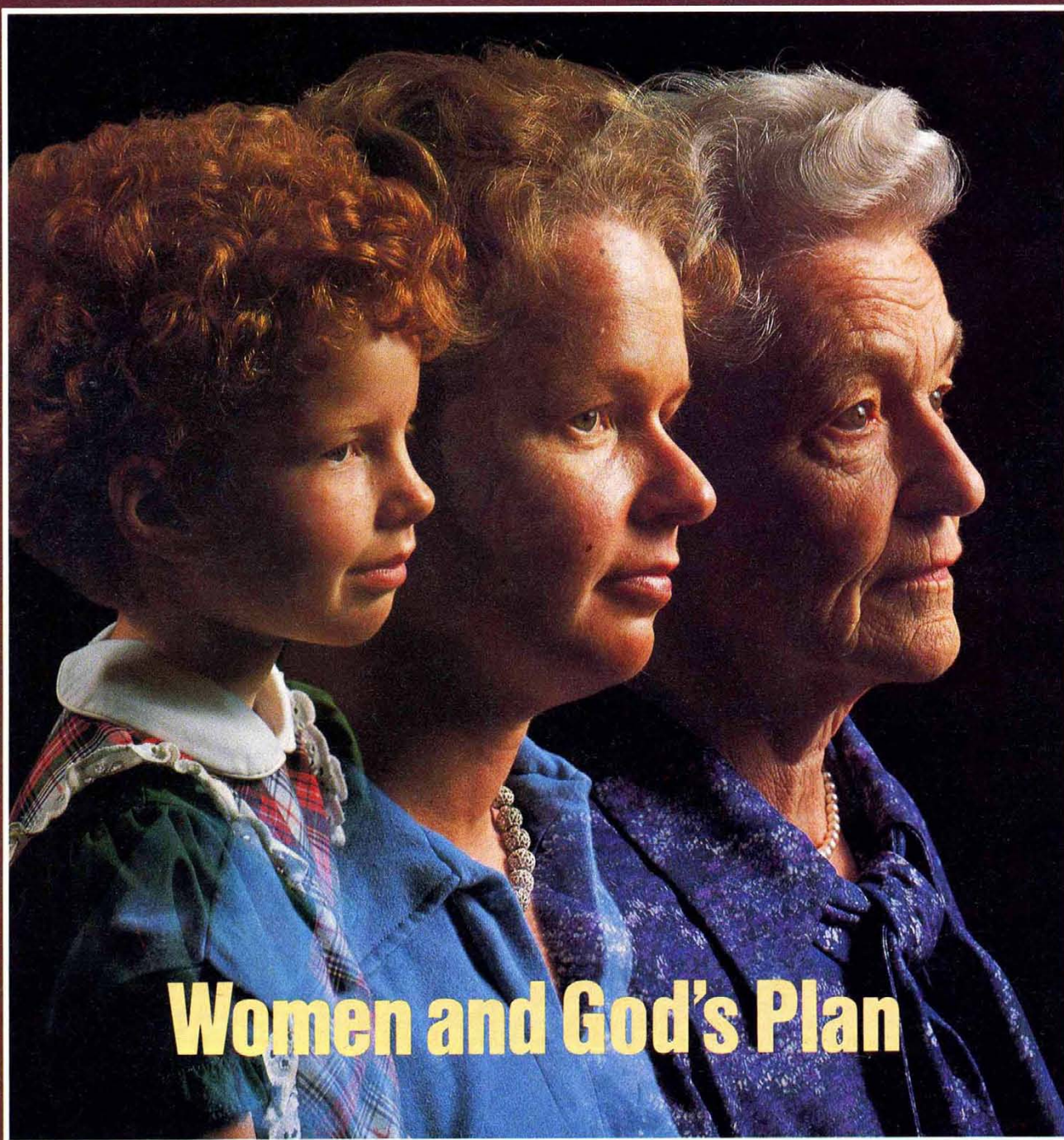


The

Good News

**History of the
Worldwide Church of God**
By Herbert W. Armstrong

JUNE-JULY 1980



Women and God's Plan

The Good News

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COVER: The so-called "battle of the sexes" has been going on for generations, and human beings, apart from God's revelation, have never come to the proper perspective. But what does God say about the role of women in His divine plan? See the article beginning on page 14. Photo by William Hubbell.

Letters

"Beefed-up" articles

Thanks so much for the "beefed-up" *GN* . . . articles we have been blessed to devour. The *GN* itself has become such a smorgasbord of spiritual enrichment and I know every article fits in with each of the others to enhance the meal. What a 360 degree turn from just a short time ago when meals were watered down. Now we enjoy the full flavor and spice once again as God intended us to.

Gary Bastie
Ocala, Fla.

Showing parents love

I would like to take this opportunity to commend Mr. Selmer Hegvold for his article "Help Your Parents Enter God's Family" in the January *Good News*.

At the close of the article he suggested that we show our parents we love them by a simple post card or perhaps phone call. And I would hasten to add — *don't wait!*

Several weeks after reading the article I bought some "Thank You" notes and sent one to each of my parents. I told them how much I appreciated all the many things they had done for me and how much I loved them for it. I didn't say a lot, but I didn't need to. They knew I loved them and the notes just thrilled them both.

Four days after receiving the notes from me my father died suddenly of a heart attack. The loss has been tremendous and I still mourn deeply for him. But I have the very deep satisfaction and joy of knowing that my father knew I loved him very much.

John King
Bishopville, S.C.

"When You Need a Friend"

I would like to thank Mr. David Albert for his needed and timely article entitled "When You Need a Friend" in the February, 1980, *Good News*.

Mr. Albert deals with what is probably one of the big problems of modern living and shows more importantly where the emphasis should be laid for its solution.

Eric Hall
Pasadena, Calif.

Ministudies

A big thank you for the "Ministudy" series in *The Good News* magazine. Each month I learn some wonderful new truths from this little study.

Joan M. Cunningham
Norristown, Pa.



HOW MANY times have you heard non-Christians, judging one who professes Christ, say in disgust, "Well, if that's Christianity, I don't want any of it!"

How many judge GOD by the way professing Christians live? How many assume that one must live a perfect life before he can become a Christian?"

How many say, "If I could give up smoking, I'd become a Christian"?"

How many think a Christian is supposed to be perfect, never doing anything wrong? Suppose you do see or hear about a Christian doing something WRONG. Does that mean he is a hypocrite — that he is *not* really a Christian, after all?

Is it possible for one to actually sin, while he is a Christian, and *still* remain a truly converted Christian?

I suppose nearly everyone would reply in the negative. But here is a vital point *you need to UNDERSTAND!*

It's hard to believe — but TRUE! Few know just what *is* a Christian. Few know how one is converted — whether suddenly, all at once, or gradually. Does conversion happen *immediately*, or is it a process? IT'S HIGH TIME WE UNDERSTAND!

The TRUTH is that there is a sense in which true conversion does take place *at a definite time* — all at once. But it is also true that in another sense conversion is *worked out gradually* — a process of development and growth.

NOW NOTICE CAREFULLY!

When does one really become a Christian? It is when he receives God's Holy Spirit. In Romans 8:9, we read that *unless* we have the Holy Spirit, we are not Christ's — not Christians.

There is a definite TIME when God's Spirit enters into one. At the

very moment he receives the Holy Spirit, he is, in this first sense, converted. Yes, *all at once!* If he has Christ's Spirit, he is Christ's — he is a Christian! He has been begotten as a child of God.

But does that mean his salvation is complete? Is he now fully and finally "saved"? Is that all there is to it? Is he now, suddenly, *perfect*? Is it now impossible for him to do wrong?

NO! Far from it! But *WHY?* What's the answer? Why do so many misunderstand?

Here is the GOOD NEWS you need to know.

First, there are two conditions to becoming a Christian: REPENTANCE and FAITH. These two we, ourselves, must perform. Yet no one can, of himself, say: "O, now I see — I must repent. All right, I hereby repent." One does not just decide casually, as a matter of routine, to repent. *WHY?*

Jesus Christ said that none can come to Him, except the Spirit of the Father draw him. God *grants* repentance. God calls one, and convicts the mind and conscience by His Spirit, working on the mind externally. Usually a real struggle goes on within. The person has been shaken to know he has done wrong — he has sinned. He is not only sorry — he abhors himself! He is brought to real REPENTANCE, not only for what he has done, but for what he now sees that he is.

Yet he, himself, must make the decision. If he does repent, surrender to God and in faith accept Jesus Christ as personal Savior, then, upon performance of these TWO conditions, God promises to put within him the GIFT of the Holy Spirit. This is the *very life* of God — SPIRIT life. It imparts to him the *very* divine nature!

Then *what*, at that stage, has happened?

This new convert has only been

begotten of God — not yet BORN. He has not received the full measure of God's Spirit Christ had — he is only a *spiritual babe* in Christ — he must now GROW spiritually, just as a newly conceived fetus in its mother's womb must grow physically large enough to be born as a human.

This new convert has now repented, in his mind, from the depths of his heart. HE MEANS IT, too! In all sincerity, in his mind and heart he has *turned around to go the other way* — to live a different life. He is now a CHRISTIAN — he has received God's Holy Spirit. He really wants to do what is right — to obey God — to live GOD'S WAY.

Yet he finds he does not *do* this perfectly! Many, at this stage, become discouraged. Some give up even trying to live a Christian life. And *WHY?* *Because of the false notion that a Christian is one who becomes PERFECT at one fell swoop* — or, that one cannot become a Christian until he has broken all wrong habits, and *made himself* righteous.

It's vital to UNDERSTAND how true Christianity really works!

The newly begotten Christian must grow up, spiritually. What would you think of a human baby who became 6 feet tall all at once, without growing up? The growing-up process requires TIME. There is an instant when a person receives the impregnating Holy Spirit of God — when he first becomes a Christian. But he is only a spiritual infant. He must grow up spiritually.

The newly converted person, *in his mind and heart*, sincerely has about-faced! He has actually gained contact with GOD, and received God's Holy Spirit. God's own divine NATURE has now been conceived within him.

BUT THAT'S ALL — it is *merely conceived* — not yet full grown! And his human nature is still there — it has not been killed or removed!

(Continued on page 25)

The History of the Beginning and Growth of the Worldwide Church of God

By Herbert W. Armstrong

I was ordained at or near the day of Pentecost, 1931. It was June. The Oregon Conference had a small tent. Robert L. Taylor and I took it to Eugene, Ore., and we placed it in a vacant lot on West 10th Avenue. I engaged an upstairs room in a house across the street, with a small kitchenette. I provided my own food while there.

We placed a small platform at the front of the little tent and managed to set 50 folding chairs. That is all — just 50!

I must have gotten out some kind of handbills or advertising in a newspaper — what, I do not now remember.

Our campaign was to last six weeks, six nights a week, skipping Saturday nights. We had the 50 seats filled most of the time.

Mr. Taylor and I alternated preaching every other night. The first night I emceed and led a song service. He preached.

When we had lived in Portland, Ore., I had gained some little experience with "Pentecostal" people. Yet at that time I really knew little about them. I was somewhat overawed by their "speaking in tongues," their glib "testimony" about how Jesus had blessed them. I did not really

understand it yet. But one thing I had noticed, they had no desire to keep God's commandments, and they had no real biblical knowledge. There were a certain number of verses — or parts of verses — that they had memorized, but always putting on them a meaning totally contrary to the intended meaning in the context.

The Oregon Conference brethren were definitely against this "tongues" movement, especially a Mr. J.J. McGill, a big 6-foot-4-inch man with a husky frame. Mr. Taylor had been questioned about this, for those brethren wanted none of that in the Church. Mr. Taylor had solemnly assured them he was totally opposed to it.

As the meetings wore on, I noticed two couples of Pentecostals attending, and gradually, when he was speaking, Mr. Taylor encouraged their loud "Amen's" and "Praise the Lords" and "Glory Hallelujahs." I began to be suspicious.

There was no sign of any real results in our meetings, and that was discouraging. One night a real storm blew in. Mr. Taylor and I went over to drive the tent stakes in deeper, lest the tent be blown away. No one came, but one couple, who drove up as we were driving deeper the tent stakes. Mr. Taylor said he was going home — no one was coming.

I said to this couple, it was a shame to have driven in — they had

come six miles — in such a storm, and then have no service. I asked them if they would care to come across the street to my room, where it would be dry and warm, and we could at least have a Bible study.

They came. They gave the appearance of being a very "poor" couple. He certainly was not handsome (for that matter neither was Abraham Lincoln), and she was not beautiful. I felt sorry for them. But later I learned he was the most successful farmer around!

Mrs. Margaret Fisher asked me, when we reached my room, if I would explain the Sabbath to them. Her husband Elmer believed we should keep it, but she said, "All these churches can't be wrong."

"Why," I replied, "that's precisely what I said to my wife when she began keeping the Sabbath. That's the question that resulted in my conversion. I'll be delighted to explain it."

I did, she accepted it, and thereby, unknown to me at the time, *began* the first convert of the Worldwide Church of God! The Fishers were to mean much to the start and founding of God's true Church of our time!

And, incidentally, this was the SOLE FRUIT borne by our six weeks' campaign — when Mr. Taylor was not with me. GOD NEVER BLESSED ANY EFFORTS WHEN I TEAMED WITH ANY SARDIS MEN!

In due time I learned that R.L.

Taylor was, always had been, Pentecostal.

Once he told me I was not "spiritual" enough. He asked me to go with him to an all-night "tarry meeting," so I could get (notice that word *GET*) my "baptism."

I said I preferred to follow Jesus' example and His teaching, to go to a solitary place or into a small closet and pray *ALONE!*

"You'll never get your baptism that way, brother!" he said sternly and rebukingly.

"Then it's something I don't want," I said.

The six-weeks tent meeting ended with no results, except the night with the Fishers in my room.

Meanwhile Mr. Taylor had brought up the idea of building a small local church building. He felt he could carry on and build up a church. He induced the Oregon Conference to buy a 50-foot-wide lot, then a half block outside city limits at the end of West Eighth Street.

It now developed that Mr. Taylor had not so recently arrived from Southern California, as he had led us to believe. He had been in the retail lumber business in Eugene and had failed. He had a small amount of lumber left on hand — not enough, as I remember, to finish the building of the small church. But he would donate the lumber. Of course he maneuvered to have the property deeded in his name.

The Oregon Conference decided now to team me up with this young minister, Roy Daily. There was "an interest" (to use their expression) up in St. Helens, Ore., 25 miles north of Portland on the west bank of the Columbia River. It turned out that the "interest" there was one woman who was filled with so much zeal she made the church officials think a few dozen people were prospective members.

I bought a half page in the St. Helens newspaper, announcing the meetings. One couple came one night only. Mr. Daily "preached" a full sermon in loud preachy tone at this couple. They never came back.

Then Roy and I went over to Umapine in far eastern Oregon, near Walla Walla, Wash. Roy knew of a member there, a Mr. Preston. He felt we could draw a crowd there.

We drove over, rented a hall, advertised, started a meeting. Roy and I slept in the same bed in the Prestons' spare room. About 35 to 50 came to our service the first two or three nights. Then attendance increased.

After about two weeks of these meetings, a letter came from Mrs. Florence Curtis, secretary of the state conference, saying the treasury was almost empty, and a meeting had been called a couple days after we received the letter to decide what to do. The conference was employing Mr. Taylor as well as Mr. Daily and me, each at \$20 per week salary.

"I'm driving back for that business meeting," said Roy, "starting at 5:30 tomorrow morning."

"But Roy," I exclaimed, "we have a campaign going, with increasing attendance!"

"I'm not concerned about that," answered Mr. Daily. "That board will let you and me out and keep Mr. Taylor on, since they can no longer keep all three of us. I'm going back and fight for my own interests!"

I simply could not understand that kind of reasoning. To me, the Work of God came first, not protecting my personal interest.

Nevertheless, at 5:30 sharp next morning Roy started driving back alone. I was left alone to finish the campaign. Now interest in the campaign took on new life. The attendance increased. I had five new conversions and baptisms.

By now I had begun to notice that when I worked alone God blessed my efforts and spiritual fruit was borne. But I noticed that not one of the Sardis ministers ever produced a convert. I asked some older members in the church, and not one of them could remember of a single new convert ever having resulted from the work of one of those ministers.

Had they, themselves, been converted and had God's Holy Spirit working within them, they too, would have been spiritually productive. Had I teamed up with a truly converted minister, results would have been much greater than when I worked alone. But when I teamed up with one of those men — *NO RESULTS* came!

IT IS THE SAME TODAY! Some ex-ministers of God's Church have gone

out to draw a following after them. Some of them have drawn a *FEW* — yet so far as I can verify, they have drawn *ONLY* the embittered, resentful, unconverted members whom our local churches have been much relieved to be rid of! *THAT IS THE WAY CHRIST ACTS!*

Actually the business meeting had been postponed, and Mr. Daily had run off from our meetings for nought. But a little later the conference did lay him and me off and keep on Robert Taylor — later to their sorrow!

My mistake

It was near the end of November, 1931. I was left without an income. But I didn't worry. I had learned to *LIVE BY FAITH*. I prayed for *GOD* to solve the financial problem — and I had faith He would.

Almost immediately a former business colleague, who had been advertising manager of the Vancouver daily newspaper when I had conducted a six-month merchandising survey for that paper, came to see me. He had started a new daily newspaper in Astoria, Ore. — without capital and in the midst of the rapidly descending depression. Would I come out and bail him out of his difficulties? He knew of no one else who had the peculiar know-how and experience to save his new paper from going under.

I mistakenly supposed this was God's answer to my prayer. I should have known better. I should have known God's Word says a minister must keep at it, in season and out of season, and Jesus said, "No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the Kingdom of God." But I was still a "babe in Christ," and did not think of these scriptures. I looked on it as a very *TEMPORARY* job to help an old friend.

"I will come out and help you for one month," I agreed, "just the month of December."

But once out there I was stuck. The circumstances were entirely different than I had supposed, and I was stuck there until February, 1933.

Meanwhile for the first seven months of my Astoria stint my wife and children remained in our rented house on East State Street, Salem.

(Continued on page 23)



Photo by Scott Smith

Why Some Tithers Do Not Prosper

Are you having difficulty with your finances? If so, why? God promises to bless those who keep His law of tithing, but there is another important consideration every Christian needs to remember.

By Richard Rice

“I’m having a terrible time making ends meet,” admitted the head of a Worldwide Church of God family as he counseled with a minister.

“I don’t understand why,” he said. “I’ve been in God’s Church for 11 years. I have faithfully paid all my tithes. I have sent in monthly donations to the Building Fund. I’ve never missed a Holy Day offering. I haven’t robbed God of a single thing that was rightfully His. Why, then, am I suffering the most humiliating and distressing financial hardship of my life?”

In a discouraged tone he continued: “Because I haven’t been able to find a steady job, I don’t have enough money to properly feed and clothe my family. I can’t even make a down payment on a used car.”

With a furrowed brow and a for-

lorn look, the man asked: “What am I doing wrong? Why doesn’t God prosper me? Hasn’t He promised to bless the tithes payer? Aren’t God’s people supposed to abound with greater material blessings as they continue to obey His tithing laws?”

No isolated case

The above example is not fictional, nor is it an isolated case. Dozens of similar, true-to-life, down-to-earth situations constantly come to the attention of God’s ministers.

Far too many of God’s people — faithful tithes payers — are just barely getting by. At the end of a month they have practically nothing left over to save or to build up an emergency reserve.

Some have been unable to pay their monthly bills. A few have even had their furniture and appliances

repossessed because of the inability to keep pace with the rising cost of living and make monthly payments.

Why should so many be facing financial disaster when God has avowed to bless and prosper the tithes payer? Why aren’t all of God’s people becoming more prosperous each year, if the law of tithing really works?

More than tithing required

Don’t misunderstand. Tithing pays big dividends. There is an invisible law in tithing that insures monetary increase when one un begrudgingly gives God His 10th.

What many of God’s people don’t seem to realize is that they are under obligation to obey other laws equally as important to success as the law of tithing. You should know by now what these inexorable laws are — if

you have been attending weekly Sabbath services, eagerly studying the Bible, seriously reading *The Plain Truth* and *The Good News* and regularly listening to or watching the Work's broadcasts.

But knowledge is of no value unless it is acted upon. You must obey all God's laws if you expect to continue receiving the marvelous blessings which God's gigantic storehouse provides. If you are not receiving God's blessings, then you are not doing all God requires.

The apostle Paul revealed why some do not prosper. He said: "We commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat. For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies" (II Thess. 3:10-11). Paul warned Timothy, "But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel" (I Tim. 5:8).

Your Bible plainly states that a person who will not work and provide for his own home is worse than an infidel. Even though such a person is satisfied to barely eke out an existence, tithing alone will not make him prosperous.

Some people in God's Church are poor because they will not work hard enough to keep a job when they do get one. A member of God's Church should be willing to work harder than anyone else on the job. He must be willing to make money for his employer. Any person who is lazy cannot help but reap shame, poverty and defeat after defeat.

Must exercise self-control

Suppose that another member of God's Church is generous with his tithes and offerings. Perhaps he even sends in more than his budget would allow. But he doesn't take care of his health. He consistently eats too much starchy and greasy food and too much candy, ice cream and cake, for instance. This man has never learned to exercise willpower. So he eats too much. Eats the wrong kinds of food. Doesn't exercise. Doesn't get enough sleep. Then he wonders why he finds himself bedridden with such ailments as high blood pressure, stomach trouble, a liver disorder or one or more of a host of other infirmities.

Tithepaying will not save from financial disaster a man who cannot hold a job because he has ruined his health by overindulgence.

Do you suppose God would somehow annul the penalty exacted from breaking His health laws just because this man was faithful in tithing? No.

God wouldn't be true to His own laws if He did that. Clearly manifested in this example is the fact that tithing alone cannot guarantee financial prosperity as long as other immutable laws are transgressed.

Suppose a man makes a good salary but is a poor manager of money and "blows" his earnings on anything

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and everything he ever desires. God will not prosper the man who squanders so much of his monthly salary on things he doesn't need that he hasn't enough left to meet his monthly bills.

While such a poor manager may pay his tithes, how long can he hope to avoid financial difficulty when he spends more every month than he has coming in? Should he expect God to free him from every crisis, remove every hardship and protect him from bankruptcy when he foolishly squanders his salary? No.

Can you realize that for God to deliver a man from every plight — when that man makes no attempt to correct his mistakes — is to condone the sin? God does not condone sin! If God would shower great rewards on a man who mismanages his salary, He would only further encourage

foolish spending and allow him to destroy his character.

How plain. We can't succeed unless we give to God, in the form of tithes and offerings, what is His. But we must obey not only this one law — we must obey all other laws and we must follow the seven laws of success. If you are not familiar with them, write for our free booklet, *The Seven Laws of Success*.

Key to success

God leaves no doubt. More than tithing is required for an abundant life. He specifically states in Joshua 1:8 another key governing success: "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success."

Did you notice that God emphatically stressed complete acceptance of and total obedience to all His laws? He did not say "pay your tithes" and then you will find your prosperity and have good success. He plainly said, "Observe to do according to *all!*"

This doesn't mean you must be perfect to prosper, but it does mean you must be striving for that goal of perfection and not be knowingly delinquent in any aspect of Christian living.

The great Lawgiver designed dozens of spiritual laws and principles to govern success. Obedience to one law by itself cannot produce success. Water is essential to good health, but water alone cannot sustain it — one must also eat, sleep and exercise. In like fashion, tithing is one of many laws that make for progress and prosperity, but tithing by itself does not make one prosperous if he is disobeying other laws of financial success.

The answer to the man who came to the minister and couldn't understand why his tithing wasn't getting results is simple. Even though he was paying his tithes, he was ignoring other spiritual laws of God. His poor management, his rebellion in carrying out instruction, his refusal to improve his general talents and establish a trade and his lack of enthu-

siasm all contributed to his downfall.

His obedience to the law of tithing could not revoke the penalty that disobedience to these other existing laws claimed.

Israel promised blessings

In Deuteronomy 28, the Eternal unreservedly promised great and stupendous blessings to Israel if they would obey all His commandments.

“And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments . . . all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee . . . Blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed shalt thou be in the field. Blessed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground, and the fruit of thy cattle, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep. Blessed shall be thy basket and thy store. Blessed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and blessed shalt thou be when thou goest out.

“And all people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of the Lord; and they shall be afraid of thee. And the Lord shall make thee plenteous in goods, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy ground, in the land which the Lord sware unto thy fathers to give thee.

“The Lord shall open unto thee his good treasure, the heaven to give the rain unto thy land in his season, and to bless all the work of thine hand . . . if that thou hearken unto the commandments of the Lord thy God, which I command thee this day, to observe and to do them: And thou shalt not go aside from any of the words which I command thee this day, to the right hand, or to the left, to go after other gods to serve them” (verses 1-14).

Obedience required

God promised 21 incredible blessings for obedience. What magnificent rewards obedience to God's law brings! But mark well the fact that the Eternal stipulates obedience to all His laws. And besides natural rewards, God Himself will also supernaturally add even more blessings, if one humbly submits and obeys.

The Bible irrefutably proves that obedience guarantees success. But with equal certainty the Bible guarantees that disobedience brings failure. God promises disaster will strike down all who with impunity break His laws. God warns, “But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee” (read them in Deut. 28:15).

God warns that the curses He went on to enumerate will surely come swiftly upon the disobedient. No

**If you set your heart
on things above and
conscientiously
try with your
entire being to obey
all of God's
laws, then He will
provide your daily
needs and will also
add extra blessings
in abundance.**

true, long-lasting prosperity can be found in rebellion — only curses.

Are you hiding your sins?

Are you failing to prosper because you are hiding your sins? Solomon in his great wisdom was well aware of the grave consequence of trying to cover one's sins. In Proverbs 28:13 he warned, “He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.”

Some fail to prosper because of self-deception — refusing to evaluate one's personal life according to the holy precepts of God, refusing to see what one is really doing wrong and justifying one's actions by placing the blame on God.

The man mentioned at the beginning of this article was guilty of this very thing. In his tone was an un-

derlying accusation against God. After all, he was obeying the “big” law that promised material increase. Why then, after all these weeks, months and even years of tithing, wasn't God prospering him? The answer is obvious. He would not honestly open his mind to examine himself, to look at himself as God saw him. The man was hiding his sins through self-deception.

But don't people who have only recently learned about the truth prosper when they start tithing? Why are they blessed in giving a 10th even though they don't obey all of God's laws? Indeed, they prosper. Dozens of letters are sent to the Work daily from new people telling how they put Malachi 3:8-10 to the test and were greatly rewarded.

But you must realize that tithing may be the only major point of truth these people understand. As they act on it, God showers down the blessings. And through this physical means, they see that there are material advantages in obeying God. It awakens them to the reality of God. But as they grow in grace and knowledge and acquire additional truth, God expects more of them. If they reject new truth and refuse to obey it, the blessings derived from tithing will diminish.

God commands, “Become ye perfect.” Obey new truth as it is revealed to you.

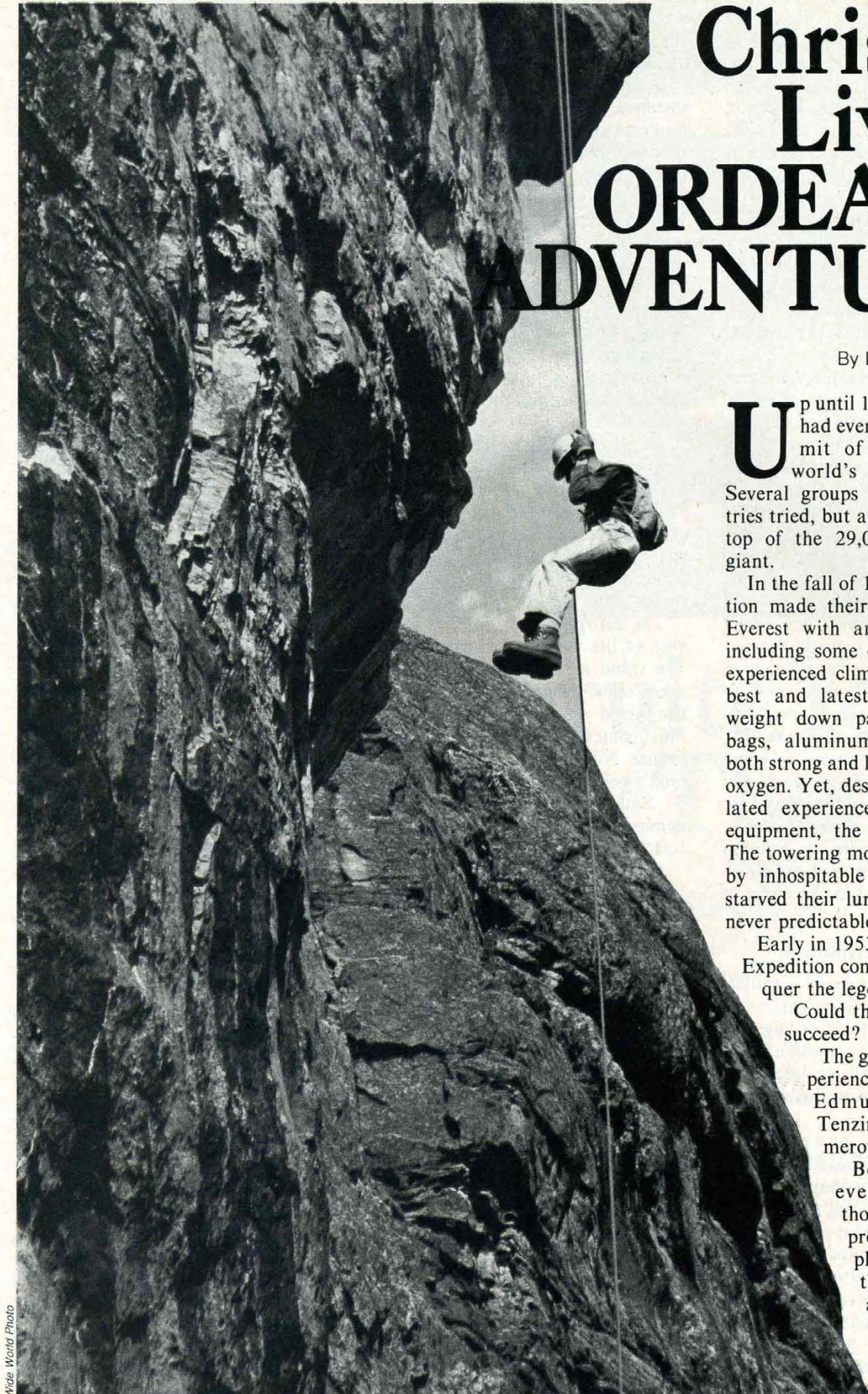
Seek the Kingdom first

What is your main interest in life? Is it to gain material wealth, riches, treasures? To have mammon in great supply in order to satisfy your carnal cravings and desires? Is this why you are tithing? It shouldn't be!

Make your main goal to serve the living God with all your might, to please Him no matter what the stakes might be, to seek His Kingdom above every physical goal.

If you set your heart on things above and conscientiously try with your entire being to obey all of God's laws, then He will provide your daily needs and will also add extra blessings in abundance.

Do you really want to prosper? Then, “Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you” (Matt. 6:33). □



Christian Living: ORDEAL or ADVENTURE?

By Lawrence W. Greider

Up until 1953 no human being had ever set foot on the summit of Mt. Everest, the world's highest mountain. Several groups from various countries tried, but all failed to reach the top of the 29,028-foot Himalayan giant.

In the fall of 1952 a Swiss expedition made their second attempt at Everest with an impressive party, including some of the world's most experienced climbers. They had the best and latest equipment, lightweight down parkas and mummy bags, aluminum alloys that were both strong and light and canisters of oxygen. Yet, despite all the accumulated experience and sophisticated equipment, the Swiss team failed. The towering mountain was shielded by inhospitable weather, light air starved their lungs and footing was never predictable.

Early in 1953 the British Everest Expedition completed plans to conquer the legendary peak.

Could the British expedition succeed?

The group consisted of experienced climbers such as Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay and numerous porters.

Before setting out everyone underwent thorough training and preparation. Extensive planning determined the best strategy with alternate courses of action. Finally everyone was ready and determined to succeed. The

group was prepared for a journey full of dangers. Yet, as they began to proceed up the mountain the challenge became much tougher than expected. Snow blindness, frostbite, exhaustion and other setbacks thinned the ranks. Discouragement crept in. Dangers multiplied the closer they got to the summit.

Then the whole expedition considered turning back. After all, every step could give way to a hidden crevice. A severe snowstorm could cause the whole group to perish.

But a few of the climbers remained optimistic. Their vision was to reach the summit, and nothing could deter them.

Finally, on the morning of May 29, 1953, climbers Hillary and Tenzing started alone from Camp 4 on the mountain's south side. They were within several hundred steep yards of the summit. This was to be the most significant day in their lives.

One by one, those few last yards became the most demanding and risky steps of the climb. One wrong step or movement spelled disaster. But, driven by a constant vision of victory, the two men persevered — step by step — on the slippery ice. Finally their dream burst into reality. Exhilaration and ecstasy warmed their cold bodies. Their goal was accomplished. In a few days the whole world would headline their victory.

What makes people go through such hardship, agony and sacrifice? All this was endured in the name of *adventure!*

Christian life an adventure

True adventure directly parallels the Christian way of life. Yet, a few of God's people see their calling as a burden to bear. The apostle James exhorts, "Count it all joy when you fall into divers temptations" (Jas. 1:2).

What is there to rejoice about in a difficult situation? What kind of attitude does it take to find joy in the loss of a job, sickness or family rejection? Well, why not regard it all as adventure? Look forward to an exhilarating victory at the end of your struggle, because that is exactly what awaits a true Christian.

Magazines like *National Geographic* or major television networks rarely picture great adventure as

strolling down a country lane on a summer's day. Pleasant? Yes. But challenging? Hardly, unless the lane is in the middle of a war zone, for instance, or up the side of the world's highest mountain! The larger the potential danger and the greater the odds against accomplishment, the greater the thrill of victory. That is why the highest mountains and the steepest climbs are acclaimed as the most challenging.

Christian living is a challenge. "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places" (Eph. 6:12).

Christ told us to "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it" (Matt. 7:13-14).

The entire world is opposed to the way of life God has revealed to us. We stand as a small army against great odds. The wrong influences of the world are everywhere, and we must contest against our own human nature. Not only that, we must, with God's help, fight the evil one himself — Satan — who, with legions of demons, is determined to make us forfeit the crown of life.

Certainly the Christian way of life, like any real exciting adventure, demands much struggle against great odds.

Willingness to endure

True adventure requires a willingness to undergo difficulties.

Every mountain climber knows that each expedition demands physical sacrifice. It may mean several days of dangling from ropes, sleeping and eating in cramped spaces, suffering frostbite and enduring bone-chilling coldness — just a few of the costs of going to the top.

Paul's Christian life was full of difficulties. In II Corinthians 11:24-28 he lists some of his experiences: "Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; In

journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches."

In Luke 14:28 Christians are told to count the cost of living this way of life. That cost could even mean our very lives. True Christians must be willing to undergo difficulties to make it into the Kingdom of God. He who is not willing to "bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my [Christ's] disciple" (verse 27).

Expectation of victory

All adventure has the expectation of victory. No leader of a mountain-climbing expedition can afford to expect anything but successful accomplishment. Negativism crushes morale. The vision of victory is lost.

Although the Christian way of life is difficult, we must deeply know that victory is possible.

We are told to be confident of this victory, that "he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:6). We can come boldly before the throne of grace, knowing that our elder Brother has already climbed to the peak and holds the rope for us.

Paul writes in I Corinthians 9:25-27: "Now they [the world] do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection."

Paul expected victory. We can also. We have Jesus Christ on our side, and with Him everything is possible.

Christian living involves the same attitude as being in an adventure. See every inch and every foothold as progress. Consider every bruise and scrape as a part of the price. Struggle on for the thrill of supreme accomplishment — becoming a son of God. There is no adventure greater than the Christian life. See you at the top! □



By Their Fruits You Shall Know Them

By Selmer L. Hegvold

*What are the characteristics of a person following the example set by Jesus Christ?
How can you know you are a real Christian?*

A look of dismay swept over the waitresses' faces as the family with several children entered the busy restaurant and waited to be seated. Families with children always created problems for them. One of the young women rolled her eyes heavenward, shrugged her shoulders, took out her order pad and escorted the group to the largest table. It was obvious she expected the worst: squabbling, noise, crying and food and silverware scattered on the floor around the table.

But the waitress was amazed. The family was courteous, quiet, orderly and patient — all of them. The children looked respectfully to

their parents and politely let their choices from the menu be known. Neatness and smiles prevailed all around the table as the meal progressed. The impressed restaurant personnel complimented the couple and their children as they paid the cashier, and warmly invited them to return soon.

That family — members of the Church of God — let their light shine brightly, honoring the God they serve.

Some time ago as my wife and I walked down the street in an unfamiliar area of the city, we saw, walking ahead of us through a crowd of shoppers, two strangers.

They stirred our interest and I commented, "I bet those two are members of the Worldwide Church of God." We discussed it somewhat, proceeded into a store and soon forgot about them.

Later, as we checked out, we saw this same man and woman in an adjoining aisle paying for their purchases. We overheard some of their conversation and became convinced that they were members of the Church. We began a friendly conversation with them and discovered that we were right. The four of us were delighted over that brief contact.

What is it about God's people that

lets others know we are servants of the living God?

Conversion in action

Conversion is more than acceptance of what you have heard, seen or come to believe intellectually. As a person truly convicted, called of God and repentant, you realize there is much you must *do*.

Christ said: "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me" (John 6:44-45).

The proof that you belong to God becomes visible through service to others. You have a growing sense of satisfaction in service that requires sacrifice of your strength and personal time. The greater reward by far will be yours at the resurrection and the return of Jesus Christ.

Christ showed how to identify truly converted people, "By their fruits ye shall know them" (Matt. 7:20). Let's hope your fruit is all good. Let's hope you are the salt of the earth. Let's hope yours is a brilliant light shining out in a darkened world.

At Holy Day gatherings, at Feast sites, at services with God's people in other towns away from your home, you discover an aura of brotherhood, a reassuring warmth of friendship.

Years ago, prospective members requesting a ministerial visit were oftentimes called upon unannounced because few gave telephone numbers. When the minister and his wife were met at the door and introduced themselves, they found they had been already recognized as representatives of Herbert W. Armstrong. What is it that identifies God's people to others immediately, without a word being spoken?

Clerks and receptionists quickly recognize people of God's Church and students of Ambassador College when they come into offices and shopping centers in Pasadena. God's people are known by their courtesy, patience, attractive appearance and conversational pleasantries. Others "just know who you are" before you open your mouth. They appreciate what they see and hear. They com-

mend you to others. They wish the whole world could be like you. Why do Christians shine this way to others?

Evaluate yourself

Because you are spiritually begotten, you will have the mind of the living Christ motivating you through God's Holy Spirit. You will have the in-depth spiritual discernment required to understand the things God is revealing to His Church.

Are sermons and Bible studies a wealth of spiritual nourishment to you? Do you absorb the messages hungrily and constantly desire more? Do repeated or lengthy sermons become an extra treat to you? Does time in Church pass too quickly?

Do you search for correction and receive it thankfully? Do you never apply corrective sermons to your neighbors, but always to yourself? Do you realize how far from the perfection of Christ you really are, and are you moved spiritually by sermons and Bible studies?

How eager are you to associate with your brethren? Do you linger as long as possible after services to meet and fellowship with them? The Church grows through hospitality exercised by its members. How hospitable are you — to the point of extravagance, encouraging and welcoming visits by brethren and the ministry?

The "book of your heart" should always be open to the needs of others, both in the Church and in the community. Really! You have nothing to hide and everything to share. Always be aware of and thankful for God's blessings poured out on you and your family. Step out and correct yourself if you are weak in any of these areas. Ask God to correct you — in His mercy.

Retain an awareness of God's loving care for you, and your trust in Him will glow in your personality. A beautiful poem expresses it perfectly:

Loving Father of All

A little brown bird sits atop my tree
And warbles a cheery "Good
Morning!" to me.
He seems so contented, so happy
and gay,
Come sunshine or shadow, come
blue skies or gray.
He sways on the treetop and sings
with a vim;

The state of the weather means nothing to him.
Evidently he knows that his needs will be met,
With no cause for worry, no reason to fret.

Though mankind should ever be keenly aware
Of his kinship with God, and of God's loving care,
We tend to be fearful or worried or blue;
We accept false beliefs, close our minds to the true.

Instead of relying on God as we should,
In seeking His Guidance to our ultimate good,
We shoulder our problems and struggle along,
And wonder why everything seems to go wrong,
Forgetting that God, loving Father of all,
Is ready to help us; we have only to call.

Let us ponder a while . . . Can it possibly be
That the little brown bird is much wiser than we?

—Hazel Thomas Wright

Fighting this world's god

Of course, there is another consideration you must face when you bear good fruit in this world.

Years ago, one of God's ministers was called upon to answer a visit request in an institution for the mentally handicapped. As the attendants led him down the corridor and through a recreation room, he was abruptly interrupted by one of the patients. To the amazement of the minister, the patient began shouting repeatedly that he was a servant of the most high God!

As the attendants hurried the minister into safer corridors, they asked him if he knew the patient. The answer was an emphatic "No!" Though the others did not realize it, the minister knew the man was under the control of a demon that knew him, identified him for what he was and intended harassment.

Not everyone is pleased with and supportive of those who radiate the attributes of Jesus Christ. Some hate

what we so obviously stand for and refuse to accept or praise our best efforts to please God.

When you on occasion enter a place of worship of a different faith, do you feel uncomfortable? Each of the other churches in this world seems to have its own motivating spirit that makes the church distinct. And there is a clash between different spiritual characteristics. The Holy Spirit of God cannot abide any other spiritual influence than that of God. Unusual tensions exist in individual ecclesiastical groups whenever the Holy Spirit makes itself felt in their presence through you.

When people from other faiths visit Worldwide Church of God activities or services, we find that they are impressed, but uneasy.

Satan is the god of this world. All its systems and religions are contrary to the way God's Holy Spirit works in you. Others can see the Spirit's good fruits in you. They hate the purpose and plan of God, and so they hate you! They can neither see nor understand what you do.

"If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you" (John 15:18-19).

God said that there would be many afflictions for the righteous along the way, and that only through much tribulation will we finally be with Him.

Peter was inspired to write, "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall" (II Pet. 1:10). Read the preceding verses also, where Peter explains "these things."

Do you immediately see and agree with the decisions reached and announced by God's apostle, Herbert W. Armstrong? The Church is to act upon them all. Avoid the terrible mistake some make in setting themselves up as watchdogs of the Worldwide Church of God. In so doing, they expose a profound lack of understanding and conversion. Christ has no need of such in His Church.

If you find yourself tempted to criticize the Church's leadership,

take immediate corrective steps through more study, fasting and prayer. God is fully capable of managing His Church and His servants.

Your Christian light must shine to all the world. How brilliantly is it shining?

Turn your life around

If you radiate the fruits of God's Holy Spirit to others around you in your daily activities, well and good. You are on the right track. But suppose you find yourself far off base. What then?

Realize that it is never too late in life, nor have you strayed too far afield. God is interested in what you do with your life *now*. "But this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:13-14). God is not interested in what happened yesterday. He is interested in what you do today and tomorrow.

Are you constantly beset by the troubles of life? Are you fearful, afraid of the unknown and the unexpected? If you take extreme precautions for your safety, examine your spiritual life. Prayer, Bible study, fasting and meditation have probably become sporadic or nonexistent. Through concerted, energetic effort *now* they can be reactivated to turn your life around.

David was well aware of his own weaknesses and how alarmingly God acted in his life to stir him to action. "Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word. . . . It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes" (Ps. 119:67, 71). And again, "Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them" (Ps. 119:165).

David's light did not always shine out to others commendably. He had to take hold on his life and turn his heart completely around. Neither did the apostle Paul shed a very glorious light before his calling. For the next 20-odd years of his active ministry he struggled with his faults and weaknesses.

Both of these servants of God overcame and will sit with Christ in His throne when He returns. They

warned of the many pitfalls you and I would have to avoid today. "Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all" (Ps. 34:19). The apostle Paul instructed his disciples in the same vein, "Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God" (Acts 14:22).

David's cry to God must have echoed in the heaven of God's throne: "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation" (Ps. 51:10-12). David became the servant God called a man after His own heart.

Plunge into giving

Keep current with all the news about the Work. Prove to God you are a faithful laborer performing His great commission. Become involved. If all you can do is smile and always be cheerful — nothing more — remember that it exemplifies the joy of God's message for mankind.

Volunteer to handle the unsavory jobs nobody likes to do. Put your hand more firmly to the plow. Be always willing to do more than you're asked to do, remembering, "So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do" (Luke 17:10).

It will amaze you how rewarding and satisfying your life will become as you plunge selflessly into the *giving* way of life within God's Church. It's the *get* way most of us live that saps us of the light that should shine. We only select as our true friends people who have learned to give of themselves. Are you one of them?

You've been given the greatest calling ever offered in the history of the world. Make certain you have enough oil for your lamp, lest the light flicker, fade and die out. It takes effort, dedication, prayer and study, but the rewards for all who put their shoulder to the task are now just around the corner. □

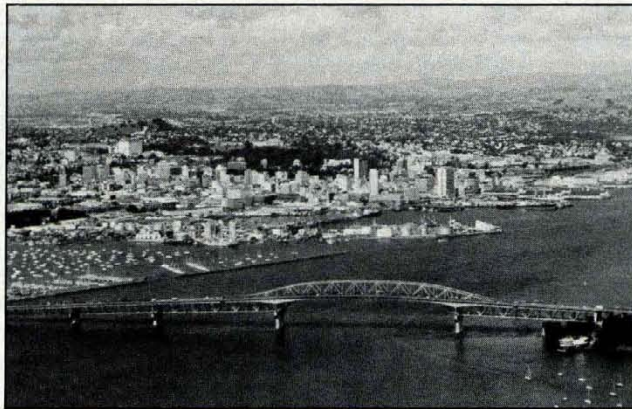
Good News on the South Pacific Work

How It Began

Responses to advertisements placed in the New Zealand edition of *Reader's Digest* in the early 1960s brought the first requests from New Zealand for the Church's literature. These were initially met by the office in Australia, and Australian ministers made several baptizing tours of New Zealand. In 1968 increasing interest made it necessary to open an office in Auckland, New Zealand.

In 1970 private commercial radio became a reality in New Zealand, and *The World Tomorrow* broadcast was aired to the nation. Presently Herbert W. Armstrong is heard over seven stations in the Pacific Island area administered from New Zealand.

Thirteen ministers serve



Auckland, New Zealand, has been the site of one of the Work's regional offices since 1968. (All photos by Barry McKay)

13 churches and several outlying Bible studies throughout New Zealand. Church attendance now averages 850 a week, and the area has the additional strength of 2,500 co-workers and donors.

Annually about 50,000 letters pour into the Auckland

office, and more than half a million pieces of literature are sent out free of charge.

New Zealand is not just a tiny, far-flung speck in the corner of the globe. God's Word is being proclaimed there as a witness, in a powerful way.

helped manage the Work's growing press complex in England.

Following his graduation in 1967, Mr. Morton married another Ambassador student, Sandra Jackson, from the Melbourne, Australia, church, and was assigned to the London and Bricket Wood church areas in Great Britain.

Mr. Morton served in the Work in the British Isles for the next eight years, during which time he supervised the Church Administration Department, taught on the faculty of Ambassador College and conducted some of the Church's first baptizing tours of Africa and the Mediterranean area in this era.

In 1975 Mr. Morton was appointed regional director of God's Work in his native homeland of New Zealand upon the transfer of Graemme Marshall, who had directed the office since its inception in 1968.

Overcoming Barriers

Just as Christ moved dramatically to bless the Work in New Zealand and the South Pacific during 1979, so Satan moved just as dramatically to attack it.

In January, at the start of the receivership crisis in Pasadena, the Work faced a wave of negative articles in newspapers throughout New Zealand and Fiji.

Economic troubles in New Zealand also threatened the Work. A rising inflation rate (around 17 percent a year by December) ate away at the Work's income increases. Price rises were especially severe in areas where the Church must buy materials and services.

For instance, during June, the government increased postal charges affecting *The Plain Truth* by 60 percent, with promises of more increases to come. Rates for letters and other articles also rose by an average of 50 percent. The Work was among

a small handful of organizations severely affected by the government's budget.

In Fiji, when the annual contract for *The World Tomorrow* broadcast was due for renewal in October, the local Council of Churches mounted a strong lobby to have the program discontinued. But the members' prayers were answered and the broadcast continued.

New Zealand's 1980 economic outlook is grim, with a deepening recession, severe restrictions on the sale and use of fuel and rising costs for printing the magazine. Inflation and unemployment are expected to rise dramatically, and more postal increases are scheduled for April.

But as the events of 1979 proved, no matter what barriers Satan attempts to put in the way, God can overturn them and pour out rich blessings on His people and Work.

Regional Director

An advertisement in the New Zealand edition of *Reader's Digest* brought Robert Morton in contact with God's Work in 1960.

Three years later he gave up his professional career as a surveyor and entered Amba-



Robert Morton

sador College at Bricket Wood, England, as a freshman student.

During his college years he served as class president in both his sophomore and senior years, edited *The Portfolio* (the student magazine) and

Getting the Gospel Out

Since New Zealand is a small country with a population of little more than three million, the Work has been able to experiment on a national scale with different methods of promoting *The Plain Truth*. Among these are newsstand distribution, personal appearance campaigns, film evenings, radio spot ads and newspaper, magazine and television advertisements.

But the most successful promotional tool of all is the "householder card."

A colored card advertising *The Plain Truth* and one of the Church's booklets is distributed to every household or mailbox in a given area. A person responds by writing his or her name and address on the card and returning it to us.

In 1975 and 1979, a household card was dropped into every mailbox in the nation. Results have been excellent, creating one of the highest *Plain Truth* saturation rates in the world. The current mailing list is 45,000, representing one household in every 22 in New Zealand. An additional 30,000 received *The Plain Truth* at some time over the past two decades.

The Church in the Pacific

God's Church in Tonga has been meeting regularly since 1968 with an attendance of about 30 people. I. Toluta'u Ha'angana, who in 1978 became the first Polynesian to become an ordained minister of the Church, is the pastor for the Tongan brethren.



I. Toluta'u Ha'angana

Mr. Ha'angana is a fourth cousin of the king of Tonga and works as head of Tonga's agricultural quarantine service. He first requested a visit, along with four other *Plain*



Ratu Epeli Kanaimawi

Truth subscribers, in 1966, and two ministers from the Australian office came and baptized them. In 1969 Mr. Ha'angana made available to the Church 1½ acres of his land as a Feast site, and the brethren built a tabernacle there. The building has been used ever since for Church activities.

The World Tomorrow broadcast is aired weekly on Tonga's only radio station.

In the nearby Fiji Islands, the Church has had weekly services in Suva, the capital, since June, 1979. Attendance averages around 50, and the minister serving the Fijian

brethren is Ratu Epeli Kanaimawi.

Ratu is the official title for the hereditary chieftains of Fiji. Ratu Epeli, who is closely related to both the governor general and the prime minister of Fiji, is a senior civil servant working as Secretary of Fijian Affairs.

During October, 1979, the Work ran a month-long advertising campaign in Fiji's two leading daily newspapers. This was the largest promotion in Fiji so far and the response was excellent. About 4,000 subscribers were added to *The Plain Truth* mailing list, raising the circulation in Fiji to more than 6,000 copies monthly.

The Plain Truth is also sent from Auckland to the New Hebrides (200 copies monthly), Western Samoa (100 copies), American Samoa (five copies), the Cook Islands (30 copies) and the island of Niue (10 copies).

Three members of God's Church live in the New Hebrides and three in Western Samoa.

There is also a mailing list of 70 copies of *La Pure Verite* in the French-speaking areas of New Caledonia, the New Hebrides and Tahiti.

Growth in 1979

The year of 1979 began with the biggest January income ever.

As the year moved on, month after month brought income increases topping the 30 percent mark, and Church services and Bible studies throughout the nation reported all-time record attendances.

In early March the office launched a brand new style of promotion — a series of 288 60-second spot ads on one of New Zealand's top-rated radio stations. Simultaneously, advertisements were placed in the national press, and members helped by dropping a card offering *The Dilemma of Drugs* and *The Plain Truth* into mailboxes throughout the country.

By July the New Zealand office had already received more mail than during all of 1978. *The Plain Truth* mailing list had doubled in just three months.

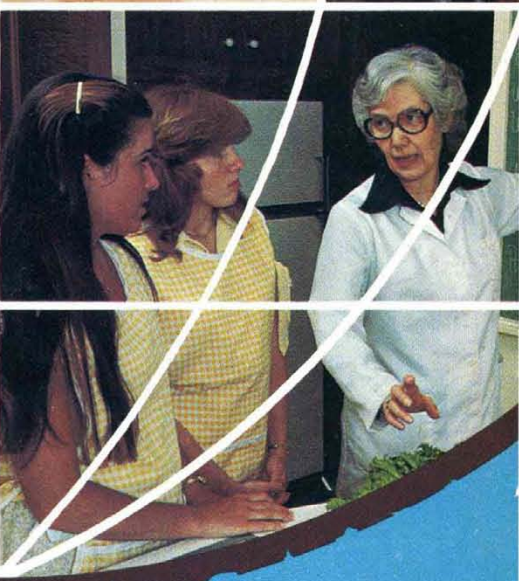
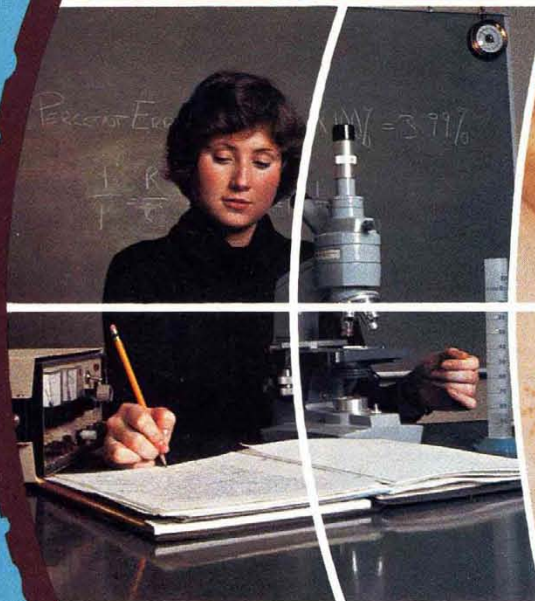
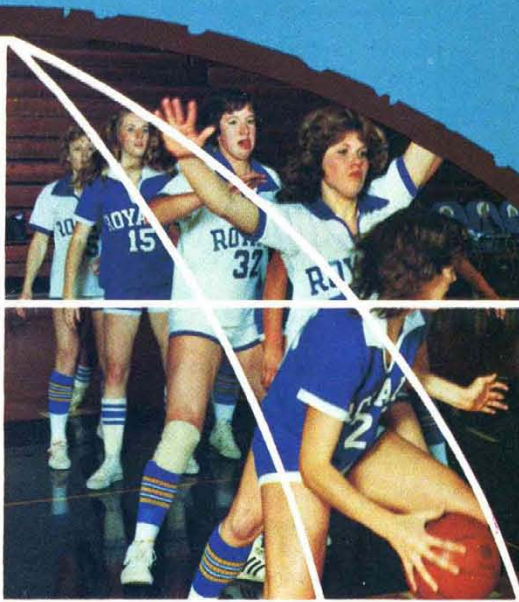
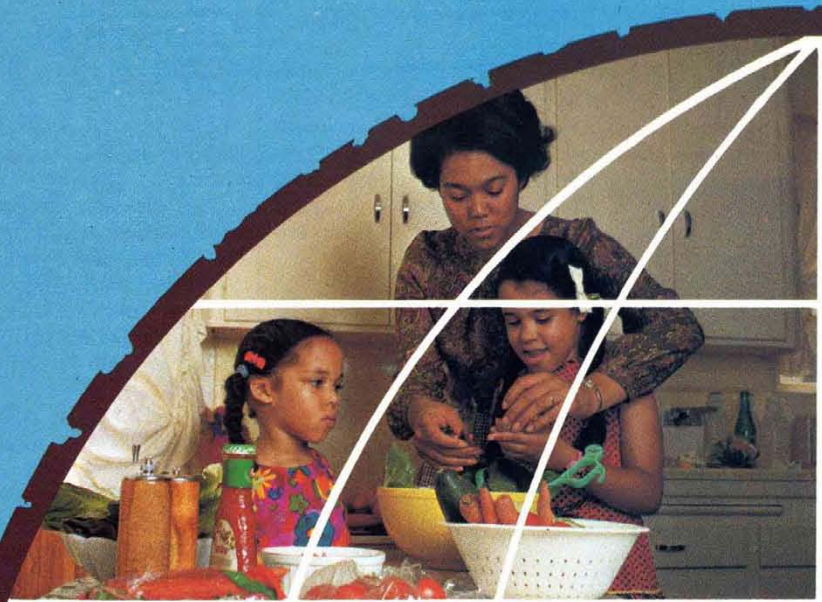
In September the number of responses from the household cards topped the 30,000 mark, each representing a brand new *Plain Truth* subscriber.

December's income was 46.5 percent more than the same month the previous year and was the highest income figure of any month in the history of the Work in New Zealand.

The year ended with an overall income increase of 28.3 percent. More than 65,000 pieces of mail had been received, an increase of 74.4 percent on 1978's figure. Church attendance was running about 50 percent higher than the previous year, with seven new churches added during 1979. The number of co-workers nearly doubled during the year, and *The Plain Truth* mailing list in December was 115 percent larger than in December, 1978. The size of the magazine also increased from 32 to 48 pages each month.



God's Work is being proclaimed in the South Pacific area in a powerful way. The Work there has grown dramatically since its beginnings in the early 1960s. Map above is not to scale. (Map by Gene Tikasingh)



Women and God's Plan

By Ronald Kelly

The traditional role of women is under attack. Just how do women — one half the human race — enter God's Kingdom? Women, read here how to prepare for rulership in the world tomorrow.



What role do women play in the plan of God?

Stop and think about it! This question is of life-and-death importance. Women make up half the human race, and men, who make up the other half, must interrelate with women, in whatever role they play, for all eternity.

When God made man almost 6,000 years ago, did He make *just* man? Was the woman merely an afterthought? Had God intended all along for mankind to be male *and* female?

Can women enter God's Kingdom just like men? And will their rewards be the same?

Will the "battle of the sexes" that has raged through the centuries continue in the Kingdom?

Let's look into it.

In the beginning

Everyone is familiar with the story of creation in Genesis 1. We all know on the sixth day God created Adam and Eve. "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl . . ." (Gen. 1:26). Since the first chapter of Genesis does not elaborate

on the whole creation process, we have to draw certain conclusions from what we read. This verse refers to the creation of all *mankind* — not just Adam, the man. We find in verse 27, "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; *male and female created he them.*"

We would not conclude from these verses that women were created inferior to men. The creation process does not imply that. The woman was not created as an afterthought.

In the second chapter of Genesis the story is told more completely.

When God made man, He made him from physical, earthy materials — "red mud." Adam was made with God's own hands from the dust of the earth, and God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life.

On the sixth day God created cattle and beasts and the creeping creatures of the earth. When He made Adam we could presume it was well into the sixth day. It was not days, weeks or months later when God observed, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet [suitable] for him" (Gen. 2:18). At most, that was only a few short hours later. And it was what God intended all along.

On the same sixth day, "the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon

Photos by Warren Watson, Roland Rees, Scott Smith, Dave Conn. Center photo, Worldwide Church of God.

Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man" (verses 21-22). God was not making some subordinate species. Adam himself realized immediately, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man" (verse 23). She was completely equal to man — of the same substance. Some men, for some unknown reason, have felt because woman was taken from man it made him superior to her.

Nothing could be farther from the truth.

Eve was made exactly from the same substance from which Adam was made. If man realized he was made from red mud he would realize his humble origins are no cause for vanity. The sum total of chemicals necessary to make a full-grown human being amounts to less than \$25 on the retail market. Nothing about which to be vain.

No, from the beginning, God established His will to make mankind both male and female — and for a great purpose.

Why male and female?

In the fifth chapter of Ephesians, Paul explains how husbands and wives should relate to one another. This subject is expanded further elsewhere in the Bible. We are not left without principles by which we can live our lives regarding male and female — husband and wife — relationships. But more than any other place in the Bible this fifth chapter of Ephesians reveals to us an all-encompassing purpose for which God created mankind male and female.

"For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church" (Eph. 5:31-32).

Herbert W. Armstrong has been making the Church keenly aware for some time of the urgency for the Church to be prepared as the Bride for the coming Bridegroom, Jesus Christ. Mr. Armstrong is working tirelessly to present the Church as an

espoused Bride to Christ — holy, pure and blameless.

Part of the way we learn that great spiritual lesson for the Church to marry Christ is to understand and live as husbands and wives in proper harmony with God's law.

To understand God making mankind male and female and to understand the female destiny as well as the male destiny is important.

We should be able to observe after nearly 6,000 years of human experience that women were not made inferior to men. As we have pointed out, woman, taken from the flesh and bone of man, is the same as man. And we have also seen that the creation of the family unit in marriage reveals the mystery of the marriage of Christ to His Church.

Certainly Christ does not intend to marry an inferior subspecies. But rather, He will marry the resurrected saints who have been made immortal in His exact form, image and substance. Christ will take a bride who will then exist on His same high immortal plane. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" (I John 3:1-2).

We will all, both male and female, be exactly like Christ is — "head and . . . hairs . . . white like wool, as white as snow; and . . . eyes . . . as a flame of fire; And . . . feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and . . . voice as the sound of many waters" (Rev. 1:14-15).

Under Christ's authority

The Church, made immortal and married to Jesus Christ, born into the Family of God and made of spirit, will nevertheless constantly and eternally be lovingly in subjection to Christ. Always under His authority.

Authority is not a bad word. *Subject to* is not a demeaning phrase. True Christians could never dream of eternal life in a rebellious, hostile environment struggling with God for power. Government and authority are necessary.

Have you ever wondered why God placed the husband as the head of the home? Is it because women are inferior or incapable? I hope no one believes that.

Would authority be necessary in a perfect home? If both husband and wife were perfectly compatible and completely harmonious with one another, would authority in the home be mandatory?

The answer is — yes!

Authority is always necessary.

Witness Christ and God the Father. No two beings in the entire universe are more at one, cooperative and harmonious. Yet they are not equal in authority — God the Father is clearly in charge. Absence of authority is anarchy. Someone must be in charge — in the Kingdom and in the home.

God did not make the husband the head of the home to place a great burden on women. And neither did God make men to be tyrannical and despotic dictators. Men were not placed as head of the home because they were inherently smarter than women, superior to women in any way. We are not dealing with a matter of "superiority" or "inferiority." Rather, it is a matter of God specifically designing each — husband and wife — for a distinct purpose in this physical life.

God designed and programmed men to fulfill certain responsibilities and duties. Included is the responsibility to lead and guide the family. Woman, on the other hand, was designed by God from creation to fulfill a purpose no man was capable of fulfilling — to become wife, mother, and even more importantly, to be the spiritual type of the Church.

The woman's special role

Some women have come to feel that because God ordained the man to be head of the home that a woman has nothing to do to qualify for leadership in God's Kingdom. This is not true.

A woman's responsibilities are just as much a part of God's plan as a man's. Because a wife is in subjection to her husband does not mean she is void of opportunities that develop the character necessary to be born into the Kingdom of God. It is God's will for all to be saved.

This life is a training ground for the Kingdom of God. What we do now determines the reward we will receive when Christ returns. We are told in Revelation 3:21, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." It is logical to presume that one half of those born into the Family of God will have been physically women in the flesh. There is simply no room, when we truly understand God's Word, to think women are relegated to menial tasks or that they are less important in God's eyes.

Grandmothers, mothers, teenage girls — all of you were created to fulfill a calling no man could ever adequately fulfill. Your strengths lie in a specific area — the area of homemaker, wife and mother. You are the undisputed, unquestioned champion in these fields. Your husband, or any man, would be woefully inadequate. For the female of the species, there is no greater calling, no greater accomplishment and no greater reward possible than the successful fulfillment of the goals and high standards God has set.

A woman who chooses to marry and have children accomplishes just as much in the character building process as any career woman or any male business executive. The apostle Paul was inspired by God to write the evangelist Titus, "That they [older women] may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed" (Tit. 2:4-5). I know this statement is not popular with the modern feminist movement. But it is what the Eternal God says.

I was shocked while listening to a television talk show recently on which a leading Protestant theologian was a guest. The subjects of the Equal Rights Amendment and the feminist movement were being discussed. When asked about the apostle Paul's instruction that women should not be ordained to the ministry (I Cor. 14:34), the leading doctor of theology stated, "On this subject, the apostle Paul was wrong!" He went on to proudly proclaim his Prot-

estant denomination was the first major American denomination to ordain women into the ministry, sometime in the middle part of the 1880s. I couldn't believe what I was hearing — the apostle Paul wrong?! But this illustrates the problems we must face in coming to understand the Bible in a complex modern society. Some leading theologians simply do not believe what the Bible says.

But in God's Church we must!

We are not dealing with superiority and inferiority when we talk about men and women and their roles in life. We are simply coming to understand the great purpose for which each was created.

Some modern problems

President Jimmy Carter recently startled young men and women in the United States by proposing to reinstitute draft registration not only for young men of normal military age, but also for young women.

All of a sudden it seems everyone once again is talking about women, rekindling the debate on the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), women's rights, the feminist movement and a host of related subjects. Perhaps as never before attention has been focused on women's rights and women's responsibilities.

In the light of so much interest on the subject of women in the Western world, it's a good time to search the scriptures on this subject. If anyone has previously believed the Bible is antiwomen, I hope we have changed his or her mind.

God created mankind male and female with an overall, transcendental purpose from the beginning. Even though today's complex society may have created many problems, there is a Bible answer.

The answer lies in understanding the God-created roles of male and female. Ancient societies developed a "me Tarzan, you Jane" syndrome. When we think of ancient history we think of the proverbial cave man dragging his woman behind him by a hank of hair. Later societies kept women in silence and subjection, 10 paces behind. Women, like children, were to be seen and not heard. In our century came women's suffrage, women's rights and now the feminist movement.

Which, if any, of these societies, ever understood women's roles properly?

The answer — none of them.

Mr. Armstrong has so often pointed out that when Adam and Eve took of the forbidden tree in the midst of the garden, they made the choice to decide for themselves what is right and what is wrong. They rejected God as the source of knowledge. Mankind, ever since, has followed the same path — the right to choose for himself which way he will go. In 6,000 years of human history there has never been a society created by man in which men and women understood the true role intended by God from creation.

So no matter how complex the society may be, the only answers lie in the pages of the Bible.

Where to from here?

Since we are faced with these problems created by a modern world, should we assume the traditional role of the woman as homemaker is out of date? Is wife, mother, homemaker passe? Can a woman really develop the skills and obtain the experience as a homemaker that will qualify her for rulership in God's Kingdom?

These questions seem almost absurd. But some people have felt that if a woman is not out there making all those multimillion dollar decisions like men do she just isn't developing the ability to serve as a king and priest in the Kingdom.

But wait a minute.

How many men are out there making those multimillion dollar decisions? What about the small businessmen, the farmers, the salesmen, the laborers — the thousands upon thousands who have been in God's Church over the generations? Christ's called apostles were carpenters, fishermen, a tax collector. Yet He deemed them capable of ruling over the 12 tribes of Israel when the Kingdom is established.

But those men became ministers — apostles — you may say. They qualified for their positions by directing God's Church for the remainder of their lives.

Well then, how about Mary, the mother of Jesus? And how about Joanna? And Mary Magdalene?

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Close-Up

Personality profiles of members and co-workers of God's Church around the world.

Last Dec. 7, Edward Turppa of Lewiston, Mich., joined an elite group in God's Church, as he entered his 101st year of life.

Mr. Turppa, who was baptized in 1966, attends the Gaylord, Mich., church, where, according to pastor Gerald E. Weston, he is one of the best-loved members. Still active, Mr. Turppa is almost totally self-sufficient at his Lewiston farm.



Edward Turppa
Lewiston, Mich.

Mr. Turppa was born in Kyro, Finland, Dec. 7, 1879. With his parents, a brother and a sister, he moved to the farm in 1900.

The Gaylord church's resident centenarian has had a varied career, including farming, owning a grocery store and working as a clerk. He and his wife Emma had seven children, two of whom are still living. Ted is 75 and Leonard is 69. Emma died in 1945.

He spent one winter in Mexico, where he mastered printed Spanish, so that he can now read in Finnish, English and Spanish. Mr. Turppa's favorite pastime is reading, and he has amassed a library of about 1,000 books — classics, histories and works on health — and his favorite, detective stories. He also reads the Bible through several times each year.

"The kids wanted to buy me a television set, but I didn't want it," says Mr. Turppa. "I told them I'd sit down and look at it and forget to get up! I read a lot."

Mr. Turppa also keeps busy painting his house and splitting and stacking wood for his cooking stove and winter heating. He built a Finnish sauna that he still fires up once a week each summer. And he does all his own shopping and cooking.

Mr. Weston reports that Mr. Turppa "shakes hands with everyone — including the kids — at church services." He helps with the sound system and, according to the pastor, "will pick up all the songbooks if someone doesn't get to it first."

When he turned 100, he received commemorative letters from President Jimmy Carter and Michigan Gov. William G. Milliken. When a reporter asked Mr. Turppa how to live a good life, he responded, "I need advice myself."

In recent years Mr. Turppa has displayed a remarkable capacity to recover from illness, remarks Mr. Weston. He bounced back from a gall bladder operation "looking stronger than ever" within two months, and shook off a case of pneumonia in two weeks.

According to Mr. Weston, "He wants to live to see the return of Christ, and I for one wouldn't be surprised if he does." — *By Norman Shoaf* □

When asked to what she attributed her long life, Susannah Gibson Sturgill, 90, replied, "I obeyed my father in every word he said, and I've tried to never disobey God in anything." This reply reflects the strength of character Mrs. Sturgill, known as "Granny Sue" by the Lexington, Ky., brethren, has shown as a member of God's Church for 16 years.

Granny Sue was one of the first members of the Lexington church. Mrs. Sturgill, originally from Hindman, Ky., has four children, 12 grand-



Susannah Sturgill
Lexington, Ky.

children, 22 great-grandchildren and a bright smile for everyone.

Mrs. Sturgill, a polio victim, has been confined to a wheelchair for 50 years. She has also suffered from diabetes for 45 years.

But she refuses to feel sorry for herself and give up. While in the hospital when she was first afflicted with polio, she inadvertently overheard a doctor say she would never walk again. She cried for two weeks, until her sister asked her what good her crying was doing her. Says Granny Sue, I promised right then that I would never again cry over being crippled or nag God asking, 'Why me?'

Mrs. Sturgill first came into contact with God's Church through Herbert W. Armstrong's radio broadcasts. "The first time I heard it I knew that man had God's truth," she states. "Every night at five o'clock I held my paper and pencil ready and I would take it all down. Later I would read it to myself — every scripture given. I knew it was God's truth because I read it in His Word." Granny Sue was baptized by two ministers who came from Ambassador College in Pasadena. She attended services in Cincinnati, Ohio, a round trip of 300 miles, until the Lexington church was started.

Granny Sue has an amazing command of the Bible and can recite many chapters from memory. She looks forward to the Kingdom and being able to teach her husband and children God's truth and His plan for mankind. "I like to read of the time when Christ returns. I want Him to come so bad. Then I wouldn't have to die," says Granny Sue with a laugh. "Here I am 90 years old and I could be changed. I want to be changed in the twinkling of an eye." — *By Steven Smetak* □

What Kind of Example Are You Setting?

By David Carley

I saw a humorous little sign once that read, "Don't feel useless — you can always serve as a bad example!" Unfortunately, this observation describes precisely the good that came out of ancient Israel's existence.

Beginning at the Red Sea, Israel failed in their first of many opportunities to build faith in God's ability to lead them safely into the promised land. The thought of the threat from the Egyptian pharaoh's army as being an opportunity to build faith in God seemingly never crossed their minds. Yet that's exactly what that trial was for them. Rather, they looked at the approaching army on one side and at the Red Sea on the other and began to bitterly attack Moses.

In spite of this rebellion, God delivered Israel. Many more opportunities to build faith, rather than doubt, came upon them in the form of more trials. But they persisted in seeing the hardships as the fulfillment of the worst of their fears. It was not until Israel refused to enter the promised land that God sentenced them to wander and eventually die in the wilderness. Their lives were spent in doubt, confusion, despair and all the other bitter fruits of faithlessness.

For our admonition

The apostle Paul said that "all these things happened unto them [Israel] for ensamples [lessons]" (I Cor. 10:11) and that the trials they suffered "did not profit them" (Heb. 4:20). Well, if their lessons did not profit them, whom did they profit? Paul answers, "And they [Israel's mistakes] are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come" (I Cor. 10:11).

The end did not come during Paul's life, as he thought it would when he wrote this. Nor has the end come yet. Jesus revealed that the

"end of time," meaning the end of Satan's rule over the earth and the establishment of God's Kingdom, would be near when two special conditions were met simultaneously.

The first condition became a reality when the newly developed atom bomb was exploded shortly before the middle of this century. Mankind has since rapidly developed the nuclear arsenal needed to fulfill the prophecy of Jesus Christ that "except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved" (Matt. 24:22).

It was at this juncture that another event would be taking place to pinpoint the approaching end of the age. Christ described it this way, "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" (verse 14). The Worldwide Church of God is now doing that Work of announcing Christ's coming rule — the second event to mark the end of this age.

The survival of mankind hinges upon the existence of a group faithful to God. Christ said that unless there was an "elect [God's Church] there should no flesh be saved" (Matt. 24:22) alive upon the earth.

Not only must there be an "elect" group of God's people on earth so God will intervene and prevent mankind from destroying himself, but that faithful "few" must be preaching the Gospel just before "the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord." Otherwise God will "come and smite the earth with a curse" (Mal. 4:5-6) — or utter destruction.

The responsibility resting upon our shoulders as God's people is staggering. Whereas Israel's failure meant the temporary physical death of a single nation, the failure of God's

Church now would mean the eternal death of its people and the destruction of the entire world.

To help insure that the Church does not fail, God built in ancient Israel a prototype or working model of God's Church and Work today. In short, Israel's experience shows us what we must *not* do if we hope to finish the Work and complete our journey to the Kingdom of God.

Israel, as a type of God's Church today, was set free from slavery (sin) and was baptized unto Moses "in the cloud and in the sea" (I Cor. 10:2). Stephen called Israel "the church in the wilderness" (Acts 7:38). They had a human leader as we do today. And, as a "church," Israel followed after God (Jesus Christ) through the wilderness toward the promised land (I Cor. 10:4).

Today God is once again leading a "modern Israel" through the wilderness of this world of sin toward the promised Kingdom of God.

God's people, though scattered around the world, are united in that journey by doing the Work of God. The wilderness God's Church collectively travels today is just as difficult as it was for the Israelites of old.

Our journey is filled with its problems, trials and attacks from enemies. But, as He did for ancient Israel, God has chosen another man, Herbert W. Armstrong, to lead us under Christ through these many perils.

In Israel's story lies a vital message for God's Work today.

Need for faith

The greatest danger we face in God's Church is the same as it was to Israel. Paul exposes this danger by stating, "Let us labour [do the Work of God] . . . lest any man fall after the same example [of Israel] of unbe-

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'And this Gospel shall be preached...'

Matthew 24:14

Sermon Summaries from Ministers of the Worldwide Church of God

By Robert Fahey

I was sitting at the main hotel in Lagos, Nigeria, with three of our African ministers. And I looked over and saw a group of Nigerian men dressed in their extremely colorful native garb. Each wore a long robe with baggy trousers embroidered in fancy colors and gold, shining in the sunlight, and a little pillbox hat. There were five of them sitting in a circle in the late afternoon after working hours, just talking and gesturing. They appeared to have known each other for years.

They displayed a very pleasant, beautiful kind of relationship.

Their companionship was striking. No one was left out. Everybody was a part of the group, everybody was accepted, everybody shared — and everybody was enjoying it. I saw the courtesy they extended to each other. I saw the joy they shared at each other's comments, the laughter they had at various remarks. They really enjoyed each other. I saw a real brotherhood in those men.

I said to myself: "That's it! That is what is pleasing to God — this fellowship. That's what His plan is all about."

God is a fellowship

John 1:1 goes back to the very earliest time we know of — to before there was a heaven and earth, before there were any angels, before there were stars or a moon, before the sun shone. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word [the One who became Jesus Christ] was with God [the One who became the Father], and the Word was God." These beings made up the God Family. There were the two, and nothing else — but fellowship.

They had a relationship that to our human minds is unbelievable. They were perfect in everything they did. They never tried to take from each other, were never selfish. There was always complete trust and confidence between them, complete open sharing. They had known each other forever.

"The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made" (verses 2-3). In God was life.

There was total cooperation. They had the same mind (such that later One was able to say, in effect, "If you've seen Me, you've seen the Father, because We look at the basic issues exactly alike" — see John 14:9). They were generous and all-wise.

But They were alone. So They wanted to add other beings, with whom

to share the eternal life They had. Beings who would be like Them, with all the same characteristics. Perhaps — and here, admittedly, we may be extrapolating from the plan They put together — perhaps They were lonesome. So They wanted a community of people. They wanted diversity. They wanted different personalities and outlooks so They could have a fellowship like that of those five men I saw in Nigeria.

They did not want other beings just there to take up space, or selfish beings who would foul the nest and fight and scream and say, "That's mine!" They wanted beings who would shun sin and exercise wisdom, beings equally as immortal as Themselves, who would always display respect for God as leader and for their fellow beings. They wanted to enjoy the other beings' viewpoints and feelings.

Look at how God pictures the world tomorrow — what He's looking forward to. I like the idea of the lion dwelling with the lamb and snakes that won't harm. In the world tomorrow the plowman will overtake the reaper. Families will be happy. People will grow up in an environment with no war.

But look at Zechariah 8:1-3: "Again the word of the Lord of hosts came to me, saying, Thus saith the Lord of hosts; I was jealous for Zion with great jealousy, and I was jealous for her with great fury. Thus saith the Lord; I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem." God is going to dwell right smack in the middle of it. Why? "And Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth; and the mountain of the Lord of hosts the holy mountain. Thus saith the Lord of hosts; There shall yet old men and old women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, and every man with his staff in his hand for very age" (verses 3-4).

God is looking forward to a time when He will dwell in the middle of Jerusalem with people. People will be living, working and playing safely. You won't have to worry about somebody assaulting your children. "And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof" (verse 5). God likes the idea of a community of people, together and sharing.

The God Family

When you realize what plan the Father and the Son were working out, you may find it interesting and instructive to think about what Christ's last Passover supper meant to Him. "And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him" (Luke 22:14).

Here was a beginning of

TRUE CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

Look at how God pictures the world tomorrow . . . the plowman will overtake the reaper. Families will be happy. People will grow up in an environment with no war.

His expanding Family — a beginning of the government for the time when all mankind would be members of the God Family. Christ was sitting at a dinner with men whose company He enjoyed, who had been with Him as disciples three years. There had been only two Beings. Now there were to be more.

“And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer” (verse 15). Can we understand that more deeply than before?

Christ was eager. This was His final dinner as a human being before the plan went into effect. He was to be scourged, crucified and raised back to the God level. Then He would work with these men to bring other people into a “Church” through them. Then He would guide the Church as it announced that all the earth was eventually going to be encompassed in His fellowship.

“For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof [of the Passover — the communion or fellowship supper], until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God” (verse 16). Christ would again have fellowship with them then. He desired those men. He appreciated and loved every one.

He said so later on, and He told them, “By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another” (John 13:35). Christ told them their love for each other would show the world they were His disciples. Beings in that kind of relationship were the beings he wanted to dwell with Him forever.

Take a look at Revelation 19:5-7: “And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great. And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunders, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.” The wife represents the people who are going to be a part of His Family in that enjoyable fellowship forever.

How does Christ celebrate this marriage? First He dresses His people royally: “And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb” (verses 8-9). He’s also going to celebrate His reign with a banquet. It’s a community rejoicing — as much as the fellowship of those five men in Nigeria, but much more.

Christ is eager for it. He says: “Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God” (verse 9).

Brotherly love versus loneliness

The whole law God has given to mankind is based on love. Love is outgoing concern for other people, for their welfare, for their feelings. Love is the basis of true fellowship.

Love is social. If you are stuck on a desert island alone,

you may have difficulty expressing love and outgoing concern. You will still be able to have love toward God, of course, but love is also between persons, between minds. It involves a joy of association and sharing.

The opposite of love is expressed in the life of a hermit who is fed up with everybody and wants nothing to do with people. Some people get so hurt and upset for various reasons — some their own fault and some not — that they get to the point where they just don’t want communication. They say, in effect, “I only trust me.” That’s the opposite of what God wanted.

Loneliness is epidemic in our society. The farther we go from God’s law, from love and companionship (God’s law is called the law of love), the more lonesome people feel, regardless of the size of the crowd they’re in. We’ve got wall-to-wall cities, and people are more lonely than ever.

When the real problem is, “I am lonely,” people say instead, “Life is boring.” Or: “I just feel unhappy. I don’t know why, but I’m unhappy all the time.” Or, “I’ve got a drinking problem,” or, “I’m overweight.” “I can’t sleep.” “I’m irritable.” Unfulfilled would be the bottom line under all that. Authorities have identified other signs in lonely people. They brag a lot, talk about themselves or talk too much or too loud. They develop other outlets to try to satisfy their need for fellowship. Others become overly quiet, timid, seemingly fearful. But all these different cues signal one underlying problem — loneliness and discouragement. It’s one of the most effective tools against God’s people that Satan has.

Because people do not generally recognize what the real problem is, it’s impossible for them to find the solution. They may have a lot of talk and pizzazz on the outside, but nevertheless they begin to draw inward. Their thoughts become self-centered. Then, worse, they become addicted to props — chemicals sometimes, in the form of alcohol or drugs. Doctors now know that some chemically-addicted people are really lonely.

Some people become addicted to their work, their house, a hobby or a dog or cat. They get all wrapped up in nonhuman company because human company has become so distressing.

The real problems come after that. A constant anger can build up underneath — a constant frustration that keeps boiling, and the blood pressure begins to rise. Or anger disguises itself as depression and causes mental breakdowns, irrational behavior, physical illness, divorce, alcoholism, drug abuse or suicide.

Emotional psychologists say that loneliness is probably the number one problem of our age. It’s interesting when you consider that God’s plan offers the exact opposite. God’s law and God’s way lead totally away from that.

A treatment for loneliness

Overcoming loneliness involves being able to look around and see those with whom you come in contact — perceiving their loneliness and fastening your mind there.

We all have deep problems, apprehensions, hopes and dreams. But it helps to have another human being you love . . . to talk to you or listen.

A lonely person needs to focus on others — to express outgoing concern — instead of drawing inward and concentrating on himself. Most people will respond with friendship — the commodity they are dying for — if they are approached in the right way.

Doctors have found in group sessions that the loneliest people never nurture others. They never consider the other person's feelings. When others are speaking, they don't listen. They're self-obsessed. They insist on their share of time. The fact that the speaker might be at a great point of interest or covering some point that would be beneficial makes no difference to them. To solve this problem, these people need to learn to share.

The doctors suggest that these people develop a skill and share it with somebody — tennis, racquetball, swimming, sewing, playing cards, walking or some other hobby. The thing not to do is just sit down and say, "Help me, I'm lonely." If you do that, you're asking for a babysitter. You should go out and do something — share, participate.

A friend of mine has known a certain elderly gentleman for a long time, and he regards this old man as very wise. Once he asked the old fellow, "Tell me, in my lifetime, how many really close friends can I expect to have?" The man told him, "Well, if you're lucky, as many as you have fingers on one hand." It's a rare thing to have a really close friend. But if you're able to be one, then you're going to have far more than usual.

I Corinthians 13 describes love, an outgoing concern for others. Learn to nurture others. That's biblical love, serving others. It is exactly what God wants. It is the essence of keeping His commandments — showing love toward God and also toward every fellow human.

Close families talk and share outings and sports. There's never a lonesome person in the middle of a close family. Everybody feels accepted. As Malachi says, we should turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to the fathers (Mal. 4:6). In principle, that includes aunts, uncles, sisters, brothers and cousins — and even neighbors, in the broadest sense of the term. When is the last time your family had a reunion?

Help for problems

In my Ambassador College days all the guys in the dormitory and all the friends I knew had problems. They would share them with me a little bit, and I'd start praying about every one of those problems. That can take an awful long time, just one after the other. I wouldn't bring up one of mine. But before I knew it, my problems seemed somehow more manageable.

God made us so that one of our greatest needs is to be understood and be able to share in an open way. We all have deep problems, apprehensions, hopes and dreams. But it helps to have another human being you love, have affection for and admire to talk to you or listen.

Job's three friends came to him and sat there seven days. They were grief-stricken by what had happened to

the man — his family and possessions were wiped out and he was covered with boils from head to foot. For seven days they never said a word. That was good. But then they made one mistake. They began to talk to him, tell him his problems and preach at him. And that was the last thing the man needed. Then he thought, my friends are against me as well. His wife had given him the discouraging advice, "Curse God and die." All together it put poor Job right at the bottom. Be careful how you share.

In this world, when you're lonely, the solution isn't to go hunting for some human friends who will solve your problem. But there is one Being who is always available — who's always a friend you can go to. That's God the Father. Take a look at Psalm 73:23-25:

"Nevertheless I [David, or any one of us] am continually with thee [God]: thou hast holden me by my right hand. Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory [God will welcome you into His Family]. Whom have I in heaven but thee?" There was nobody else David could share with, deal with, trust.

"And there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever [God is the One who strengthens you]. For, lo, they that are far from thee shall perish [God's purpose was to bring them close to Him and give them life. As Christ said, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (John 10:10). And those who remain far from Him are going to perish.]: thou hast destroyed all them that go a whoring from thee. But it is good for me to draw near to God: I have put my trust in the Lord God, that I may declare all thy works" (verses 25-28).

If that's your outlook, as it was David's, other children of the Father who share that relationship with God are going to be very close to you. You're going to appreciate them more and more. Paul wrote of "preferring" the brethren, just because they're brethren (Rom. 12:10). People not acquainted with God's true Church don't have this fellowship, and may run into enormous problems. They're just totally alone in a society where nobody is their friend.

We need fellowship. In the Church of God, we have the Father first, the Son and then all the sons and daughters. We have fellowship among us. Don't be separate, off by yourself. Be part of the Body that's growing and readying itself to be brought into the Kingdom of God, to share eternity with God and live with Him forever.

If you're part of that Body, let everybody know by your presence.

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The History

(Continued from page 3)

Early July, 1932, my wife called me. Garner Ted, then almost 2½, was stricken with pneumonia. I rushed in a newspaper car back to Salem, arriving late at night.

My wife was still awake. Garner Ted was lying on a sofa in the living room. Immediately I knelt by his side, my wife with me, and I anointed him, asking God to heal him. Suddenly it came to my mind I ought also to ask God to heal his speech. He had been born dumb. He could not speak a word — and now 2 years and 5 months old. He could only make motions, and grunt, saying, “Ugh! Ugh!” I asked God to restore his speech.

Afterward my wife told me that while I was praying for God to heal him of the pneumonia, she had silently asked God to put it into my mind to ask for his speech to be healed also. Ted was instantly healed of the pneumonia. The very next morning he was able to say a number of single words. In about three days he was talking in whole sentences.

Also while at Astoria, a member down in the Willamette Valley, Milas Helms, who by then was president of the Oregon Conference, drove to Astoria, arriving after 10 p.m. He had come unannounced in his pickup truck. It was December, 1932, or January, 1933. He had driven from his farm near Jefferson, Ore., thinking I might be too busy to come, but if he arrived with his pickup truck, he felt I would drop everything and go.

His little son, James, was stricken with pneumonia — not expected to live. The highways were icy and covered with snow. We arrived back at his farm about 5 a.m. Immediately I anointed and prayed for the boy. He was healed instantly, and later that morning was up out of bed, dressed and playing.

Again in late February, 1933, Milas Helms drove out unannounced to Astoria. The Oregon Conference had a little money — a very little.

By now — as a matter of fact — since December, 1931 — I had realized the mistake I made in going to Astoria. My wife and I had been praying earnestly to be returned to Christ's

ministry. Our prayers at last were answered — but not until God knew I had learned the lesson of STAYING WITH IT, once in His ministry.

Mr. Helms explained a man named A.J. Ray, a former president of the California Conference of the Church of God, had come. He was anxious to bring to Oregon from Southern California a friend, a Sven (Sam) Oberg, supposed to be a “great” preacher. But the Oregon brethren had been “stung” by one supposed great preacher from Southern California, Mr. Taylor. I had learned that Mr. Taylor had failed utterly to raise up a single member for the church at Eugene, had traded the property off for an island in the river near Eugene, and had estab-

I was left without
an income. But I
didn't worry. I had
learned to LIVE
BY FAITH. I prayed
for God to solve
the financial problem
— and I had faith
He would.

lished a colony there of “Pentecostal” people, each of whom had donated all their properties and cash over to Taylor. The colony had gone on the rocks, the people had left and some had sued Mr. Taylor. They won their case. That was the end of the “great” Taylor.

Mr. Helms said the brethren did not want to get deceived by another “wonder preacher” from California, and they all wanted to get me back in harness before he arrived. They could only pay \$3 per week, but farmer members would supply us with eggs and produce, and they would also supply us with 100-pound sacks of whole wheat flour, with sugar and such things. The house rent they had selected for us was, I believe, \$7 per month, which they paid.

Mr. Oberg was a man of 53. He

arrived only a day or so after I had. If R.L. Taylor had “swept them off their feet,” Oberg did MORE! He was SO GREAT as a speaker and a man, on first appearance and first sermon, I actually thought of Hebrews 13:2 — that we might be entertaining an angel unawares. Oberg was TOO PERFECT to be human!

But the brethren had been taken in once, and they saw to it that I was hired before he and Mr. Ray could contest it — and there was no more money for Mr. Oberg. He and wife, age 25, and little girl about 3 or 4, all stayed at the Runcorns.

Immediately I wanted to start a major city-wide campaign with Oberg as speaker. I would handle the advertising and emcee. But Oberg and Ray wanted to hold a SMALL campaign in the Hollywood resident area of Salem, in an empty store building. There were many empty store buildings then. Probably more than half of small businesses in the United States had failed during the Depression. And 1933 was the year President Roosevelt closed the nation's banks!

My disillusionment of the super GREAT, GREAT Mr. Oberg began. I was in a humbling process. I was small in my own eyes. Mr. Oberg loomed as a spiritual GIANT. But I did have vision. And I did learn that Oberg did not think BIG!

For these Salem meetings I had handbills printed and distributed, and a half-page ad in the newspaper.

On opening night I was greatly alarmed — and so was Mr. Ray, Mr. McGill, Mr. Helms and others. The “Pentecostal” people were coming IN FORCE!

I had said before, I had observed that these people were glib and loud in their “Amens” and “Hallelujahs” and bragging testimony testifying of their own spiritual perfection since RECEIVING (GETTING) their “baptism,” misquoting scripture, always using it out of context, and UNWILLING TO OBEY GOD!

We called a hurried huddle.

“Just leave everything to me,” assured the GREAT Oberg. “I know exactly how to handle these people.” He got away with it.

By the third night the “Pentecostals” had taken over. I preached ser-

mons of spiritual truth and UNDERSTANDING and RIGHTEOUSNESS — but they had no taste for that. Oberg had hundreds of stories stored in his mind — tear-jerking stories, laugh stories, every kind. But NO BIBLE TRUTH. Just a DELIVERY and PERSONALITY! After a few nights I dropped out of the every other night turns for my preaching. I preached to our own brethren on the Sabbaths, but he preached every weekday night.

The wild and weird antics of these “Pentecostal” people increased.

But was this GOD’S Spirit doing such crazy things in them? This is a good place to quote a scripture in this connection the reader needs to understand: “If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, And the sign or wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them; Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet . . .” (Deut. 13:1-3).

To resist or disobey God’s commandments is to “go after other gods.”

God’s Holy Spirit is the Spirit of a SOUND MIND. The weird antics, spiritual bragging and ways of these people were definitely NOT of a sound mind!

Satan’s counterfeits are, indeed, DECEPTIVE, and by them Satan lures multiple thousands and even millions.

Absolutely NO “FRUIT” was borne by those meetings. Those meetings lasted some four months, Mr. O.J. Runcorn paying the \$10 monthly storeroom rent. Nothing was accomplished but a nightly emotional jamboree.

All through this “campaign” the conspiracy of Messrs. Oberg and Ray against me deepened. They wanted my \$3 per week and were willing to use any dirty politics to “GET” it.

My father had died in April, 1933. My wife had gone in late April or early May to be with my mother on the farm, near Molalla, Ore. One night my wife was awakened from an intensive dream. God’s angel was giving her a message: “GO TO SALEM AT ONCE! GO TO SALEM AT ONCE!

Enemies are plotting against your husband.”

She was too alarmed to let the dream go unheeded. She came immediately to Salem. About the same time, Milas Helms drove in a hurried emergency trip from his farm south of Salem to warn me that Messrs. Ray and Oberg were privately going around to brethren with an accusation against me. We had four children, the two boys then 3 and 4. Oberg was an addict on neatness and precision. Naturally part of the time, toys and playthings were scattered around our house. Otherwise my wife was a neat housekeeper. These two men were saying I was disqualified for the ministry because I was “not ruling well my own household, and

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my wife was not neat and tidy enough.”

Milas was then president of the conference.

“There is only one thing I can do to help you,” he said, “beside warning you. I will be chairman of the business meeting they have set up. I can let you speak first, if that will help.”

The propaganda of these men was false. I did rule well my own household, and my wife *was* a good housekeeper. Normally I should have wanted the last word — to speak last. This time, God led me to choose to speak first.

The business meeting was held in the little church in Harrisburg, Ore. Messrs. Oberg and Ray had stern faces.

I prayed. God showed me what to say. Mr. Helms opened the business

meeting with prayer, then immediately gave me the floor, and I sprang to the pulpit before either of the conspirators realized it. They were taken completely by surprise. I said I was going to speak openly and in complete frankness. I understood Oberg and Ray had pressured the calling of the meeting as an INQUISITION, to accuse me FALSELY — that my eyes had just been opened to a conspiracy going on against me. I understood their charges were to be against my wife. I acknowledged that I myself was not perfect any more than my inquisitors. If they had accusations against ME, let them make them, and I would only ask the brethren to PRAY for me. But in all boldness I said that if one of these men dared say a word against my wife, I would forget I was a minister, and CLOSE THEIR MOUTHS WITH MY FISTS!

My speech was short and to the point! As I had confessed some of my own faults, asking all of them to pray for me, every eye but those of the conspirators was filled with tears.

I sat down. Oberg and Ray were then called. There was nothing left for them to say. I had confessed personal faults and imperfections, and the brethren would have backed me in shutting their mouths from accusing my wife.

God pulled me through that inquisition.

The Oregon Conference brethren all loved me. Only the jealous ministers hated me. The brethren still looked to ME for LEADERSHIP, in spite of Mr. Oberg’s “perfection.”

As the Salem “meetings” came to an end, Mr. Elmer E. Fisher, the farmer living seven miles west of Eugene, asked me to come there for a campaign. He was chairman of the school board of Firbutte School, 8 miles west of Eugene — a one-room country school seating 36. At the same time the conference had rented the church at Harrisburg, seating 150, for a “campaign.”

I preferred the smaller schoolhouse, leaving the 150 seats for Sam Oberg at Harrisburg.

Now came the BEGINNING of what has grown into the WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD. But I was not yet through with the Ray-Oberg persecution. □

(To be continued)

PERSONAL

(Continued from page 1)

Understand this!

We were all born HUMAN. We all have HUMAN NATURE. Few seem to know what human nature is. It is a strong PULL — a tendency — and, like gravity, it is a *downward* pull. Like a strong magnet, it draws us in the way of SATAN — that is a pull toward self-gratification and jealousy, envy and resentment toward others. It is the spirit of rebellion against authority, hostility toward God and the law of God. That is human nature. It is within you. But how did human nature become that way? Adam and Eve were not created with that nature.

Originally God created the beautiful archangel Lucifer. He sealed up the sum of wisdom, knowledge and beauty. But one thing he lacked — the righteous CHARACTER to choose the right way, and resist the wrong — to discipline the *self* in the way he ought to go, instead of the way of self-desire. So Lucifer became Satan. He allowed pride and vanity, selfishness and greed, a lack of outgoing concern for others — the spirit of competition, opposition, strife, effort to acquire and to exalt the self — to enter his mind. He became perverted.

Satan, ever since the Garden of Eden, has beamed his new perverted thinking into the minds of unwitting human beings. So humanity has accepted Satan's nature and allowed it to become infused with human nature.

God's purpose in having created humanity — in having caused *YOU* to be born — is to reproduce Himself. And GOD, above all things, is PERFECT, RIGHTEOUS CHARACTER! God is able to create character within us — but it must be done as a result of our independent free choice. We, as individual separate entities, have our part in the process.

What *is* perfect character? It is the ability, in a separate entity, to come to the KNOWLEDGE of the right from the wrong — the true from the false — and to CHOOSE the right, and possess the WILL to enforce self-discipline to do the right and resist the wrong.

Like muscle, character is developed, and grows by exercise. My name is Armstrong. I suppose I could make my arm stronger, and develop the muscle, by constantly bending it back and forth at the elbow. But if I pull, or push, against some heavy weight or resistance, the muscle will develop much faster. Therefore God allows us to have this NATURE that exerts a heavy pull *against* that perfect righteous character — to give us something to *strive against*, for THE VERY PURPOSE OF STRENGTHENING AND DEVELOPING RIGHT CHARACTER!

God's CHARACTER travels in the direction of His law — the way of LOVE. It is an outgoing CONCERN for

What *is* perfect character? It is the ability, in a separate entity, to come to the KNOWLEDGE of the right from the wrong — the true from the false — and to CHOOSE the right, and possess the WILL to . . . resist the wrong.

others. God has that character! He has an outgoing concern for you and for me. He GAVE His only begotten Son to reconcile us to Him, and make the JOYS of His character and everlasting life possible for us. He showers on us every good and precious gift. He even puts within us His DIVINE NATURE — *when* we repent and turn *from* the wrong way of this world, begin to resist it and turn to Him through faith in Jesus Christ as personal Savior!

God's divine nature is the nature of love — of giving, serving, helping — of outgoing concern. It is the nature of humility.

Now when one is converted — has repented, and *turned from* Satan's and this world's false WAY — has at

once received God's Holy Spirit — his HUMAN nature, as I said before, does not flee. It, too, remains. It *still* exerts a pull. We still live in THIS PRESENT EVIL WORLD, and *it* exerts a pull. God still allows Satan to be around — and HE exerts a pull.

So we now have three pulls to resist — to overcome! We must now *overcome* these three — Satan, this world and our own selves. We have to battle against these three, in order to develop and strengthen RIGHT CHARACTER within us. God says plainly it is THE OVERCOMERS who shall be saved — who shall reign with Christ!

No human being is strong enough to do this BY HIMSELF! He must seek, and IN FAITH receive, the help and power of God. Even with God's power he will not overcome such forces easily, or all at once. IT IS NOT EASY! Christ plainly said the way to ultimate salvation is hard, difficult. It's a constant BATTLE — a struggle against self, the world and the devil. The creation of CHARACTER comes through EXPERIENCE — it takes time!

This development is a process. It is a matter of GROWTH — DEVELOPMENT. It requires, to become perfect, full and right knowledge of the very Word of God — because Jesus taught that we must *live by* EVERY WORD OF GOD.

The natural, unconverted mind cannot fully and rightly UNDERSTAND the Scriptures of God. The acquisition of this KNOWLEDGE, in itself, is a procedure requiring TIME. It is the DOERS of this Word, not hearers only, who shall be saved.

But can any man DO, immediately and all at once, this new way he now learns about? Can any man, all at once, break all habits he now sees are wrong? No, he finds he has a fight against acquired former habits.

He still has this PULL of human nature to overcome. This nature is a law working within him. The apostle Paul calls it the law of sin and death.

Paul was *converted*. Paul was a real Christian. He had repented, accepted Christ and received the Holy Spirit. With his MIND, he wanted with all his heart, and in real, intense sincerity, to DO God's WAY! But did Paul do it perfectly? Let him tell.

LISTEN! "For we know that the law is spiritual," he wrote, "but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I . . . Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me" (Rom. 7:14-17).

He is speaking of human nature within him. He continues: ". . . for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. . . O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (verses 18-24). Then he thanks God — that GOD WILL — through Jesus Christ, and by the power of His HOLY SPIRIT. BUT *IT TAKES TIME!*

The truly converted Christian will find that he often stumbles, *under temptation*, and falls down — even as a physical child learning to walk often falls down. But the year-old child does not get discouraged and give up. He gets up and starts out again.

THE TRULY CONVERTED CHRISTIAN IS NOT YET PERFECT!

GOD LOOKS ON THE HEART — the inner MOTIVE — the real *intent!* If he is trying — if he gets up whenever he falls down, and in repentance asks God's forgiveness and sets out to do his very best NOT TO MAKE THAT MISTAKE AGAIN — and to persevere with renewed effort to OVERCOME, God is rich in mercy toward that man in his striving to overcome.

Speaking to CONVERTED CHRISTIANS, John writes: "These things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin [even though he ought not], we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And He is the propitiation for OUR sins" (I John 2:1-2). Yes, for the sins of converted Christians. Such people often are under heavier temptation than before conversion. They are STRIVING against sin — STRIVING to overcome. But they are not yet perfect. Sometimes they are caught off guard. They may actually sin. Then they WAKE UP, as it were, and realize what they have done. They REPENT. They are filled with remorse — *truly sorry* — disgusted with themselves. They go to God, and CRY OUT FOR

HELP — for more power and strength from God to OVERCOME!

This is the WAY of the Christian!

It is the way of a constant BATTLE — a striving against SIN — a seeking God in earnest prayer for help and spiritual POWER to overcome. They are constantly GAINING GROUND. They are constantly GROWING in God's KNOWLEDGE, from the Bible. They are constantly rooting out wrong habits, driving themselves into RIGHT habits. They are constantly growing closer to God through Bible study and prayer. They are constantly growing in CHARACTER, *toward* perfection, even though not yet perfect.

The truly converted Christian will find that he often stumbles, *under temptation*, and falls down — even as a physical child learning to walk often falls down. But the year-old child does not get discouraged and give up. He gets up and starts out again.

With Paul, they say: "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I FOLLOW AFTER . . . Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but *this one thing I do*, FORGETTING those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I PRESS TOWARD THE MARK FOR THE PRIZE OF THE HIGH CALLING OF GOD IN CHRIST JESUS" (Phil. 3:12-14).

But, someone may ask, what if one's life is cut off, and he dies *before* he has attained this perfection? Is he saved, or lost? The answer is that we shall never obtain absolute perfection in *this* life.

I said, earlier, that a person who is converted does receive the Holy Spir-

it at a *definite time* — *all at once!* Not the full measure Christ had — he is not at once full-grown spiritually — only a spiritual babe in Christ. Yet he is then a changed, converted man — changed in mind, in attitude, in the *direction* he has set himself to strive to travel. Even though he has not yet reached perfection — even though he may have stumbled under temptation, and taken a spiritual fall — as long as, in his mind and heart, he is earnestly striving to travel GOD'S WAY, to overcome and grow spiritually — as long as God's Spirit is in him — as long as he is being led by the Spirit of God, he is a begotten SON OF GOD.

If, anywhere along this life's journey, that life is cut short, such a man will be resurrected.

It is only the one who deliberately QUILTS and GIVES UP — who REJECTS God and God's way, and rejects Christ as his Savior — who turns FROM this direction of GOD'S WAY, *in his mind and heart* — in his inner INTENT — who deliberately and intentionally in his mind TURNS FROM Christ, who is lost. If, once having been converted, having received God's Spirit and TASTED of the joys of GOD'S WAY, one deliberately rejects that way, makes the DECISION, not under stress of temptation, but deliberately and finally, NOT to go God's way, then God says it is IMPOSSIBLE to renew such a one to repentance. He would have to REPENT of that decision. But if he WILLFULLY made it, not in a time of temptation, but calmly, deliberately, willfully, then he just WILL NOT ever repent of it.

But anyone who FEARS he may have committed the "unpardonable sin" — is perhaps worried about it, and HOPES he *has not* committed it, and still WANTS to have God's salvation — no such has committed it — such a one MAY repent, and go right on to salvation IF HE WANTS TO!

If you have stumbled and fallen down, *DON'T* BE DISCOURAGED! Get up and press on ahead!

If you see a Christian do something wrong, *DON'T* SIT IN JUDGMENT AND CONDEMN — that's God's business to judge, not yours! Let's have compassion and mercy — we don't know the inner heart of others — only GOD does! □

MINI STUDY

God's Great Master Plan

MASTER PLAN

The Good News, in conjunction with the Correspondence Course Department, presents brief monthly excursions into the study of the Bible, delving into topics relevant to the development of future members of the God Family. Bible study is one means by which Christians are renewed daily (II Cor. 4:16), so let's refresh ourselves with more of the precious truths of God's Word!

Instructions: The format of these ministudies is similar to that of the Ambassador College Bible Correspondence Course. Look up and *read in your Bible* the scripture references given in answer to the questions. Comments following the questions elaborate on the scriptures just read. That's all there is to it! (These studies are based on the King James Version of the Bible, unless otherwise stated.)

— Prepared by Richard H. Sedliacik

12. What is the next festival, or annual Sabbath, of the seven described in Leviticus 23? Verses 23-24.

The Day of Trumpets depicts primarily the triumphant return of the powerful living Christ to set up the government of God on earth and to rule as King of kings (Rev. 11:15; 19:16). You will remember that the *first resurrection* also occurs at the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, which is announced by the blast of a mighty trumpet (I Thess. 4:16-17; I Cor. 15:52). Yet the overall meaning of the Feast of Trumpets encompasses even more.

Notice that it is the Feast of Trumpets, *plural* (Lev. 23:24), not the "Feast of the Last Trump." When ancient Israel was wandering in the wilderness, they became accustomed to the blowing of trumpets for many purposes: the calling of assemblies, the signal to march or halt, officer's call or as a *warning*. Much like the use of bugles in modern military history, Israel recognized various sounds as having specific meanings.

13. What do Revelation 8:1-2, 6 and 10:7 have to say regarding the blowing of trumpets shortly before the return of Christ?

There is a parallel between trumpets sounding alarms of warning in ancient Israel and the warn-

ing/witness message of the Work of God today (Isa. 58:1). There is also a similar relationship between the angelic trumpet blasts of Revelation signaling the imminent return of Jesus Christ and the continual warning and witness conducted by God's Work today as it prepares the way for the return of Jesus Christ. The successive angelic trumpet blasts and accompanying catastrophic events on a worldwide scale just prior to Christ's return will serve as *final warnings* to a heedless, sin-ravaged world!

14. What annual Sabbath follows only nine days after the Feast of Trumpets? Lev. 23:26-32; 16:2-34, especially verses 29-31 of chapter 16. Also notice Revelation 20:1-3 in connection with Leviticus 16:21-22.

The rituals required of the Old Testament Levitical ministry on the Day of Atonement are described in great detail in the 16th chapter of Leviticus. Suffice it to say here that the live goat, upon whom all the sins of Israel were to be confessed and which was led into the desolate wilderness, represents the devil, upon whom the guilt of all the sins of mankind will be laid by Jesus Christ after He returns.

Satan, who is called the "god of this world" (II Cor. 4:4), and is described as the "prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience" (Eph. 2:2), being the father of sin (John 8:42-44), will be *restrained* by Christ from further leading mankind into sin. No longer will he be able to "broadcast" his attitudes of vanity, lust and greed.

At the devil's "chaining" (Rev. 20:1-3), the symbolism of Leviticus 16 will become reality. The minds of men, formerly kept tightly closed by Satan and his demon cohorts, will now at last be opened by the Spirit of God. For the first time they will be able to understand God's master plan of salvation for mankind, and humanity will readily accept and receive forgiveness of their sins through Christ. Then, and only then, will man become at one with Christ and the Father, as symbolized by the Day of At-one-ment.

15. How are we to specifically observe the Day of Atonement? Lev. 23:32.

MINI STUDY

The Day of Atonement is perhaps the most unusual Holy Day as far as what God expects us to do during this 24-hour period. For it is the one day on which God has commanded us to *fast* — to “afflict your souls” or bodies. (For biblical proof that afflicting one’s soul means fasting, compare the following passages: Ps. 35:13; 69:10; Isa. 58:3; Ezra 8:21.)

Fasting on the Day of Atonement means denying oneself food and water for 24 hours — from sunset to sunset (“even[ing] unto even[ing]” — Lev. 23:32). Fasting is *not* penance — *not* a hunger strike to try to get one’s way with God. Whenever a Christian fasts, it should be for the purpose of humbling his or her own fleshly mind with its carnal will, and to draw closer to God and His righteous way (Isa. 58:6-11).

Thus fasting on the Day of Atonement is a vivid reminder of the state of mind necessary for salvation — of the humility, the godly sorrow, the earnest seeking for God’s way — a condition to which this world will have been brought by catastrophic events culminating in Christ’s return!

16. What important seven-day Festival and integral annual Sabbath day occurs soon after the Day of Atonement? Lev. 23:33-35; Deut. 16:13.

The Feast of Tabernacles was also called the “Feast of Ingathering” (Ex. 23:16; 34:22) because this seven-day Festival began just *after* the autumn harvest season. The whole nation observed this Feast after the final, main harvest was in (Lev. 23:39).

17. Did Jesus Christ keep the Feast of Tabernacles? John 7:2, 8-11, 14. Did everyone know that Jesus always kept God’s feasts and was *certain* to be in Jerusalem for its observance? Verse 11.

Because of continually mounting persecution, Jesus wisely chose not to travel openly in Judea (verse 1). However, verses 1-10 show that He did risk His life to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. Even though He went secretly, He openly taught in the temple during the middle of the Feast.

18. What is the divinely set theme for the annual observance of the Feast of Tabernacles? Deut. 16:14-15. (Notice the words *surely rejoice*. Other translations render this “be altogether joyful.”) Does God intend for everyone — regardless of age, social strata or economic level — to *rejoice* in this Feast? Verse 14.

19. Does God intend for a man to take his wife and children to rejoice with him at the Feast of Tabernacles? Deut. 16:14; 12:5, 7, 12. Are they to live in “booths” — temporary dwellings (roughly corresponding to motel rooms, hotel rooms and

lodges of today) — at the place designated for the observance of this Feast? Lev. 23:42.

The Feast of Tabernacles is full of spiritual meaning for Christians today. Simply put, the Feast of Tabernacles portrays the wonderful world tomorrow under the righteous rule of Jesus Christ — 1,000 years of peace, prosperity and *joy* for the billions of mankind who will live in this utopian age. It is during the Millennium that the great “autumn harvest” of human lives will begin to be gathered into the Kingdom of God — born again as divine members of the Family of God.

Just think of it! Satan will have been immediately deposed at Christ’s return. Then 1,000 years of peace and prosperity will follow. Those who are the “firstfruits” of God’s spiritual harvest — *first born* into God’s Family and coinheritors with Jesus Christ — will join Him in ruling the earth. They will be given the privilege of bringing saving knowledge to every human then alive and those born during the ensuing Millennium!

Over and over God tells us that the Feast of Tabernacles is a time of exceedingly great rejoicing. For ancient Israel it was a time of rejoicing because the abundant winter’s store was taken in just before the Feast. But in the Millennium, the happiness, joy and prosperity pictured by the Feast of Tabernacles will exist *worldwide* under the enlightened rule of Jesus Christ. Obedience to the spiritual principles of God’s laws and God’s revealed way of life will make the world tomorrow a literal utopia.

Today, God’s great Fall Festival gives His Spirit-begotten children a special time and setting in which to think about His purpose for life and the way to attain it. The Feast of Tabernacles is intended to change their routine and separate and free them from the world. Dwelling in temporary habitations for an entire week away from their everyday surroundings, away from their jobs, their customary thoughts and most negative influences, they picture by their observance of these seven days the universal freedom and peace that will exist in the Millennium.

The Feast of Tabernacles as observed today is actually a tiny, but happy, foretaste of the joyful world tomorrow when the Spirit of God will lead humanity. These are days of concentrated teaching by God’s ministers — days of continuous, genuine Christian fellowship and just plain good fun! Christians at the Feast demonstrate now, by the way they live together in harmony, what this entire sin-sick, unhappy world *could and will be like!*

(This subject to be continued.)

Women

(Continued from page 17)

And Susanna? And Sarah and Deborah and Ruth and Lydia and all the other great women of the Bible? They are all certainly going to be in God's Kingdom, ruling with Christ.

The apostles are the only ones named to rule in a specific area. You and I, men and women, are only told we will become rulers over one, two, five or 10 cities or more based on how we utilize our talents and abilities. We will receive responsibility in proportion to how much we overcome. Multimillion dollar decisions and corporate presidencies have little to do with it.

So how do women enter God's Kingdom?

Exactly like men do!

We must all come to believe the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Then everyone has to repent and be baptized in the name of Christ. After baptism we receive the Holy Spirit. Then we must grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ. And remain faithful. And overcome to the end.

It's the same for everyone — no shortcuts. It doesn't matter whether you're male or female. It isn't better to be one or the other. We are all in this together.

There is a crown of righteousness laid up for all Christians. Christ has gone to prepare a place for us, and He will come again (John 14:3). When He comes again, we will all be caught up together to meet Him in the air (I Thess. 4:17). And then both men and women will be changed to spirit — given immortal life.

So the course of life you pursue in career, homemaking, whatever, only makes a contribution to your overall character development process. It is not the end, but a means to the end.

"But could you be a little more specific?" you might ask.

Are there ways women do develop skills to qualify for rulership in a specific manner, especially when they are homemakers?

Certainly. And in coming issues of *The Good News* we will be covering that very subject — the homemaker as executive manager. We hope you will look forward to this information. □

Example

(Continued from page 19)

lief" (Heb. 4:11). Paul specifically says that it was "because of unbelief" that Israel could not enter the promised land (Heb. 3:19).

Paul then shows Israel's warning message to God's people: "Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest [God's Kingdom], any of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them [Israel], not being mixed with faith in them that heard it" (Heb. 4:1-2).

Faith was the missing element needed in their lives to enter the promised land. And faith is what we need to develop in order to succeed where they failed.

Doubt is deadly to us, for it will open the door to all the terrible attitudes and sins of ancient Israel.

Israel's warning message is simple, yet far reaching. The greatest single danger to those of us (modern-day Israel) journeying toward the promised Kingdom of God is doubting God! It's doubting that Christ can lead His Church through Mr. Armstrong, His leader today. The movements of God's Church are not being decided by a man, but by God.

How do we grow in this thing called faith? It is simple. We just do what Israel did not. Whenever trials come upon us, we face them as opportunities to build faith, rather than as calamities to be feared.

We know that although the physical circumstances may look disastrous, we look to an invisible circumstance that can affect the outcome. God is that invisible reality standing beside us ready to make "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose" (Rom. 8:28).

Though scattered around the world, God's people are marching, united by the Spirit and Work of God, toward the Kingdom of God. Mr. Armstrong has stated that this Work is a work of faith.

We see this faith demonstrated daily by our Church leaders to challenge all the trials that come upon the Work, but do we as individual members realize we too should be

challenging our personal troubles with that same kind of faith?

Our daily troubles are opportunities to build faith. Problems intrude into all our lives. Our trials can come from almost any area of life — school, work, home or play.

We also have Satan's influence and the pull of the world to continually cope with. We have to contend with our own human nature. Unless we fearlessly approach these trials as opportunities to build faith in God, life can become a tremendous burden.

None of us enjoy adverse circumstances in our lives, but if we can accept them as necessary in building faith, then we can at least approach our trials with a positive rather than negative attitude. Peter said "the trial of your faith" is "much more precious than . . . gold" (I Pet. 1:7). Why? Because faith is the essential element we must build in order to do the Work and enter the Kingdom of God. Without faith we would all fail.

At times life seems filled with many "Red Seas," some little and some so big they look impossible for us to cross. But let us learn the beautiful truth that ancient Israel did not — that there is no "Red Sea" too big to cross with God.

Let's view each day of our lives, with all its joys and sorrows, as just another step toward the Kingdom of God. We should expect trials to come upon us in our journey, as they did on ancient Israel. We can learn from Israel's wrong examples and determine to refuse to face our troubles with useless doubt and fear. Rather, we can choose to challenge life with a positive attitude of faith.

When we do this, we will see our lives transformed into an exciting, happy journey. We will be able to understand how Paul was able to say, "I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation" (II Cor. 7:4).

God is with us each step of the way and will deliver us. Choosing to challenge life — with all its troubles — with faith will give us the pleasant fruits of hope, strength, peace and joy.

We will succeed where ancient Israel failed. And then their message will not have been delivered in vain unto us "upon whom the ends of the world are come." □



Where Is the True Church?

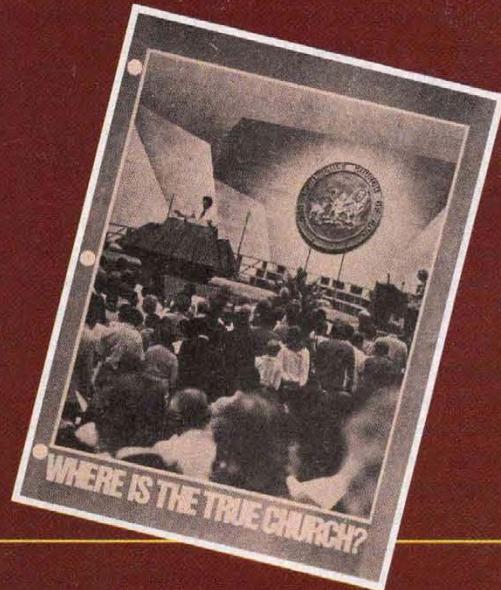
Believe it or not, your life depends on the answer to this question. God's true Church — wherever it is — holds "the keys of the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 16:19), and without those keys there is no hope for anyone beyond this physical existence.

So what about this whole church question — as it concerns you? Where is the original true Church Christ founded — the one the living Jesus Christ still heads today? Is it a human organization? A spiritual organism? Of whom is it composed? How does one become a member? What is the purpose and function of the Church?

Herbert W. Armstrong analyzes these life-and-death questions in a new reprint series entitled *Where Is the True Church?* Mr. Armstrong brings out the eye-opening truth about what the Church of God really is, where it is today and what its divine commission entails. He discusses the true name of God's Church, the governmental structure in the Church, how one becomes a part of the Church (It's not how you may have thought!), where the Church is headed today — and why — and the great Work

Jesus Christ gave His Church to do *now*.

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