

PASTOR GENERAL'S REPORT

TO THE MINISTRY OF THE
WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD



VOL. 4, NO. 31

PASADENA, CALIFORNIA

JULY 30, 1982

FROM MINISTERIAL SERVICES

Information About Deaf Brethren

The Services for the Deaf section of Ministerial Services requests that all Church pastors send in an update on the number and names of deaf (including hard of hearing) adults and children in each of their congregations. There are some deaf people unknown to us who could be encouraged and assisted through special letters and other means if this information could be obtained.

International News

Canada The financial picture for June is considerably better than the one for May. We registered a 15.7% increase over June of last year, bringing our year-to-date figure to a plus 12.9%.

This last month has seen the office staff very busy handling the regular mail plus the extra work generated by our magazine advertising campaign. The latest figures are as follows:

TV GUIDE (May 31)	2,690	CHATELAINE-English	1,237
MACLEANS MAGAZINE	1,606	PERSPECTIVES	1,212
L'ACTUALITE	1,508	TIME Magazine	622

June also saw us mail out Mr. Armstrong's semiannual letter offering the WONDERFUL WORLD TOMORROW and the UNITED STATES AND BRITAIN IN PROPHECY booklets. The latter continues to be one of our most popular booklets. In the first six months of this year we have mailed out over 22,000. This will probably jump considerably with the advertising of it in the letter. The other most requested booklets of the first six months are as follows:

NEVER BEFORE UNDERSTOOD, WHY HUMANITY CANNOT SOLVE ITS EVILS	23,567
THE BOOK OF REVELATION UNVEILED AT LAST	8,498
WHO IS THE BEAST?	7,663
THE SEVEN LAWS OF SUCCESS	6,831
WHY WERE YOU BORN?	5,647
ARE WE LIVING IN THE LAST DAYS?	5,499
DOES GOD EXIST?	5,137

We have mailed a total of 135,890 booklets so far this year. The PLAIN TRUTH is now on display in 5,826 waiting rooms. Of this total, 5,325 were added through the phone program. We certainly appreciate the work of the members across the country who made this such a successful program.

NOTICE TO ALL MINISTERS

Alvin Johnsey, recently disfellowshipped, is a truck driver who may try to attend services in Churches throughout the U.S. For further information, please contact Mr. Roger West.

Appreciation for the Second Ministerial Refreshing Program

Dear Messrs. Armstrong and Tkach:

We have just returned home from another very fine Ministerial Refreshing Program. This format is much more effective than the former ministerial conferences as well as the sabbatical programs. Having been involved in all three formats, it is obvious that ministerial education is also now on the "right track." All the lectures were informative and helpful, and I appreciate the opportunity to get to know a group of fellow ministers in an in-depth way.

Ray and Carol Meyer

Dear Mr. Tkach:

This year's Ministerial Refreshing Program was excellent. Thank you for your part in it. The ministry God is using to educate the ministry made it clear what God expects of us. I'm sobered by the responsibility and am striving to overcome so as to be more worthy of my calling. It is evident how God is unifying the Church through these programs.

Nancy and I are thankful for our new assignment. We're saddened because we're leaving brethren we've known and loved several years but excited about meeting and serving more of God's people. We're anxious to get to work in our new area and use the material given us in this year's Refreshing Program. Thanks again to you and all those that gave us some meat of the Word to chew on.

Ken and Nancy Williams

Mr. Joseph Tkach:

A sincere thanks to you and all the individuals involved in Refreshing Program II, Session #7. Judy and I were certainly inspired by the spiritual meat that was given to us in these classes. So much valuable Biblical information was "dished" out for our consumption. We look forward to digesting this information for our spiritual growth, as well as passing it on to the brethren.

Also, the opportunity to meet and fellowship with several of the ministers was greatly appreciated.

Christ continues to ready His Church through His Apostle, as well as all of you on the Headquarters team.

Dennis and Judy Milner

Comments From Monthly Church Reports

GREENSBORO, NC--BOB LEAGUE: A person in the northern part of our area requested a visit. She said there were others interested as well. To our surprise, there were eight families present. In all there are approximately 30 people--about 20 adults and 10 children!

SAN ANTONIO, TX--GREGORY L. SARGENT: June saw more solid requests for visits by PM's--old and new. We have a total of 15 people who have counseled for baptism, but are not yet baptized. Expect twice as many baptisms as last year.

SAN DIEGO, CA--NORMAN A. SMITH: New PM's seem to be enthusiastic and eager. Some have been searching for the true Church and now believe they have found it.

MT. POCONO, PA--O. G. ENGELBART: The members are very encouraged to have the telecast in our area. They continually express how strong Mr. Armstrong is on these telecasts, realizing how short time must be.

CANTON, OH--JOHN FOSTER: Every Sabbath I hear more and more comments on how great the telecasts are becoming and how inspirational and encouraging the articles in the PT and GN have become.

FT. COLLINS, CO--CHUCK ZIMMERMAN: New visits continue to increase due to telecast. PT newsstand growth should eventually produce a net gain. God has healed quickly and completely in a number of illnesses and accidents here lately. One person was healed without scarring from burns. Others have been healed of menares disease, female problems, etc.

CLEVELAND (EAST), OH--GUY L. ENGELBART: The brethren are thrilled to hear from Mr. Armstrong via tape. The message on why only a few are chosen today was fantastic. The way Mr. Armstrong explained that those who are going to be teachers must be schooled first before the rest can be called, was a concept most had not thought of in that way before. Hope he can keep the tapes coming.

JACKSONVILLE, NC--JOHN MOSKEL: The brethren really appreciate Mr. Armstrong's sermons! Please keep sending them to us. We get a lot of "mileage" out of them.

COLUMBUS, IN--STEVE NUTZMAN: Several S.E.P. campers returned from Orr with glowing reports about this year's camp. Their highlight was Mr. Armstrong's visit to camp and his inspection tour of their dorms. They said he even inspected the closets! This type of feedback helps the other area teens become more involved in Y.O.U. and the Church. Some of the Y.O.U. parents don't support the local activities on a regular basis due to finances and time pressures. This, of course, tends to have a negative effect on the whole Y.O.U. program. I'm hopeful that in our parents meetings the next several months we can develop a great awareness and rapport between parents and teens.

GENEVA, AL--DON WATERHOUSE: The PLAIN TRUTH distribution program is a success. Even though some local Protestant churches have forced the magazine out of some stores, more new outlets have quickly opened up.

ROANOKE, VA--ROBERT PERSKY: The GN is always fantastic! The PT is hard hitting and very interesting. The TV telecasts the best ever. Y.O.U. and Y.E.S. are a wonderful success. God is pouring out His blessings everywhere. I have never known it to be so good in the true Church.

--Joe Tkach, Ministerial Services

PUBLISHING SERVICES UPDATE

God is continuing to bless Mr. Armstrong's efforts to put the Church back on the right track by granting ever-increasing growth in PT subscriptions. Thanks to Mr. Armstrong's very dynamic and revitalized television program and the diligent efforts by our 7,000-member team of newsstand representatives, during the first six months of 1982 over 700,000 new subscribers have been added to the PT mailing list. This increase is already 80% of the total number added during all of 1981. It also represents the same number of subscribers added in 1979 and 1980 combined!

More than 70% of all new subscribers this year have come from newsstands, TV programs, and blow-in cards. This increase of new subscribers has raised the U.S. subscription level to 1,891,000 with the August issue.

Worldwide circulation at this point, including newsstands, is at 4,820,000. It is interesting to note that many of the new subscribers are coming from the major metropolitan areas of the U.S. These areas have historically yielded few subscribers. For example, the New York area has advanced 46 places in the past nine months in rank of PT penetration. Chicago and Philadelphia have increased 56 and 54 places in rank respectively. These advances reflect the substantial increase in media coverage for these areas from TV, newsstands and display items.

The most spectacular increase has been in the Hartford/New Haven area, which has risen in rank of PT penetration 102 places. It is interesting to note that the Hartford/New Haven Church area distributes the largest number of PT newsstand magazines in the U.S.

We are now reaching one out of every 25 households in the United States. At this rate of growth, we should reach the five million circulation level by the end of 1982.

--Ray Wright, Publishing Services

UPDATE FROM MAIL PROCESSING

People Looking to God's Work for Solutions

Since The PLAIN TRUTH circulation and media coverage for Mr. Armstrong's broadcast have greatly increased this year, so have letters from listeners and subscribers seeking for help with their personal problems. Many are turning to God and His Work for answers. This type of mail has increased 100% over the first six months of last year.

The most prevalent problems troubling people are:

- 1) Health (particularly cancer)
- 2) Marriage
- 3) Child rearing, delinquency, drugs, etc.
- 4) Unemployment
- 5) Old age

Our Personal Correspondence writers strive to give these people help and encouragement by showing them that God is very concerned with all who turn to Him in their time of need. Along with each letter we send whatever literature applies. When appropriate, the person is also offered the services of the local pastor.

Phone Comments About the Telecast

Many of the calls in response to Mr. Armstrong's telecast come from new people who are making their first contact with the Work. Enthusiasm often runs high. Here are a few unsolicited comments taken by our WATS operators.

I love Mr. Armstrong's program! I take notes each time it comes on. My husband is a minister, and as soon as he gets home from work, he turns Mr. Armstrong's show on! I wish we could see him speak in person.

D.C. (Bridgeport, CT)

We missed church today and saw Mr. Armstrong for the first time ever. Both my husband and I were absolutely spellbound. It was so vivid! The art work was so realistic! I have never had something made so plain to me! I would love to meet Mr. Armstrong and tell him so!

H.C. (Charleston, SC)

The more I listen to Mr. Armstrong, the more I see he is speaking the truth. I see that a lot of us have been receiving the doctrines of men and not of God.

G.H. (Santa Monica, CA)

Of all the preachers, he is the only one who really knows. Several of us have been watching him, and we all felt the same way at once. Thank you very much.

T.M. (Tuckahoe, NY)

I would not miss Mr. Armstrong. I know he is preaching the truth. No one else preaches as he does. The whole world should listen to him.

C.P. (New York, NY)

Mr. Armstrong makes things so very, very clear. Also, he is not constantly asking for money.

L.B. (Fitchburg, MA)

I have never heard of anything like this before where they don't ask for money. I have been studying my Bible for years, but this is all new to me. It is a terrific program.

M.C. (Alpine, NJ)

Of all the preachers I have heard on TV, he is the best. I will watch him again next Sunday.

Mrs. W.W. (Milwaukee, WI)

I really appreciate Mr. Armstrong's method of teaching. He doesn't force people to believe. He shows clearly from the Bible itself what the truth is--especially in the recent program on Revelation. I have heard many interpretations, but never one so plain and simple as Mr. Armstrong's.

G.J. (Los Angeles, CA)

I don't know anyone who knows the fundamentals of the Bible as Mr. Armstrong does. It's not only what he says, but the way he speaks. He speaks with authority and knowledge.

D.A. (Bourbonnais, IL)

--Richard Rice, Mail Processing Center

ON THE WORLD SCENE

HERPES--PROMISCUITY'S PAINFUL PENALTY A most remarkable article appeared in this week's (August 2, 1982) issue of TIME magazine. In fact, at least in the North American edition, it was the cover story, titled "The New Scarlet Letter," subtitled: "Herpes, an incurable virus, threatens to undo the sexual revolution."

It would be worthwhile for all in the ministry to obtain a copy of this issue, or at least a photocopy of the article from a nearby public library. For those around the world who are unable to do so, I felt it would be good to summarize it here, along with some comments and quotes. The article begins as follows:

After chastity slouched off into exile in the '60s, the sexual revolution encountered little resistance. Indeed, in the age of the Pill, Penthouse Pets and porn-movie cassettes, the revolution looked so sturdily permanent that sex seemed to subside into a simple consumer item. Now, suddenly...herpes, an ancient viral infection that can be transmitted during sex, recurs fitfully and cannot be cured...has emerged from relative obscurity and exploded into a full-fledged epidemic. "The truth about life in the United States in the 1980s," says Dr. Kevin Murphy of Dallas, one of the nation's leading herpes researchers, "is that if you are going to have sex, you are going to have to take the risk of getting herpes."

An estimated 20 million Americans now have genital herpes, with as many as half a million new cases expected this year.... Those remarkable numbers are altering sexual rites in America, changing courtship patterns, sending thousands of sufferers spinning into months of depression and self-exile and delivering a numbing blow to the one-night stand. The herpes counterrevolution may be ushering a reluctant, grudging chastity back into fashion. Eight years ago, Alex Comfort, the expansive apostle of coitus [and author of JOY OF SEX] could say of sex: "There is nothing to be afraid of and never was." Now, in the Age of Herpes, Playboy

employees jokingly refer to the swimming facilities at Hugh Hefner's Los Angeles mansion as "the herpes pool."...Flesh Merchant Al Goldstein, editor of [unprintable] magazine, says glumly, "It may be there is a god in heaven carving out his pound of flesh for all our joys."

Why the dramatic rise now in the incidence of herpes? Sexual freedom is obviously implicated. "With herpes, every new case is added to the pool," says Dr. Yehudi Felman, a New York City VD specialist. "The increase is exponential after a while." Not only are more people indulging in sex, they are also more active --starting younger, marrying later, divorcing more often. The wider acceptance of oral sex has also played a role. Herpes Type I produces cold sores in the mouth; Herpes II, genital lesions. [But Herpes I can become a venereal disease if spread there through oral sex. This practice, in fact spreads both viruses in each direction.]

Many swingers have dropped out because of herpes. And a trip to a prostitute is a high-stakes gamble....The epidemic has clearly made married philanderers extremely wary. Few things cool extra-marital ardor like the specter of passing on an incurable disease to a mate and then having to explain where it came from....Wives now give husbands smiling lectures on the ravages of the disease to keep them faithful....

The herpes virus itself is a particularly perplexing and defiant villain, as described in TIME's follow-up article, "Battling an Elusive Invader." It has been labeled "the ultimate parasite." It could also be called a most intimate parasite. Once herpes has found its way into your system, says Dr. Harold Kessler, a Chicago specialist in infectious diseases, "it's your virus for life." It does this by taking over the protein-producing apparatus of the host cell, initiating what one expert calls a "biological coup d'etat."

Once the initial attack has been brought under control by the body's immunological system, the virus retreats, in the case of genital herpes, to the sacral ganglia which is a cluster of nerve cells near the base of the spinal cord. Here the herpes simplex virus lodges safely beyond the reach of the body's immune system and enters a latent stage.

The virus reinfects the original site capriciously, sometimes twice a month, causing discomforting sores and lesions, sometimes (though rarely) as seldom as once a decade. Since physical and emotional stress seems the most likely trigger to reinfection, herpes sufferers try to lead tranquil lives, some practicing yoga.

Genital herpes has its particularly dangerous manifestations also, especially to the unborn. Should genital herpes recur in the final weeks of pregnancy, look out! It is estimated that about half of newborns pick up the disease when traversing the birth canal. Of those infected, up to 60% die, and for the survivors there is a 50% risk of blindness or brain damage!

The Herpes simplex virus has remarkably altered the "etiquette" of promiscuous behavior, notes the TIME special report:

...A direct question ("You don't have herpes, do you?") is regarded as tacky. Standard openings have evolved. "You would tell me if you had anything I could catch, wouldn't you?" is admired for its implication of trust and its we're-in-this-together coziness....

When or whether to tell a date that you have herpes is a thorny matter....Psychotherapist [Michael] Herships [came up with a] solution: if you are not having an attack of herpes at the time, then don't tell, because the risk of transmission is low. [This amounts to a kind of "herpes rhythm method," doesn't it?] Surprisingly, many doctors counsel silence on the first encounter, mostly because their patients' psyches are shaky....Says another doctor: "Every time you kiss someone good night, do you tell them you sometimes get cold sores on your mouth?"

Herpetics (those who have the disease) can do little but try to control the negative emotions and stress that usually trigger the recurring attacks. Of course, medical science is attempting to come up with either a vaccine or a wonder drug to circumvent the built-in penalty for violating the Seventh Commandment. Right now there is an international search underway for a herpes vaccine. There are said to be "promising" vaccines being tested. As far as drugs to control the virus once it is contracted, prospects are bleaker. Once the virus has tunneled into the ganglia "hide out," it may be too late. Says one specialist: "You would need a pretty remarkable drug to attack the virus genes without damaging the host cells." Of course, medical science is cut off from the knowledge and power of God who is the only one who can cure (heal) herpes--once a person truly repents of transgressing God's Laws in this aspect of life.

The TIME article nowhere counsels a return to a moral "lifestyle." A biblical-based morality is subtly scorned, as evidenced by a reference to herpes as "Jerry Falwell's revenge" (Falwell is a TV preacher who heads the so-called Moral Majority movement in America) and the less subtle quote from Al Goldstein ("a god in heaven carving out his pound of flesh for all our joys"). The TIME article does admit that the herpes epidemic may be ushering in a time of "reluctant, grudging chastity." Oh yes, carnal mankind wants to have "fun" without paying the penalty and bemoans the fact that it can't "have it both ways." But even TIME is forced to admit that our promiscuous age is being snapped back into a sense of reality. It concludes by stating:

For now, herpes cannot be defeated, only cozened into an uneasy, lifelong truce....But perhaps not so unhappily, it may be a prime mover in helping to bring to a close an era of mindless promiscuity. The monogamous now have one more reason to remain so. For all the distress it has brought, the troublesome little bug may inadvertently be ushering in a period in which sex is linked more firmly to commitment and trust.

Meanwhile, the Churches Veer Farther From the Truth

TIME magazine and other popular publications can't be expected to counsel the public to go the right way. But then, who does act as wise counsel except God's Church? Certainly not this world's churches! Here is an article from the TIMES of London, June 10, 1982, discussing one church's "enlightened" new outlook regarding homosexuality.

A third attempt is to be made this month to persuade the Methodist Conference to accept a statement that takes a tolerant view of homosexual relationships. In 1979 and 1980 reports reaching similar conclusions were referred back for further consideration. They both ran into opposition on the ground that their attitude to homosexual conduct was incompatible with biblical teaching.

The latest report, published today, records that two views exist in the church and adds that a majority of those on the working party which produced it felt that biblical teaching on homosexuality should be reinterpreted in the light of modern insights.

The biblical authors considered that God had created all people as heterosexual by nature. Hence homosexuality was contrary to God's design. It was now understood, the report said, that some people are by nature homosexual, and "we must consider seriously the possibility that homosexuality is part of God's process of creative design."

A majority of the working party therefore concludes, as did the two earlier reports, that homosexual and heterosexual relationships should both be valued according to the presence or absence of love. Therefore the choice of a homosexual relationship, including "genital expression," is to be expected as one that Christians may responsibly make. The working party was united in believing that men and women of a homosexual nature should not be barred from Christian ministry or church office.

Elsewhere in the report the working party also urges a tolerant attitude towards people who, whether homosexual or heterosexual, live together in transient relationships.

In other words, even "slumming around" is to be viewed with tolerance. Anyway, I felt that a diversion from our normal coverage of world events in order to delve into this social topic would prove helpful. It certainly shows the immutability and wonder of God's Law and how it cannot be broken without paying a penalty.

"Yea, let God be true, but every man a liar"--including the sex gurus of this age such as Alex Comfort and Hugh Hefner with his insidious "Playboy Philosophy," which he propounded continuously in his publication, setting much of the tone for contemporary moral standards. Just because God's Law didn't exact an immediate penalty for violation, the hucksters of hedonism thought there was no penalty. They couldn't see that genital herpes and the large array of other wildly explosive STD's--sexually-transmissible diseases--must first build up a large reservoir of affected victims before their full impact would be felt. How much easier it is to learn truth by obeying God's Law rather than through painful experience.

--Gene H. Hogberg, News Bureau