing of it, that vow would become binding.

Now another person may take a vow never to touch any alcoholic beverages at any time. This person may have heard his minister state that "wine is a sin"! According to the teaching of the Bible, wine is not a sin. The *wrong use* of wine is a sin. Jesus used wine at the Passover. The true New Testament Church always uses wine at the Passover or communion service. Since it is a spiritual requirement that we should take a little wine in remembrance of Christ's blood shed for our sins, the person taking a foolish vow never to touch alcoholic beverages is *not required by God to keep that vow*. God's ministry has the power to rescind such a vow since the ministers are spiritually mature enough to know what God requires. The person taking such a vow was misled by spiritual immaturity. He did not know what God required. He thought that any use of alcoholic beverages was a sin. That was a mistake. God can forgive his rash vow.

Here is another common example. With more zeal than wisdom, some men and women vow never to cut

Should You VOW?

(Continued from page 2)

not to vow. It is to safeguard them that God made parents responsible for children, husbands responsible for wives and the ministers responsible for God's Church. God makes it the responsibility of those who are spiritually more mature to judge matters for those who are spiritually less mature.

Some of you may have taken vows. Are those vows binding? Here are some

examples which show how God judges the taking of vows.

Specific Examples

Let us suppose that before you became converted you vowed to give your tithe to a Church which you later found was not God's Church. Is that vow binding? Consider. The tithe is God's. It belongs to Him. God has

their hair. Let us take the case of a woman who vows never again to cut her hair. Is such a vow binding? Let us suppose this woman is married to a *converted* man. If her husband does not disapprove of her vow, that vow is binding. If her husband disapproves, it is not binding. But it happens in many cases that women are married to *unconverted* husbands. If her unconverted husband when he hears of the vow doesn't disapprove, it becomes binding. Now suppose the woman were living alone. According to Numbers 30 she is held responsible for her vow. The vow is binding. There is no commandment in the Bible which *requires* a woman to cut her hair. God's ministers then have no authority to rescind her vow.

But suppose a man vows never to cut his hair and beard. Is such a vow binding? Notice the example that Paul gives us in the New Testament. "Doth not even nature itself teach you, that, if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him? But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering" (I Cor. 11:14-15).

Here is the New Testament teaching. It is proper for a woman to have long hair, but it is a *shame* for a man to have long hair. In speaking of those who wear long hair, Paul states: "*We have no such custom, neither the churches of God*" (verse 16). It is not the custom in the ministry or the New Testament Church of God for a man to wear long hair. It is a shame to any man and a reproach to God before the world. It is the responsibility of God's ministers to enforce the practice that no man wear long hair in God's Church because it is a shame to do so. It therefore is the responsibility of God's ministers who are spiritually mature to rescind the vow of any man who has vowed never to cut his hair and beard. This man's vow is not binding in God's sight. In Old Testament times, men of course were permitted to wear long hair under certain circumstances (Num. 6). In the New Testament, according to Acts 18:18, the Jew Aquila wore long hair for a temporary period of time. The Jews in New Testament times were *allowed* to continue certain of the temporary customs of the law of Moses. Apart from this one particular permission granted to the Jews for a limited period of time, the Church of God has no such custom. Men are not to wear long hair today.

Yes, it's high time we understood the matter of vowing. God does not require us to take a vow. It is far better not to vow than to vow and not perform. Most people make rash vows.

They are not mature enough to know what kind of vow is a wise vow. Since God does not require a vow, God's ministers today can never recommend that you take a vow. But if you have taken a vow and your vow is binding, *you must perform it!*

Your Part In God's Work

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ferings were a most important part of their active service to God, they have sought to work extra hours or to get extra part-time work, and have in every *right and honest* way possible sought to employ their talents and abilities to *earn more money to put into the work of God!*

May God bless them for it!

Carnal men are always scheming to make more money in every way possible. They will miss sleep, meals, and drive themselves on because they worship *Mammon*.

How many Christians will show the same ZEAL in earning money to give to *Christ*?

Will YOU?

This is plain talk, brethren, but the time has come when those of you who are in God's own church should be told these things. God's servants around the world are doing our best to give ourselves *completely* to God in carrying out our part in His growing work. *Now all of you must do the same!*

We cannot count on outsiders or even our unconverted co-workers to put forth this kind of effort. But you converted brethren should have the *Spirit* and *power* of God to inspire you to shoulder more of the load!

Mr. ARMSTRONG has spent many sleepless nights in concern and in earnest prayer during the seemingly impossible financial struggles God's work has had to go through. He has forced himself to write co-workers letters when he wished and prayed that it wouldn't be necessary. And God has *always* delivered His work!

But as this age draws to a close and God's work suddenly expands to the ends of the earth, *we must have more of you brethren with your whole HEARTS in this work.*

Our Lord and Master said, "Where your *treasure* is, there will your *heart* be also" (Mat. 6:21).

God grant that each of you will put your whole *mind* and *heart* into God's service, and present your *bodies* a "living sacrifice" to Him in every way. Earnestly seek how you may best serve God in a

more active manner and be an instrument He can use.

Neglect not the gift of GIVING. It is *vital* at this time. Take this as *your* opportunity and responsibility in God's work. Seek to exercise it more effectively. Go to *extra effort* and *sacrifice* for Christ! *There is no greater purpose in life.*

Hear, and understand, and ACT, that you may be worthy of Jesus' words: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

Heart to Heart Talk

(Continued from page 4)

cerning the *fiery trial* which is to try you, as though some strange thing had happened unto you: but rejoice" (I Peter 4:12-13).

Moses suffered affliction in order to lead the children of God, choosing this rather than the riches of the king's palace and the pleasures of sin for a season.

David suffered constant criticism and false accusation, his enemies continually tried to unseat him, and his trials were so great sometimes it seemed God would *never* come to his rescue—yet God always did! Truly these trials teach us to be *patient*—for it often seems an eternity before God finally delivers us.

God chose Paul to be an apostle of Jesus Christ, and the Lord said, "I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake" (Acts 9:16). And late in life Paul wrote: "In all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments" — (people probably would call Paul a crook, a racketeer, an imposter and a jailbird today)—"in tumults, in labors, in watchings, in fastings" etc. (II Cor. 6:4-6). Paul outlined more of his troubles and sufferings in II Cor. 11:23-28.

Perhaps a chosen servant of God may be called upon to endure more trials, troubles, and tests of faith than other Christians—but every Christian shall suffer persecution, and meet fiery trials, sorrows, troubles, tests of faith. All our readers who are Christians will understand. Let us not murmur or grumble. Let us have FAITH, and endure in our faith *patiently*. And above all, *let us pray one for another*, and help one another!

Brethren, continue to stand loyally by this great work of God now encircling the world! Let us continue to pray earnestly for one another, and we shall march forward through Christ to great victory!