

When Heresy Strikes And What God Says You Must Do

In about 53 A.D. the apostle Paul wrote a letter to the brethren who lived in the area known as Galatia. In his epistle to these members, he was amazed at how easily they had been deceived into accepting a false gospel “I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel”, Galatians 1:6.

In Galatians 3:1, he further likened this deception of the truth to a bewitching “O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth”. These are strong words by an apostle to the members of his flock. It is inconceivable that such a thing could happen to God’s people, especially those who were taught the truth directly from such a prominent apostle such as Paul “Ye know how through infirmity of the flesh I preached the gospel unto you at the first” Galatians 4:13. But it did happen!

And it is further recorded, that this same group of Galatians who once received this great servant of God with open arms “... but received me as an angel of God” Galatians 4:14, now considered him their adversary, when all he was trying to do was to steer them back to the truth “Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?” Galatians 4:16.

It is astounding how quickly false teachers can arise from within the Church and deceive the flock. And what is even more astonishing is how quickly converted members of God’s true Church can turn against even an apostle who is trying to help them and protect them against heresy and false teachers “They zealously affect you, *but* not well” Galatians 4:17.

Paul’s epistle to the Galatians stands as proof that even those in the New Testament Church who are led by God’s spirit can become confused when it comes to the truth and can turn on the greatest servants of God. Therefore, it is imperative that true Christians be able to distinguish between false doctrines and the truths that come from God.

Most would never consider that they are capable of being misled when it comes to the truth. But as it has just been illustrated, false teachings can appear from within the Church and can confuse those who are called. You will soon learn that the authors of heresy can arise from within the Church, and even from those in the highest ministerial ranks. And their deception can grip the begotten members of the Church.

The information contained in this document is intended to help those who want to remain faithful to God’s truth, the true doctrines that were restored to the Church during the Philadelphia era. It will help a begotten child of God distinguish between truth and error. And it is written to those who are looking for “the way escape” from an organization that is engulfed in false teachings or that has accepted doctrines that have been watered down or altered. And it will also help one find their way back to God’s one true Church.

You will hear from Mr. Armstrong as he led the Worldwide Church of God in truth for over 50 years address the subject of heresy, and you will see how he was pressured to compromise but did not. You will also learn what he taught regarding the subject of erroneous teachings and liberal doctrines. And you will read the instruction that God gives to His people, the course of action that they must take when heresy strikes the Church of God.

The True Doctrines

Before we begin to study what false doctrines are and what they sound like, it is prudent to first learn what the true teachings that come from Christ are and what they sound like. Jesus Christ defined the truth as any teaching that comes from the Word of God, which is the Bible **“thy word is truth”** John 17:17. And this includes prophecy. In addition, Christ stated that His sheep know the sound of his voice, which is the truth **“To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice”**.

So where does the truth come from? All truth comes from the Father (John 17:17). The Father in turn gives the truth to Jesus Christ (John 12:49) and in the 20th century, Christ revealed this truth to Mr. Armstrong through the written Word of God. Mr. Armstrong in turn revealed the truth that he received from Christ to the membership of the Worldwide Church of God (Revelation 3:8 & 10).

A vital key in determining the true doctrines that come from God from the false ones is to first establish how truth enters the Church. So how does truth enter the Church of God? This was plainly explained by Mr. Armstrong. He described numerous times how the truth entered the New Testament Church. An entire article has been written on this subject titled “How Truth Enters the Church of God” and it contains numerous quotes from Mr. Armstrong on this teaching.

A number of different Biblical accounts reveal that truth enters the Church through the office of an apostle. It is received from Christ and is handed down to the Church through this office. Mr. Armstrong further stated that he received the truth through the written Word of God, who is Jesus Christ. This is how the truth, including prophetic doctrines, entered the New Testament Church. You will soon hear Mr. Armstrong thunder this message.

And it is by this method, the way the truth enters the Church that one can be assured of the authenticity of truth. Furthermore, Jesus Christ confirmed the authenticity of the doctrines that were restored to the Church during the Philadelphia era when he stated twice that this era “kept His Word” in Revelation 3:8 & 10. One cannot keep the “Word of Christ” unless one has it.

And it was during the Philadelphia era that a massive amount of truth was restored to the Church by one who was prophesied to restore “all things”, the end-time Elijah. This is a third way to validate the authenticity of the truth. The final proof that the doctrines restored to the Church in the 20th century are correct and true is

by the phenomenal growth in membership and massive scope of the Work that took place during this time, fulfilling the verse “by their fruits you shall know them” Matthew 7:30.

Therefore, any teaching that diminishes or loosens a doctrine that was taught by Christ’s apostle during the Philadelphia era of the Church of God must be considered a doctrine that has been watered down and made liberal. And any teaching that is contrary in any way to the truths that were restored to the Church in the 20th century by Mr. Armstrong must be considered heresy. The following quotes are helpful quotes on the subject of the authenticity of the truths just mentioned, the truths that were restored to the Church of God in the 20th century by the living HEAD of the Church, Jesus Christ:

Truth Enters the Church through Apostles:

“Let's UNDERSTAND this! What doctrine have you learned? **Where did you learn the doctrine?**

Answer? In or through the WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD! How did the Church receive its doctrine — its beliefs — its teachings — when the Church first started, A.D. 31? The Church from the start received its doctrine from the APOSTLES!

“Jesus is the personal Word of God. The Bible is the written word of God. Both are the same!

“In our day, Jesus Christ taught His chosen apostle through the written Word of God. The Worldwide Church of God — the same Church as founded in A.D. 31 — received its DOCTRINE through God's chosen Apostles!”

Worldwide News, “God Commands That We Avoid Certain Ones!”, Herbert W Armstrong, February 25, 1980

“How did the Worldwide Church of God receive its doctrines, beliefs and teachings? EXCLUSIVELY THROUGH CHRIST'S APOSTLE! True, I have practiced the biblical principle that ‘in multitude of counsel there is safety.’ On many occasions some top-level ministers have contributed certain input that has helped me in setting doctrine. BUT EVERY DOCTRINE, BELIEF AND TEACHING IN THE WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD HAS COME FROM CHRIST THROUGH HIS CHOSEN APOSTLE!”

Good News Magazine, “What is a Liberal” Herbert W Armstrong, March 1979

Truth Enters the Church through the End-time Elijah:

“In the process of restoring the government of God in the Church through the modern Elijah, God used him to restore many related truths. Of primary importance was the restoration of Christ’s true gospel of the Kingdom of God! That gospel was restored when the Pastor General Herbert W. Armstrong of the Worldwide Church of God first went on air with ‘The World Tomorrow’ radio program the first week in January, 1934, and then to the world when he went on Radio Luxembourg

and radio Ceylon in 1953 – one century of 19-year time cycles after the gospel of the Kingdom had been suppressed!”

The Ambassador College Bible Correspondence Course, “Proclaiming the Gospel”, Lesson 18, Pages 11 & 14

The Philadelphia Era of the Church Kept the Truth:

“Continue with verse 8: ‘I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, **and hast kept my word**, and hast not denied my name.’

“This era of the Church was to produce fruit. To this era-or to its human leader-God had set before it an open door. It is recorded in II Corinthians 2:12 and also Acts 14:27 how Christ opened the door for Paul to go into other countries to preach the gospel. This Church and/or its leader had but little strength. Neither were of great and powerful stature in Satan's world but **those of this era were faithful to the Word of God. Though much of the original gospel truth, imparted to the original apostles by Jesus in person, had been lost, it was restored through the Bible to this era of God's Church** who were faithful in keeping it.”

Mystery of the Ages, Herbert W Armstrong, Page 290-291

You Shall know them by their Fruits:

“The great Work of God proceeds full steam ahead all over the world. In the first five months of this year a new all-time record was set in number of letters and cards received worldwide. A total of 3.8 million cards and letters were received, as against 3.1 million last year. In 1984 we averaged 465 baptisms per month worldwide — and **for the first four months of 1985 the average was 597 baptisms per month. God is adding an average of one new large church congregation per month.** This year our ministers have averaged 1,972 new contacts requesting a visit, compared to 1,292 last year.”

Co-Worker Letter, Herbert W Armstrong, July 25, 1985

“Over 1100 ministers and elders now serve 750 congregations in 62 countries as God has blessed the Philadelphia era causing it to grow until it has become truly a Worldwide Church of God.

Presentation, “Behind the Work 1983”, Herbert W Armstrong, First Day of the Feast of Tabernacles 1983

“Then we got on all the major United States stations every day—all the big 50,000-watt stations. The Work was then growing 30% a year for 35 years, up until 1968. And it finally became WORLD WIDE, as it is now.”

Sermon, “From Sardis to Laodicea”, Herbert W Armstrong, June 24, 1983

The Key Phrase

You have just seen proof that the true doctrines were restored to the Church by Jesus Christ through His chosen apostle. This occurred during the Philadelphia era of the Church by the one who also fulfilled the end-

time role of Elijah. In addition to this knowledge, there is one key phrase that stands out which Mr. Armstrong stated over and over again regarding how he received the truth from Christ. You will now understand the method by which Christ used to reveal the TRUTH to his 20th century apostle. The key phrase has been highlighted in yellow for emphasis:

“I had to prove whether the Bible is authoritative and is the direct word of God. But I did prove it. And once I proved that, I had something, and a place to go as a source to understand and to gain knowledge. And everything I learned came out of this book.

“Now, Jesus Christ in person is the living personal word of God, but the Bible is the SAME IDENTICAL WORD, THE SAME IDENTICAL TEACHING in writing. It is the word of God in WRITING. The early apostles, including Paul, got everything they brought into the Church FROM CHRIST IN PERSON. **I got it from the WRITTEN WORD - THE SAME IDENTICAL WORD.**

“Now, I have said to you who are in the Church, ‘Follow me,’ as Paul said, ‘as I follow Christ.’ You have a Bible. I preach to you and expound the Bible.”

Bible Study, “Galatians 3 & 4”, Herbert W Armstrong, December 5, 1980

“ ... Those **are all the prophets of the New Testament. Not one of them contributed any of the doctrine.** How did the Church get its doctrine? The Church got all of its doctrine through the apostles and a lot of that came from the prophets of the Old Testament. So, how did the Church today get its doctrine? Today God’s Church only has only one apostle...

“But where did the Church today get its doctrine? Where did you get your doctrine, knowledge and belief? Well its just like I had a letter from one of the evangelist rank ministers the other day. He said everything that I learned from the beginning all came from you. He said you just had it all worked out. All I had to do was listen and memorize it and believe it. Brethren, I wonder how many of you know that God used me to gain this. And where did I get it? And where did the original apostles get their doctrine. They got it from Jesus Christ.

“Jesus Christ in person is the personal word of God. But the Bible is the written word of God. It’s the same word exactly. **I got it from the written word of God.** The 1st century apostles got it from the personal word of God. **But it’s the same word of God exactly.** And some of it came from the Old Testament and some of from the New.”

Bible Study, “Romans 15-16”, Herbert W Armstrong, July 7, 1980

“I did not learn the doctrine that I preach from men. And I am about the only one in the Church that can say that. All the rest in the Church have learned it from me. But you take the gentile Churches. Every one of them learned it from Paul, or from Apollos, or from one of the others under Paul. But Paul learned it direct from Christ.

“Peter and the other apostles were sent to the lost house of Israel. They were taught directly by Christ. Now Jesus in person is the personal word of God. But the Bible is the written Word of God. And it’s the same Word. Only one is written and the other is what Jesus was saying in person. **I was also taught only by Jesus, but through his written word.**”

" ... Now really, what I'm saying is that all of the doctrine, all of what we believe, and what the church believed 1900 years ago, was put into the church by the apostles. They got some of it from the prophets, but it was put in by the apostles. That's why the church is based on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, and Christ the chief cornerstone. And it comes, now Christ had taught them directly. But Jesus Christ is word of God in person, and Christ's apostle today got the same truth from the word of God in print. And this says the same thing exactly that Christ said in person."

World Tomorrow Telecast, "How Truth is Revealed", Herbert W Armstrong, March 21, 1979

Only One Truth

Now that it has been established that the true doctrines were revealed to the Worldwide Church of God in the 20th century by Jesus Christ through His chosen apostle, it is time to learn a critical detail regarding these doctrines. This detail is so important, that it is stressed in different ways throughout the Bible.

The vital element regarding truth is that there is only one set of beliefs, i.e. one truth, and this truth does not change. The Word of God is clear on this fact and there are numerous scriptures that can be cited to prove this is true. There are also numerous quotes from Mr. Armstrong from various articles, Co-Worker letters and even messages that he gave where he stated this. Below are just a few of them:

"This faith, meaning in this sense the body of beliefs and practices handed down by the apostles, forms the essence of the meaning of God's Church ...

"So, then, the faith which must be earnestly held on to and defended is that original set of beliefs handed down by Christ's apostles. Paul's writings are full of warnings of false teachers who sought to mislead the people of God.

"Now is the time to return to the faith which was truly once and for all delivered by Christ and the apostles."

Good News Magazine, "The Faith Once and for all Delivered", August 1974, Page 27 & 29

"THERE'S NO QUESTION about it - God commands emphatically that we in His Church do 'all speak the same thing' (I Cor. 1:10).

"For many years I have striven to bring all God's children into a unity of belief (Ps.133:1)."

Good News Magazine, "Personal", Herbert W Armstrong, April 1979

"In verse 12, some of you must not be followers of one human leader apart from another and others followers of other ministers. We must be JOINED TIGHTLY TOGETHER! We must have ONE doctrine and belief. And HOW did God put doctrine and belief into His Church? By Jesus Christ—but Christ taught the Apostles and the CHURCH received its teaching and doctrines through the APOSTLES. Now

Jesus is the Word of God in Person. The BIBLE is the Word of God in writing—but the SAME TRUTH!
Brethren, I did not put myself into God's Church nor make myself Christ's Apostle—HE DID!”

Co-Worker Letter, Herbert W Armstrong, September 13, 1980

Comment: There is one additional important detail regarding the understanding that there is only one body of beliefs. It must be understood that this body of beliefs must originate from Jesus Christ. Mr. Armstrong knew that the teachings in the Church must be in complete agreement with Christ. Therefore, the Church can only have one truth and this truth cannot and does not change, including prophetic truth, otherwise, how can one ever fulfill the command to “hold fast” to the truth as stated in Revelation 3:11, I Thessalonians 5:21, and II Timothy 1:13?

“As I quoted in the beginning, **in I Corinthians 1:10 Christ says we must all speak the same thing. WHAT ‘same thing’? That which comes from the MIND of CHRIST – ‘Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus’ (Philippians 2:5)**”

Good News Magazine, “And Now Christ Sets Church Back On Track Doctrinally”, Herbert W Armstrong, April 1979

“Romans 15:5, ‘Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded’. Now in the 1st chapter of Corinthians, Paul commands and pleads that the whole Church must all speak the same thing. We must be likeminded...”

“But the Bible does teach we must be like minded. We don’t have to be like Abraham, but we must be likeminded. Now I didn’t marry a 2nd time until I found out that we were likeminded, **and likeminded in the Lord. We must all speak the same thing.** That’s just another way of saying the same thing, one toward another according to Jesus Christ. ‘That you may with one mind and one mouth glorify God’. You see we have to speak the same thing. **But we can’t have one believing this and one believing something else.”**

Bible Study, “Romans 15-16”, Herbert W Armstrong, July 7, 1980

“I BELIEVED Christ, the living Word of God. Through human weakness I have not lived perfectly — I have stumbled and fallen down a few times as **I have WALKED WITH CHRIST WITH WHOM I AM IN AGREEMENT!** But I have repented of that, worked on myself to OVERCOME — cried out to God for divine HELP in overcoming this weak human flesh. **But I have WALKED WITH CHRIST BECAUSE I AM IN AGREEMENT WITH HIM!**

“But it is still true that two can't walk together except they be agreed. **I am agreed with God and with Christ the Head of the Church. I shall never water down the TRUTH He has revealed to me, nor in any manner compromise with it.** We are **ALL OF US are going to have to AGREE with God and with Christ HIS Son, if we are to walk together with them, into God's Kingdom.**”

Worldwide News, “Reports of Garner Ted False”, Herbert W Armstrong, March 6, 1981

The Bible Interprets Itself

Another key rule to understanding the Word of God is that the Bible interprets itself. Mr. Armstrong recognized that the scriptures often speak in terms of symbols but the Bible always defines its own symbols. And this holds true in every case. This is how a large number of prophetic truths were revealed to him and it is the way to allow Jesus Christ to interpret His own Word. Therefore, to properly understand the Bible, one must let it interpret itself:

“When I tell you that I don't interpret the Bible, my friends, that's what I mean. I take Jesus' own interpretation, I don't bring you any Herbert W Armstrong interpretation. I bring you God's own interpretation.”

World Tomorrow Broadcast, “Bible Understanding”, Herbert W Armstrong

“God has concealed until now His prophecies of these colossal end-time world events now occurring by means of SYMBOLS used to describe these events — as well as by the fact of His dual principle and that our Israelitish identity has been hidden from men.

“Symbols, like parables, were used not to make meaning clearer, but to hide and conceal God's true meaning until the time came for Him to reveal the interpretation. Just as Jesus' parables were not understood until Jesus Himself explained them in plain language, so with symbols.

“For generations men have been putting human interpretations upon God's symbols. An important KEY, therefore, is that these symbols are interpreted in plain language in the Bible itself, if not in the context, then elsewhere, and we must search for God's own interpretation, never apply our own.”

Good News Magazine, “Seven Keys to Understanding the Bible”, Herbert W Armstrong,
December 1984

“Now, I've said so often, the Bible does not need to be interpreted. By that I mean that it doesn't need to have any man put his ideas, his interpretation, his reasoning into it to say it means this when it doesn't mean anything of the kind.

“A great deal of the Bible is couched in symbolic, or parabolic language, or something of the kind and it is rather mystic in that particular place in its setting but somewhere, my friends, you'll find that symbol explained in plain language in your Bible. It'll be explained just as plain as anything”

World Tomorrow Broadcast, “Bible Understanding”, Herbert W Armstrong

Private Interpretations

We have learned how the truth was revealed to the Worldwide Church of God during the Philadelphia era when it was on track, and that these truths came from Christ. And it was Christ who revealed to Mr.

Armstrong that there is only one body of beliefs and that this body of beliefs does not change. And it was also explained that a vital key to understanding the Bible is to allow God's Word to interpret itself. Now that this has been established, you will learn how the root of a false teaching often starts.

One would initially tend to believe that those who are ordained to ministerial positions or even those who are placed in the leadership role over the Church wouldn't be prone to heresy. But this is not the case. The apostle Paul understood this fact and he documented this in the Word of God when he stated "Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them" Acts 20:30.

Prophetic heresies usually originate from private interpretations. The apostle Peter talked about this in the second epistle that he wrote "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed... Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation" II Peter 2:19.

Instead of letting the Bible interpret itself and allowing Christ to reveal the true meaning of a scripture, men begin to see things or read things in the Word of God that are not there. This is how private interpretations begin which eventually leads to doctrinal error. This is a danger that Mr. Armstrong warned against because he knew that once an individual goes down this road, it will always lead to doctrinal error:

"And so men began centuries ago, to interpret the Bible. **Now the Bible need not be interpreted, it ought not be to be interpreted. To interpret the Bible is to put your meaning into it, instead of drinking God's meaning out of it.** And so God's Word has become perverted. It has become twisted, wrested, distorted. And almost every false and counterfeit meaning imaginable has been read into it, instead of drinking the natural meaning, the plain simple intended meaning out of it."

World Tomorrow, "Sound Doctrine" Herbert W Armstrong

"When rightly understood and interpreted, Bible prophecy is an infallible guide to the future.

"We also have the prophetic word made more sure, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place... knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved [inspired] by the Holy Spirit" (II Pet. 1:19-21).

"Note these important points:

"• **The Bible reveals God's 'sure word of prophecy.'** God designed Bible prophecy to shine as a light, so we are not left in darkness about what is going to happen.

"• **No prophecy is of any private interpretation. What does this mean? First, no human should interpret the Word of God. Only God Almighty, who inspired the Bible, knows how to interpret — how to understand and explain — His Word.**"

"Another important key to understanding Bible prophecy is to remember that 'no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation' (II Pet. 1:20). Only by letting God interpret His Word — only by 'rightly dividing the word of truth' (II Tim. 2:15) — can we ever know what the prophecies mean.

"The Bible was written in such a way that it is like a picture puzzle. All of a picture puzzle's pieces must be put together, and in the right way, to reveal the picture. Likewise, we must get all the verses in the Bible and put them together in order to fully understand any particular passage in the Bible. Ominous signs show that this world is hurtling toward... catastrophe, but most people are oblivious... They prefer to 'eat, drink and be merry.'

"In other words, no man should privately interpret God's Word. He should let it interpret itself by taking all of the verses on any subject and putting them together, "here a little, there a little" (Isa. 28:10-13)."

Good News Magazine, "You Can Understand Bible Prophecy!" June-July 1983

"So many people write in and comment how much they enjoy Mr. Armstrong's interpretation of the Bible. **Time and again you will hear Mr. Armstrong explain to the television and radio audience that it is not his interpretation that is being heard, but only plain biblical truth!**"

"Romans 3:4 is a good clear principle to live by in this rule of Bible study: '... Let God be true, but every man a liar.'"

Plain Truth Magazine, "How To Study the Bible", February 1980

Watering Down Doctrine / Liberalism

One of the great snares that often catches many who have come to understand the truth is the trap of liberalism. Any doctrinal changes that water down or loosen the teachings that were established in the Church during the Philadelphia era are not from God and are to be considered liberal teachings.

This snare catches God's people because it gives them a green light to do things that might seem pleasing to the senses. It also creates a false sense of freedom in the mind of an individual. But there is only one true freedom that the Word of God talks about, and that is freedom from sin which can only be achieved by keeping the full truth.

It was a liberal spirit that crept into the Church in the 1970's. And it was this spirit that Mr. Armstrong had to deal with and that caused him much pain. The following are Mr. Armstrong's words on this subject:

“Fellow ministers and wives, the LIVING CHRIST raised up this era of His Church through me. HE heads it — leads it! Through me, directly or indirectly, you came into His Church, and into the knowledge He first revealed to me.

“But the most terrible thing that ever happened to me was during the recent years when I was away from Pasadena up to 300 of the 365 days in the year, and my son assumed a full and complete authority never given to him, and **encouraged WATERING DOWN God's TRUTH** and God's COMMANDS! For the past year now Jesus Christ, through me, has been SETTING HIS CHURCH BACK ON THE TRACK!”

“I know that the large majority of you ministers are faithful in preaching the doctrines the living Christ has put into His Church through me. Yet under my son's assuming more authority than had been given him, **there was a great letdown and dereliction of duty** creeping in through a portion of the ministry. In the army, during wartime, for such dereliction of duty they might just rid the guilty officer by a firing squad. **HOW MUCH MORE SERIOUS IS WATERING DOWN OF DOCTRINES** AND THE FAITH IN GOD'S WORK?”

Worldwide News, “Watering Down – Or Building Solidly Up?”, June 11, 1979

“For the past two years I have been laboring very hard to be Christ's servant and apostle in SETTING GOD'S CHURCH BACK ON THE TRACK. **The entire Church had been derailed. A LIBERAL spirit from Satan had been injected into some in high positions under me at Headquarters in Pasadena. Instead of wholeheartedly OBEYING Christ through HIS WORD, THE BIBLE, there was creeping in,** during years when I was in other parts of the world up to 300 out of the 365 days in the year, **a LIBERAL spirit of SATAN.**

“Those leaders to whom I had delegated the responsibility of ADMINISTERING the POLICIES and DOCTRINES Christ had set in God's Church through His apostle, went way BEYOND the authority given them. **They started CHANGING POLICIES and watering down God's TRUTH, changing DOCTRINES, compromising—seeing HOW CLOSE they could go —and lead the Brethren in going—to the ways of SATAN! They wanted to be more LIBERAL —more like THIS WORLD OF SATAN.**”

Co-Worker Letter, Herbert W Armstrong, September 15, 1980

“The Church of God was being systematically liberalized, the broadcasting had gone from top to bottom in the world, and from spiritual effectiveness to almost total ineffectiveness. **God says we are to judge by the fruits. During those liberal years, the Church was bearing virtually no fruit.** The Plain Truth and publishing work also had become almost totally ineffective. Ambassador College had been destroyed as God's college. In 1978, after my ‘resurrection’ from total heart failure, I had to completely close Ambassador College at Pasadena, starting all over again, as in 1947, with one freshman class. The colleges in England and Texas had already been closed.

“It is very evident to those led by the Holy Spirit of God that there was a very significant reason why God brought me back to life at age 85 in 1977 to once again take over the reins and remove this liberal element — to once again recapture the true values and to prepare this Philadelphia era of God's Church for the coming of Christ and the reign of the Kingdom of God.”

Worldwide News, “Recent History of the Philadelphia Era of the Church of God”, Herbert W Armstrong, July 8, 1985

Comment: The following is a list of some of the doctrines that were watered down in the 1970's without Mr. Armstrong's knowledge, all except for makeup. They were altered while Mr. Armstrong was away meeting with the leaders of the nations of this world. He mentioned that he was away from Pasadena up to 300 days out of the year.

Although Mr. Armstrong gave his verbal consent to allow the use of makeup, he later admitted that when he did this, his mind was on other things and that he had made a mistake when he allowed the use of makeup to infiltrate the Church. He openly repented of this error in a sermon titled “What God Expects of Us” that was given in November 7, 1981.

Please note that the following list is not an all inclusive list of all of the doctrinal changes that occurred in the 1970's. These are just some of the errors and liberal teachings that caused the Church to go off track doctrinally during these liberal years:

1. **Makeup:** The use of makeup is not wrong as long as it is done in good taste and modesty.
2. **Interracial Marriage:** Interracial marriages may be unwise but the Church cannot forbid people of different racial backgrounds to marry.
3. **Birthday Celebrations:** The Church has no specific doctrine concerning the custom of celebrating or observing ones birthday and thus it is up to an individual to choose whether he will observe or celebrate this day.
4. **Tithing:** The implementation of how to calculate a tithe is left up to the understanding of an individual.
5. **Voting in Elections:** The Bible does not prohibit voting in regional or national elections.
6. **Healing:** The science of the 20th century is far more advanced than any other age and healing does not conflict with the use of modern medical science. It is obvious that God is not healing in this century as in earlier documented times.
7. **Divorce and Remarriage:** The Church strongly recommends that a marriage remain intact but divorces are allowed.

Heresy

The term for a false doctrine in the Bible is heresy. Heresy is any doctrinal teaching that is contrary to a doctrinal teaching that is found in the Word of God. And heresy is a work of the flesh, Galatians 5:20. That means that that our minds are naturally inclined to come up with our own false Biblical beliefs.

Since Christ restored the truth to the Church through Mr. Armstrong in the 20th century and since Christ stated twice that the Philadelphia era of God's Church "kept his Word", heresy is any doctrinal teaching that contradicts the Biblical teachings that were revealed to God's apostle, Mr. Armstrong, during the Philadelphia era.

When heresy grips an entire group of God's people, the Biblical term that is used to describe this is apostasy. Apostasy comes from a Greek word which simply means a falling away or a defection from the truth. And this word is found in II Thessalonians 2:3. It is important to note that a falling away from the truth cannot occur unless the truth is intact in the Church of God.

Signs of Heresy

Now that we understand what heresy is, we are now ready to learn much more about this subject. We will learn what the signs that indicate a false doctrine is being taught. Know that heresy can grip more than just a single member of the Church. It can seize a minister, the leader of the Church, and even an entire group of God's people. The Bible specifically warns God's people about this danger, as did Mr. Armstrong.

The following is a list of the most obvious and common signs that you will notice when heresy has gripped a person or an organization; Stunted Church growth, confusion, compromise, unharmonious picture usually of prophecy, and failed prophecies. These signs, almost always, accompany the teaching of false doctrines. The following quotes from Mr. Armstrong elaborate on the signs just mentioned:

Stunted Growth:

"The 'fruits' of the rebel leaders and 'liberals' of the 1970's should now be clear to all. After some 35 years of steady growth in all facets of the Work of God's Church, the rate of growth began to slow, then ceased entirely in some areas, and, finally, even decreases began to be experienced in the number of radio and television stations, Plain Truth circulation, number of prospective members, number of co-workers, amount of income for the Work, etc. — all under the 'leadership' of the liberal element. These are well-documented facts that cannot be denied.

"I want you, brethren, to think about and understand what happened to God's Church in the 1970's lest history repeat itself!"

Worldwide News, "Recent History of the Philadelphia Era of the Church of God", Herbert W Armstrong, July 8, 1985

"But they assumed, without my knowledge, policy-setting changes and doctrinal changes given out to ministers, in an effort to 'TAKE OVER'—destroy everything the living Christ had built through the years through me, and build something for themselves. They were watering down doctrines, changing procedures and policies and threatening other top-ranking ministers with losing their jobs if they revealed to me what was going on in my absence.

"The broadcasting program went down, beginning 1968, until most stations had been canceled and replaced with short five-minute announcements. From being the biggest user of radio power on earth, we went down to lowest, even in the religious field. Other programs promptly grabbed our time. I had spent years traveling to all parts of the United States, to SELL our program in person to station managers coast to coast. It all went down the drain...

"Changing policies Christ inspired, changing doctrines God's Word teaches, changing procedures that built His Work 30 percent a year for 35 years, was DISPLEASING TO THE LIVING JESUS CHRIST AND to GOD THE FATHER! For 13 lean years, the Work of the Christ stood still. IT DID NOT GROW during those years. But it held about even."

Co-Worker Letter, Herbert W Armstrong, December 19, 1980

"God commands we all 'speak the same thing.' But what is Christ's means of giving us that 'same Thing'?"

"UNTIL ABOUT 1969 we in God's Church did all 'speak the same thing.' By 1978 many of the ministers were speaking different things! **God had withdrawn from us His blessing and power that for 35 YEARS caused the Work of His Church to grow at the approximate rate of 30 percent every year over the preceding year!**

"WHAT CAUSED GOD TO WITHDRAW HIS BLESSING AND POWER?"

"Precisely the same thing that choked the growth of the Church of God at Corinth from A.D. 56, 25 years after the Church was founded at Jerusalem. **They were following different leaders, speaking different things, watering down the sacred and precious truths of Christ!**"

Good News Magazine, "And NOW Christ Sets Church Back On Track Doctrinally!", Herbert W Armstrong, February 19, 1979

Confusion:

“God is not the author of confusion but the devil is. And the devil will try to change and manipulate everything that comes from God if he can. And he will try to influence men to mar God's handy work and to introduce chaos and confusion where God has beauty and harmony and order.”

World Tomorrow Broadcast, “Bible Understanding”, Herbert W Armstrong

“So he created the angels with minds. He gave the angels knowledge. He showed the angels his way of living, and when he put them on the Earth, in order that they would work together in accomplishing his purpose, and this was the trying ground, and if they could succeed in finishing what he wanted finished on this Earth, then they would go to the other planets of our solar system, like Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, and the others.

“And after they'd finished our solar system, which is only part of a great galaxy, then they would go to the other planets in our galaxy, and after they'd finished that, to the other myriad galaxies, as far as outer space goes. Now I'm going to show you that instead of building up and finishing it, they destroyed the Earth and tore it down, and started wrecking what God had created, instead of adding beauty and other things to it.

“Now God is the author of beauty. God is the author of light. **Satan is the author of chaos, of confusion, and of darkness**, but I want to show a little bit more about Satan and his origin.”

World Tomorrow Telecast, “Satan’s Rebellion”, Herbert W Armstrong, May 7, 1978

“But Lucifer defected. He led his angels into rebellion against God and God's WAY of LOVE, into the way of GET – inflowing – vanity, lust and greed, jealousy and envy, competition and strife, rebellion against authority.

“Instead of CONSTRUCTION finishing earth's **creation Lucifer's way led to DESTRUCTION, chaos and confusion, decay was the result.**”

Good News Magazine, “The Plain Truth About Healing Part 6”, Herbert W Armstrong, September 25, 1978

Unharmonious Picture:

“You know, **I've heard the Bible compared to a jigsaw puzzle, and in some respects that's a good comparison.** Of course, I think jigsaw puzzles have sort of gone out of fashion right now haven't they? I haven't seen one for quite a while anyhow. And anyhow, the idea is good. **You have a lot of parts and if you put them all together properly, each one in its exact proper place, well you have a beautiful harmonious picture** when you get through and all is harmony. **But if you don't get them together correctly you've got a very unharmonious picture that isn't very pretty.**”

World Tomorrow Broadcast, “Bible Understanding”, Herbert W Armstrong

Compromise

“Do you know that, if he must, Satan is even willing to allow you to obey many of God's laws? As long as there is at least one point of the law — whichever one it may be for you — that you refuse to keep!”

“The reason is that **Satan knows God has ordained that to break one point of His law of love is to break it all (James 2:10-11)**. Therefore, to refuse to submit to one point is to rebel against God's entire divine code of behavior. Anyone guilty of such an attitude of rebellion obviously is not totally submitted to God.”

“That's good enough for Satan.”

Good News Magazine, “What Satan Doesn’t Want You to Know”, March 1985

“And if you are one of those who have come out of Satan's world, spiritually speaking, as all true Christians have, does that mean you are now immune to being misled by Satan's' evil influence?”

“Can Satan fool you?”

“It is vital that we understand, that we not be ‘ignorant of his devices,’ lest he get the advantage over us (II Corinthians 2:11). **Here is one of Satan's most important devices.** Here is something the devil for sure does not want you to know.

Satan compromises

“Satan is a compromiser. He is flexible. He will bend. He will engage in give and take as long as — and this is the ultra important point — as long as he gets his way in the end.”

Good News Magazine, “What Satan Doesn’t Want You to Know”, March 1985

“Satan is an expert in making evil look good. By compromising he can take something that is evil and combine it with enough good to make it look perfectly innocent. His strategy is to use disguise (Matthew 7:15). He made Eve believe that the innocent-looking but forbidden fruit was good for her (Genesis 3:1-6). **When he tried to get Jesus to disobey God, he quoted good, valid scriptures (Matthew 4:6).**

“But beware: A glass of good water with a few drops of cyanide in it still looks like an innocent, perfectly good glass of water.”

Good News Magazine, “What Satan Doesn’t Want You to Know”, March 1985

“Nevertheless, if we begin to compromise with God's TRUTH, even in smallest, slightest manner, we have allowed Satan to get a foot into the door of the Church, and soon he will push open the door (he is stronger than we) and take over the whole Church.

“A little leaven leavens the WHOLE LUMP! In my position, as chosen by the living CHRIST to be first under Him in AUTHORITY over the Church and the Work, **I have been charged with the commission of**

KEEPING GOD'S WORD. Keeping it inviolate — NO COMPROMISE! I have NEVER compromised with God's TRUTH — regardless of the cost or the circumstances. I never shall!"

Good News Magazine, "Operation Thunderbolt – 90 Minutes to Entebbe", Herbert W Armstrong, December 1976

Failed Prophecies:

"Now the test is this. **If a man uses prophecy to reveal in advance what is going to happen in world conditions, then God says 'If it comes to pass that man was speaking God's word faithfully and he was God's called minister'** (Jeremiah 28:8-9 paraphrased). **But if he uses prophecy to tell you what is going to happen and it doesn't happen, you know he spoke right out of his own mind**, and a human mind doesn't know what's going to happen. No one but God Almighty knows the future. But God Almighty does know the end from the beginning. He knows what's going to happen."

World Tomorrow Broadcast, "Bible Understanding", Herbert W Armstrong

"The fact of the matter is that much of what practically all people think they got from the Bible, read right from the Bible, and can 'prove' from the Bible, they actually got right from their own ideas, or from other people — parents, friends, church associates — or possibly even from a spiritual source, through the subtle planting of a thought in the mind by an evil spirit. Nowhere is this fact better illustrated than in people's understanding of prophecy.

"When human expectations don't come to pass as proclaimed, it isn't the Bible's fault. The problem is that human interpretations of what the Bible means are often in error."

Good News Magazine, "Can Prophecy Fail?", May 1975

Comment: These are not the only signs of heresy. Additional signs include division, which will manifest itself by members or ministers leaving the organized Church group if the heresy comes from the leadership. Members or ministers will leave the organization in order to hold fast to the truth.

Examples of Heresy

Now that we've taken a close look at the signs that manifest themselves when heresy is alive and well in an organization, the time is right to study 3 examples of false doctrines. Know that many more examples can be illustrated but the following 3 should help everyone to comprehend more deeply the difference between heresy and truth.

Mr. Armstrong made numerous statements when he led the Worldwide Church of God that he was the individual who was fulfilling the role of the end-time Elijah. This became an established truth in the Church. Therefore, anyone that states they are the one carrying out this role or that the role will be carried out by

someone else in the future has contradicted an established Biblical truth and has given birth to a false doctrine.

This is an example of a diametrical teaching that does not support or line up with a truth that was established by an apostle during the Philadelphia era of the Church. This is the first example of a false teaching. The following is the truth that was revealed to the Worldwide Church of God on subject of the end-time Elijah:

“In the process of restoring the government of God in the Church through the modern Elijah, God used him to restore many related truths. Of primary importance was the restoration of Christ’s true gospel of the Kingdom of God! That gospel was restored when the Pastor General Herbert W. Armstrong of the Worldwide Church of God first went on air with ‘The World Tomorrow’ radio program the first week in January, 1934, and then to the world when he went on Radio Luxembourg and radio Ceylon in 1953 – one century of 19-year time cycles after the gospel of the Kingdom had been suppressed!”

The Ambassador College Bible Correspondence Course, “Proclaiming the Gospel”, Lesson 18, Pages 11 & 14

Jesus Christ established, and the apostles who lived during the 1st century taught the membership that there is only one true Church and not many different branches or organizations. Mr. Armstrong restored this teaching to the Worldwide Church of God in the 20th century. Therefore, an organization that teaches that it is normal for the Church to exist in a number of different corporate “fellowships” or “branches” at the same time has engaged in a false doctrine. This is a second example of heresy. The next quote by Mr. Armstrong reveals the truth on the “one true Church” doctrine:

“God calls His Church the Body of Christ. In this case the word body is used in the sense of a cohesive single GROUP — a SPIRITUAL ORGANISM. We are ‘the HOUSEHOLD OF GOD; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord’ (Ephesians 2:19-21).

“So we are a body of Spirit-begotten people — we are a building, and we are a holy temple! **And all that one body is ‘fitly joined together and compacted** [welded] by that which every joint supplieth’ (Ephesians 4:16).

“But **that Church body is NOT TWO churches, but only ONE!** ‘For as the body is ONE, and hath many members.... But now are they many members, yet but ONE body’ (1 Corinthians 12:12, 20). What has been started in OPPOSITION TO the ONE Church of God is merely a group, mostly of embittered dissenters, following a MAN!”

Worldwide News, “How The Conspiracy Worked”, Herbert W Armstrong, November 27, 1979

In 1933, Mr. Armstrong went on air over the radio and began preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God. It started as a local broadcast and later became a national and then an international broadcast. He also traveled and met with the leaders of many nations proclaiming this good news. A booklet on this subject was also written in 1972 titled *What is the True Gospel*. And thus, Matthew 24:14 was fulfilled by him which states “And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world”. Therefore, any modification or addition to this truth should be considered a doctrinal error, including narratives about Jesus Christ or the way in which Christ will return. This is the third example of heresy. This next statement from Mr. Armstrong contains the true Biblical teaching regarding the gospel of the kingdom of God:

“... On the authority of Jesus Christ, it is necessary to believe THAT PRECISE, IDENTICAL GOSPEL in order to be saved! And to BELIEVE the true Gospel, we must first come to KNOW what it is!

“But if the one and only TRUE Gospel is the Gospel of the Kingdom of God, what about the Gospel of Jesus Christ?” Is that a false gospel?

“Not at all. **The Gospel of Jesus Christ is the Gospel He brought as God's Messenger — the Gospel He proclaimed is the Gospel of the Kingdom of GOD.**

“The Gospel of Jesus Christ is NOT man's gospel ABOUT THE PERSON of Christ. It is CHRIST'S Gospel — the Gospel Jesus PREACHED — the Gospel God SENT by Him, and therefore it is also called, in Scripture, the Gospel of God. The Gospel of God is God's GOSPEL — His Message — His Good News which He sent by Jesus.”

Booklet, *What Is The True Gospel?*, Herbert W Armstrong, 1972

False Teachers

So far, we have covered the subject of how a false teaching or liberal doctrine is born. Mr. Armstrong dealt with several ministers in the Worldwide Church of God who engaged in this type of action in the 1970's so he had first hand experience in dealing with these matters. He knew there is often another spirit involved behind the scenes when one engages in teaching false doctrines.

He also warned the membership that individuals who teach heresy can arise from within the Church. This is what the apostle Paul warned the Ephesian elders in the Church in Acts 20:30 “Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things”. And you will soon see that Mr. Armstrong even thought that it was possible that some of these false teachers could deceive the very elect.

An important fact to understand is that a false teacher is never going to tell you that he is a false teacher. He would have no followers if he took this approach. They will often come across as ministers who are serving the one true God and may even believe it themselves “For such *are* false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.

Therefore *it is* no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works” II Corinthians 11:13-15.

False teachers that arise from within the Church will always try to convince others that what they are teaching is correct and true. They will make statements such as “their new doctrines are lining up with the truths that were restored by Mr. Armstrong” or that “it is hard to comprehend how anyone can be honest with the scriptures and return to what we once understood” even though their new teachings are completely contrary to the truth:

“Well then, what does identify a genuine servant of God? The Bible certainly does not leave us ignorant on this vital question! Here are three vital qualifications:

“Before Jesus answered His disciples as to WHEN the END of the age and His return would come, He warned them against FALSE MINISTERS, deceiving the many. **If possible, He said, they would deceive the VERY ELECT — YOU in God's Church.**

“As the Apostle Paul warned the elders at Ephesus: ‘For I know this, that... grievous wolves shall enter in among you, not sparing the flock. **Also OF YOUR OWN SELVES [the ministers in God's Church] shall men arise, speaking perverse things,** to draw away disciples after them. Therefore WATCH... ‘! (Acts 20:29-31.)

“Brethren, could this BE God's true Church, and such things not happen to us? This sort of thing DID HAPPEN to God's TRUE CHURCH in the very first century. They only PROVE this is GOD'S Church which He is USING and blessing! But SATAN IS ANGRY. **Satan deceives even some from within us.** They will falsely accuse. **They will MISLEAD with false doctrines which they will palm off as TRUTH!**

Good News Magazine, “Why Did God Put You in His Church?”, Herbert W Armstrong, May 1974

“In the very beginning of the Church of God in the 1st century, there were false apostles and there were those who went out from the Church for selfish gain or for revenge even as today. The apostle Paul speaking to the elders, which means the ministers of the Church of Ephesus said quote, **‘Also of your own selves’ that is speaking of you ministers ‘shall men arise, speaking perverse things,** to draw away disciples after them’ Acts 20:30. That’s exactly what happened. I can name you man after man after man. When this comes in the *Worldwide News* it’s going to name these men. And you can read their names. They’ve been disfellowshipped. They’re marked. And you are to avoid them.

“To the Church at Corinth Paul wrote, this is quoted from the Bible ‘But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus’ which they do. They don’t preach the same Jesus. ‘whom we have not preached, or *if* ye receive another spirit’ **and they are of a different spirit** ‘which ye have not received, or another gospel ‘another doctrine’ which ye have not accepted’ II Corinthians 11:3-4.

“Now who was trying to turn these members of God’s Church to some **watered down doctrine or other teaching.** Paul says they were men serving Satan and therefore Satan’s ministers. Notice, the

same chapter, just a few verses later he says 'For such *are* false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into' and that is professing themselves to be 'apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore *it is* no great thing if his ministers' now notice that, it is actually Satan's ministers, his ministers, perhaps even themselves deceived into believing they are serving Christ. But if Satan's ministers 'also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness', these ministers will never admit they're Satan's ministers. They'll tell you they're ministers of Christ."

Bible Study, "Romans 15-16", Herbert W Armstrong, July 7, 1980

"In God's Church in our time I have seen how Satan cleverly and without their knowledge uses humans to destroy GOD'S TRUTH and inject false or counterfeit doctrines instead."

"The record, in our time, has been written. And the record has been written of how it was done in the first three centuries of the Church."

Good News Magazine, "How Satan Injects False Doctrines", Herbert W Armstrong, August 1979

Comment: **And let there be no doubt that when a true minister or leader of the Church begins teaching error, i.e. doctrines contrary to the truths that were restored to the Church by Jesus Christ through Mr. Armstrong, they disqualify themselves as true men of truth (Exodus 18:21) and as ministers of God.** And the ministers that allow this to happen will also disqualify themselves, *if* they do not stand up for the truth. This is confirmed in the Word of God and it is perfectly in line with what Mr. Armstrong taught the Church:

"One: A true minister of God must study, preach and live by EVERY word of God! *If a man tells you something that he knows disagrees with God's revealed Word, he instantly disqualifies himself from being a true minister of Christ! Isaiah 8:20 and Matthew 4:4 confirm this!*

Tomorrows World, "What About False Prophets?", November –December 1970

"Fellow ministers, I say to you by Christ's authority that for one claiming to be a minister of Jesus Christ and receiving a salary as a minister of, and representative of this Church, *to water down or make less binding the teachings and doctrines Jesus Christ put in this Church through me is taking money (salary) under false pretenses. It is SERIOUS and a SERIOUS SIN. God will call everyone who does that to account.*

"Compare this to a captain in the army. He is in a comparatively low authority, but he is over first and second lieutenants, sergeants, corporals, etc. Suppose an army captain begins to water down or change the military rules. Suppose he tells those under him, 'You don't need to obey this or that order — unless you want to.' Such a captain would be court-martialed and PUT OUT with DISHONORABLE DISCHARGE!

"I know that the large majority of you ministers are faithful in preaching the doctrines the living Christ has put into His Church through me. Yet under my son's assuming more authority than had been given him, **there was a great letdown and dereliction of duty creeping in through a portion of the ministry.**

In the army, during wartime, for such dereliction of duty they might just rid the guilty officer by a firing squad. HOW MUCH MORE SERIOUS IS WATERING DOWN OF DOCTRINES AND THE FAITH IN GOD'S WORK?

“It is far more important than being a captain in the army in time of WAR! If you did not agree with the military regulations and orders and openly proclaimed your dissidence to those under you, you would be court-martialed and probably shot! **Yet disagreement and contrary teaching of those under you in GOD'S CHURCH is, in God's eyes, FAR MORE SERIOUS!**

“Now I am not, of course, going to order any firing squads. But the LEAST you can do, if you cannot wholeheartedly accept and loyally teach the truths Jesus Christ put into His Church through His chosen apostle, is to resign and LEAVE THE CHURCH!

“God commands in His Word that we all ‘SPEAK THE SAME THING.’ That ‘same thing’ He put into His Church through His apostle. **If you can't agree on any point, you may bring your disagreement privately to your superior or directly to me — but to teach disagreement to the children of GOD is the height of disloyalty!**”

Worldwide News, “Watering Down – Or Building Solidly Up?, Herbert W Armstrong, June 11, 1979

False Prophets

But there is a different category of a false teacher that has not been covered yet, and that is a false prophet. A false prophet is one who engages in false prophetic revelations, often stating that they come from the Word of God or that God has revealed the date when certain events will occur. A tell tale sign that an individual is a false prophet is that the events that are predicted to happen almost never come to pass.

And Mr. Armstrong warned that these men will arise from within the flock in our time. He knew that their heresies are not limited to prophetic revelations but that they often introduce false doctrines as well. Those who come up with false prophesies are never inspired by God and are often inspired by a more sinister spirit. One should not remain in an organization after it becomes apparent that a false prophet is among the sheepfold:

“Besides false brethren, false ministers and teachers have come among God's people on many occasions. **Peter mentions that false prophets will try to set themselves up as teachers among God's people today (II Peter 2:1). Such people secretly bring in heresies**, denying Jesus Christ by their works (Titus 1:16) as well as their tongues...

“These people with feigned words, smooth speech, false pretenses and hypocrisy, make themselves appear as if they are religious and holy. **Some brethren look only on the outside, and are deceived!**”

"This Work is the direct and one and only fulfillment of the prophecy of Jesus in Matthew 24:14 for this very time: 'This Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the END [of this world] come.' The Gospel of the Kingdom of God is the ONLY true Gospel of Jesus Christ. In the first 20 years of the founding of the true Church in A.D. 31, a fierce controversy arose as to whether the gospel to be preached was the Gospel OF Christ or a gospel ABOUT Christ. A false church rose up, teaching a gospel of false prophets, ABOUT Christ. See II Corinthians 11:3 and verses 13-15. **Also both Jude and John, writing in the 90s A.D., warned of false prophets already changing the truth of the Gospel, and warning brethren to turn back to the true faith once delivered to the saints.** Also, Paul wrote the churches in Galatia, about A.D. 53, that they already had turned to ANOTHER gospel."

Co-worker Letter, Herbert W Armstrong, April 18, 1984

"The apostle John wrote: '**Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.** Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world' (I John 4:1-3).

"Let us note that John is talking about 'false prophets' (verse 1). Such prophets do not receive their inspiration from God or the Holy Spirit. They receive their 'inspiration' directly or indirectly from a different spirit — from Satan the devil or his demons. Their teachings are sometimes completely false. Other times they may be very near the truth, but nevertheless still not correct.

"This text is telling us how to distinguish the false from the true. When we hear from a 'prophet' or 'minister' we may measure him by the principles given here and elsewhere in the Scriptures to know if he is of God and inspired by His Spirit, or led by a contrary and false spirit."

Good News Magazine, "How to Try the Spirits", September 1980

Comment: One of the questions that puzzles true Christians is "why does God allow false teachers and false prophets to arise within the sheepfold?". God has an ultimate purpose in mind when he allows this to occur. It is an opportunity for God to find out whether you and I will be faithful to Him and the truth no matter the consequences. It is a great test of one's faithfulness to the living God!

"Why does God allow wolves to have access to His flock? Why doesn't He expose them before they do any harm? He has His reasons!

"The first and most basic scripture about false prophets explains why. 'If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, And the sign or the 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, or that dreamer of dreams: **for the Lord your God proveth you**, to know whether ye love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul' (Deut. 13:1-3).

"God wants his flock to stay with Him and the truth no matter what."

Good News Magazine, "Beware of False Prophets", May 1979

Following Men

The members of the body of Christ must always follow the truth. Following men has been the main cause God's people err from the truth. The reason brethren follow men is because they get used to the shepherds that are placed over them and they trust that these shepherds will never deceive them. And this includes the leader of the Church. It is for this specific reason that ministers were transferred to different pastorates every 3 to 7 years in the Worldwide Church of God.

When I was a teenager, I attended services in the Worldwide Church of God in the 1980's. I remember a sermon that the local minister gave on the subject of following men. During the message, the local minister emphasized that we are instructed to follow the truth as opposed to following a man, and he included himself. God's sheep are to follow shepherds, but ***only*** as long as the shepherd they are following follows the truth.

This is because the truth is synonymous with the Word of God "**Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth**" John 17:17. And the Word of God is Jesus Christ. Once a minister in the Church or even the leader of the Church strays from the truth, he is no longer following Jesus Christ and thus neither is the membership if they continue following this leader.

Mr. Armstrong warned numerous times against following men. He taught the Church that we are to follow him only as he follows the truth, who again, is synonymous with Jesus Christ. And it was Christ who revealed this important understanding to him:

"After God inspired Paul to command that we must all speak the same doctrines, HOW does Paul say we all come to that sameness of doctrine and belief?

"First, he shows WHY all did not speak the same teachings. He said some looked to Peter, some to Cephas, some to Apollos, some to Paul. In other words, they were all looking to MEN - and not all to the same man.

"Coming to chapter 2, Paul says he did not come to them with clever and enticing words. Then he said the TRUE DOCTRINES were REVEALED, and that the natural carnal mind could not understand. Paul had the truth because, 1) he had really repented when God struck him down temporarily blind and

spoke to him. **Then later, 2) he explained he had been with and had seen Christ. His teaching came directly from Jesus Christ. So had Peter's!**

"But Paul shows, I Corinthians 2:7-14, that NO ONE can come into the truth with a natural carnal mind. It requires the receiving of the Holy Spirit of God. As God said through Paul another time, 'Let this mind be in you, which was also 'in Christ Jesus' (Phil. 2:5).

"No one will ever come to understand the TRUTH except by receiving the Holy Spirit. **But EVEN SO, all these Corinthians were supposed to have received the Holy Spirit - YET THEY BELIEVED DIFFERENT THINGS, because they followed different men!**"

Good News Magazine, "Personal", Herbert W Armstrong, April 1979

"UNTIL ABOUT 1969 we in God's Church did all 'speak the same thing.' By 1978 many of the ministers were speaking different things! God had withdrawn from us His blessing and power that for 35 YEARS caused the Work of His Church to grow at the approximate rate of 30 percent every year over the preceding year!

"WHAT CAUSED GOD TO WITHDRAW HIS BLESSING AND POWER?"

"Precisely the same thing that choked the growth of the Church of God at Corinth from A.D. 56, 25 years after the Church was founded at Jerusalem. **They were following different leaders, speaking different things,** watering down the sacred and precious truths of Christ!"

Good News Magazine, "And Now Christ Sets Church Back On Track Doctrinally", Herbert W Armstrong, April 1979

"Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: **he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness,** but shall have the light of life." (John 8:12).

"Now light means truth. Light means, it's the opposite of darkness. It represents truth, and righteousness, and the right way. **And He said, 'follow me.' That is an act of moving.** It's an act of doing. And here He's teaching doing. I told you He set us an example we should follow His steps."

World Tomorrow Broadcast, "Follow Christ the Light of Life", Herbert W Armstrong

Ever Learning

A dangerous wind of doctrinal change has been prophesied to occur in our time, in the "last days". II Timothy 3:1-8 foretells a time when some of God's people will fall into the snare of false doctrines under the guise that they are learning new truth **"Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth"** II Timothy 3:7. And we know that it involves God's people because the men responsible for this are addressed as "men of corrupt minds" and "reprobate concerning the faith" II Timothy 3:8.

There is no indication in the Bible that a large restoration of truth will occur or that a significant amount of prophetic knowledge will be revealed in the Laodicean era. On the contrary, this era is pictured as blind in Revelation 3:17. In addition, Mr. Armstrong never once mentioned that anything like this would occur, nor did he indicate that such a disclosure of truth would happen in this age.

Doctrines of Demons

But there is another sinister attack that will occur in our time. This warning is found in II Timothy 4:1 and here is what it states “Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the **latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils**”. This is a verse that is hard to conceive because it reveals that some of God’s people will hear and believe doctrines that come from demons. This is a sobering warning and one that those in the faith must take to heart.

These types of teachings often manifest themselves in strange or odd prophetic ideas and they involve subtle doctrinal changes to the truth. And they will usually come in the form of “learning new prophetic truth”. Understand that no false prophet or false teacher will ever con God’s people by informing them that he is teaching false doctrines. He will try to convince God’s people that his new ideas are “new truths” and that these “new truths” have been revealed to him by God.

A Difficult Matter to Correct

There is a hope that I believe most of us have when false doctrines are taught in the Church. I have had this hope and I am sure that many others have had this hope as well. The hope that I am talking about is that when we hear men, in high ranking authority, engage in doctrinal error, we hope that these men will be able, at some point in time, to recover.

But sadly, this is typically not the case. Mr. Armstrong experienced this first hand. In fact, the longer that a person engages in doctrinal error, the harder it is for that individual to recover:

“Christ's apostle wrote to the Corinthian church, in A.D. 56, ‘Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment’ (I Corinthians 1:10).

“A Church divided cannot stand

“**They were starting to follow different leaders teaching different doctrines.** The Church was becoming divided! And a church divided against itself cannot stand!

“**Once such division starts among ministers it is a difficult matter to correct. For most who have gone doctrinally afield will today - just as in Corinth in A.D. 56 - not be willing to change back from error and watered-down doctrines to God's TRUTH!**”

"Now Paul was afraid here that those in the church might be beguiled. They had once come out of the way of Satan and chosen the way of God or the way of give instead of get. And now he's afraid lest they be beguiled and go back into that way again.

"That's precisely what has happened in the church of God in some of our top leading men. Our leading ministers, some of them, and yet they be, why they'd get so indignant and say, don't you tell me that Satan ever got to me. Satan never could get to me. Well Satan did get to every one of them. After they had once overcome him, they fell down before him again and Satan did get to them. And Paul was fearful lest Satan get to those that had come out of the world and had come to Christ and they go back and the Devil would beguile them again"

Bible Study, "Ephesians 2", Herbert W Armstrong

"God's Church will NOT COMPROMISE a millionth part of 1% with GOD'S TRUTH as He reveals it to us who willingly accept it—hunger and thirst for it! **When a program of watering down starts, it grows with increasing momentum. A number who left God's true Church, following a man or men have continued turning more and more from God's TRUTH,** until they no longer keep the Sabbath or the Holy Days of God!

"Many of Jesus' disciples, who had learned from Him IN PERSON, and had fellowshiped with Him IN PERSON, went out of His fellowship. 'From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life' (John 6:66-68). Jesus is IN His Church today. He will never forsake nor leave it. WILL YOU?"

Co-worker Letter, Herbert W Armstrong, November 28, 1978

When Heresy Strikes

So what is a begotten member of the Church supposed to do if a member, a minister, or even the leader of the Church begins to teach a doctrine that is contrary to the truth, the truth that was established in the Worldwide Church of God while it was on track?

And who is responsible for the division that is caused when heresy infiltrates the Church? Remember, heresy is a doctrinal teaching that is contrary to a doctrine that was established in the Church by Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church, through his chosen apostle who was known for not compromising, Mr. Armstrong.

Roman 16:17 contains the instruction that a member in the Church must take when false doctrines take root in the Church “Now I beseech you, brethren, **mark them which cause divisions** and offences **contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned**; and **avoid them**”.

One detail that will become apparent after reading the following quotes is that one cannot remain in an atmosphere where heresy has taken root and has gripped those teaching it. When heresy strikes, one must leave in order to remain in the truth and in the Church and thus faithful to God.

And it is these men, the ones who water down God’s truth and the ones who teach heresy, that are the individuals responsible for creating division in the Church (Romans 16:17), because it is these men that bring in doctrines that are contrary to those that were put into the Church by Jesus Christ, the living HEAD of the Church, through His apostle of the 20th century, Mr. Armstrong.

Once heresy takes root in the Church, God will cease to guide it and He will remove Himself from it. This is what He commands all Christians to do in Romans 16:17, it is what Mr. Armstrong instructed the Church members to do, and because God would not disobey His own command, it is what He would do as well:

“Now, notice the next verse, “**For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ**, but their own belly; and **by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple**’, and that is Romans 16:18. And **some of you brethren have wanted to hear those good words and those fair speeches** coming from persons of a personality of charisma even though you were disobeying God. ‘Well, if I disobey God I still want to know what they say’. Is that the way you think of it? Is that what you are going to say to Christ in the judgment?

“Notice further the commands of Paul. God’s message through Paul, I Thessalonians 3:6 ‘**Now we command you, brethren**’ it’s a command from God. ‘**in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly**’. I Thessalonians 3:14 ‘And **if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him**, that he may be ashamed’. **Do you do that?** Oh no, several of you members want to disobey that. How do you ever expect them to get into the kingdom of God?

Bible Study, “Romans 15-16”, Herbert W Armstrong, July 7, 1980

“Now some of our ministers have wanted to water down that doctrine. And they wanted to change that doctrine. They didn’t want to teach that doctrine of the Bible. **They didn’t want to teach the doctrine of Christ and of God.** And so they were causing division and that’s why they were put out. And so they come by speaking trying to draw you after them and I’m speaking unto you people that are going to hear this in the other Churches. And so you say, well I just want to hear what they have to say and so you go. God says don’t go! **God says avoid them!**

“Christ taught His chosen apostle through the written word of God. *The Worldwide Church of God*, the same Church as founded in 31 AD, received its doctrine through God’s chosen apostle. Every doctrine you have came through God’s chosen apostle.”

Bible Study, “Romans 15-16”, Herbert W Armstrong, July 7, 1980

“Well, supposing that one even who has received the Holy Spirit changes his mind and wants to go off a different way and he begins to cause friction and trouble. Some will say ‘Yeah, you are still going to have friction in the Church.’ Oh, no. We are not, brethren. No we're not! And I want to show you why.

“Next we have to turn back to Romans, the last chapter of Romans, the 16th chapter and verse 17 where Paul says; ‘Now I beseech you, brethren, **mark them which cause divisions** and offences **contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned**, and avoid them.’

“Different doctrines, they are causing division, they are causing trouble. That is what we had in the past. And the REASON that we had it was we said, ‘Well, we must be more loving and more kind and more good than God; and we must just leave them in among us.’ **God says, MARK THEM AND AVOID THEM. Now there are two ways we can avoid them, and only two that I know. One is if we leave them in the Church and we all go out, we're no longer in the Church. The other is that we put them out, and we stay in.”**

Sermon, “Unity”, Herbert W Armstrong, February 4, 1984

“By their false doctrine these false teachers were dividing the Church. And **the true Christians were put out of the visible Church and the visible Church persecuted God's people.** Already in the days of the Apostle John, at the end of the first century, **an apparent elder by the name of Diotrephes cast out of the Church any of his people who would have fellowship with the disciples of John** (III John 9-10). This trend continued and eventually many were following the errorists (II Pet. 2:1-2).

Good News Magazine, “The Faith Once and for All Delivered”, August 1974

Comment: As you have learned, false doctrinal teachings can originate from within the Church of God and even from its top leadership. God instructs his people to avoid those who are the authors of heresy. This means staying away from members, ministers, and even the leader of the Church if he is teaching heresy. And there are only two ways of doing this. The first way is to remove the individuals responsible for the heresy from the Church and if this is not possible, the second way is that the Church members must leave the organization in order to remove themselves from these individuals. And this must happen immediately! Or risk being infected by the false teachings.

Never Ever Compromise

There is one antidote that will prevent one from falling for a false doctrine or a teaching that has been watered down.

It has already been established that the truth was restored in the Philadelphia era of the Church. And that these truths were restored to the Church by Jesus Christ through the office of an apostle by which Mr.

Armstrong served in. And it was also mentioned that Jesus Christ put his stamp of approval on these teachings when he stated that the Philadelphia era “Kept His Word” in Revelation 3:8 & 10.

The antidote that will prevent a Christian from falling for a false teaching or a doctrine that has been watered down is the instruction that was given by Jesus Christ to His people in Revelation 3:11. And that instruction is to “hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown”. This means that one must never ever compromise with the truths that were restored to the Philadelphia era of the Church:

Mr. Armstrong was selected by God to lead the Church of God in the 20th century because he would not compromise the truth. He was determined to keep the “Word of Christ” as it was revealed to him without concession. And he was tested throughout his life on this very point. It is the only way that God can know whether one will remain faithful to Him once we learn the truth. And those that God has called can expect to be tested on this very same point. And let there be no doubt that these tests will come:

“I want to get as CLOSE to GOD's true doctrines as possible, and as far away from Satan's ways as possible.

“If there is any reason why the living Christ chose me as His Apostle, it is that **I will not compromise a thousandth of an inch on God's true doctrines.**

“Did you ever realize GOD won't compromise with them? No doubt God had the POWER to just forgive us our sins, without having to give His only begotten Son Jesus to pay our penalty— and Jesus had to give His LIFE to pay our penalty rather than compromise with His Law!

“Brethren, LET US STAND FIRM in the truth of the Eternal GOD! If ever I needed you to stand back of me as Christ's chosen Apostle, IT IS NOW!”

Co-worker Letter, Herbert W Armstrong, June 25, 1985

“God wants to know, frankly, if we are just flash-in-the-pan Christians. After our initial actions of receiving God's truth, repenting of sin and being baptized, do we continue obeying God faithfully?

“Or ‘when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word [God's commandments],’ are we offended? (Matt. 13:21).

“God is investing much time, energy and love in training us for high positions as kings and priests in His coming Kingdom (Rev. 5:10, 20:6). **He needs to know if we will be loyal to Him through the good and the bad times...**

“God's method of proving His people is not new. Hear what He did to Israel:

“The Lord your God led you all the way these forty years in the wilderness, to humble you and test you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not’ (Deut. 8:2).

“God chastises us out of love. These tests help develop holy character in us (Heb. 12:6, 10).

“How should we respond? **‘Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward. For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God [after we continued faithful to Him through thick and thin], you may receive the promise’ (Heb. 10:35-36) ...**

“Severe trials teach us to look to God, to develop the habit of waiting for God's answer. That's why we glory in tribulation! We know that ‘tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope’ (Rom. 5:3-4, Authorized Version).”

Good News Magazine, “Have You Ever Asked – Why Doesn’t God Do Something?”, January 1984

“Now I'd like to give you one little prophecy in the New Testament (in Revelation 3 and verses 7 and 8). **This is the Philadelphia Church, and it is speaking of our Church today, Verses 7 and 8.** Revelation 3:7 And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write ...

“Revelation 3:8 ‘I know thy works; behold I have set before thee an open door, no man can shut it you have but little strength and hast kept my word’. **Has believed what He says and kept His Word, and has not watered it down and has not compromised.** And when I found it watered down, brethren, we got back onto the track. We're almost back there, if not entirely and we must get all the way back.”

Sermon, “Microwave From Tucson”, Herbert W Armstrong, March 2, 1981

The Way of Escape

God made a special promise that He will deliver God’s people from various tests and trials in I Corinthians 10:13 “but God *is* faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear *it*”. This includes providing a way of escape when God’s Church becomes engulfed in heresy.

But the first step that one must take is to leave the place where false doctrines are being taught in order to stay in the truth. But the place that one must go to may not always appear in the time frame that we may expect. It may take days, months, or even years may go by before one is shown the place to gather.

This is so important that it is worth reiterating. When one is in an organization that is teaching heresy, and the matter is not corrected swiftly, God expects those who wish to remain faithful to the truth to leave so that they can remain in the truth and thus His Church. But this is only to be implemented until the body of Christ begins to gather again in truth again:

“David suffered constant criticism and false accusation, his enemies continually tried to unseat him and his trials were so great sometimes it seemed God would never come to his rescue - yet God always did!

“Truly these trials teach us to be patient - for it often seems an eternity before God finally delivers us. How often I have experienced this personally. Yet, always God has intervened before it was too late!

“God chose Paul to be an apostle of Christ, and the Lord said, ‘I will show him how many things he must suffer for My name's sake’ (Acts 9:16).”

Good News Magazine, “Why Trials and Troubles”, Herbert W Armstrong, June-July 1985

“In this work of God there has been deceitful, malicious, ruthless opposition. Obstacles have had to be hurdled frequently. Problems constantly require solution. It has required unwavering faith, perseverance, determination, constant prayer for guidance and reliance on God for both direction and protection.

“Does the Bible teach smooth sailing for true Christians whom God is using? **Did the men of God, whose lives pleased God, as recorded in the Bible, have only an easy time of it, or were they constantly meeting trials, tests, troubles of every sort - being continually forced to cry out to God for deliverance?** And WHY? Listen to God's own instruction:

“MANY are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivers him out of them all” (Psalm 34:19).

Good News Magazine, “Why Trials and Troubles”, Herbert W Armstrong, June-July 1985

“Because God's character upholds His Word, we can take the Bible for what it says, believe it and act on it with perfect confidence.

“However, the fulfillment of prayer often requires time — a patient waiting on God. David wrote, ‘Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him’ (Ps. 37:7).

“This is an area where we frequently fall short. We don't always realize that God's answers frequently take time to be accomplished. God is working out a purpose in human life, and He is not doing a hasty, makeshift job. We need not become suspicious, impatient or troubled when God doesn't answer right away. There is never a reason to doubt the promises of God. Since God knows what we need before we ask Him, He also knows exactly when and how to answer.

“The best answer may take several days, weeks or months. But if we become worried, we may press for an answer too soon or give up on God altogether and try to solve our problems our own way. We then lose faith and God's blessings as well. **We need to patiently trust Him as He carries out His promises for us.”**

Good News Magazine, “Ask and You Shall Receive”, December 1980

Sheep Follow the Truth

Christ will never force anyone to leave an organization that is engulfed in false teachings or watered down doctrine. He is waiting for you to take action, to take the necessary steps, to stay in the truth. He is a shepherd who leads his sheep. And when an organization is compromised (infected by false doctrines), Christ will lead them out of that group.

In the same manner, He will not force His sheep to reunite once the body of Christ is established in truth somewhere else. But he will call them with his voice, which is the Word of truth, and He will lead His sheep to the place where they must go:

“Verily, verily [Jesus said] I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber [now what is the door; and what is the way of entry? The sheepfold here is merely the type of the kingdom of God — of salvation]. But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep [now the shepherd goes in by the door and leads the sheep and the sheep follow right in through]. To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and he leadeth them out.’ (John 10:1-3 KJV)...

“And the gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice; he calls his sheep by name and he leads them out. When he has brought all his sheep outside, he goes in front of them, and the sheep follow him, because they knew his voice; they will not follow a stranger” (John 10:3-5 Moffatt Translation)

“Now he doesn’t drive them. He leads and they follow. And there it is again. Christ leads; He does not drive anyone. If you notice: **Jesus Christ never once forced anyone to agree with Him or to believe what He preached.**”

World Tomorrow Broadcast, “Truth Restored”, Herbert W Armstrong

“And I’ve been working hard the last 2 ½ years to get this Church back on the track after others were getting it off the track. I don’t think we’re 100% back yet. I don’t think we have gotten all of the leaven out yet. But it’s going out, believe me. And we’re going to get it out.

“Let’s not be part of those virgins who don’t have any oil in their lamps. If you have any doubt in your mind, begin fasting and praying, asking God to give you his spirit. **But his spirit will only open your mind to understand his word.** And you will have to follow it. **The holy spirit is not going to pull you, it’s not going to push you, it’s not going to compel you. It’ll show you the way. You’ll have to begin to want to walk on it on your own power and you’ll have to ask God for extra power and help.** **Brethren, we’re in the very last days. And we need to be sure that we are ready.”**

Sermon, “Church History” (DUB), Herbert W Armstrong, 1981

Conclusion

Brethren of the one true God, the identifying sign, the place where the body of Christ will gather just before the Great Tribulation strikes the nations of Israel, is the place that is holding fast to the truths that were restored to the Philadelphia era of the Church by Jesus Christ through Mr. Herbert W Armstrong, Revelation 3:8. This is the group that will be holding fast to these truths without compromise, Revelation 3:11. And this is the group that will be protected from this terrifying event, Revelation 3:10. This is the sign that will identify the body of Christ at the end of the age. May God help everyone find their way back home!

“After some years I discovered, not only where, and which, was the one true Church — but also that I was actually in it! How did I know? How did I recognize it?

“BY ITS FRUITS!

“And foremost among those identifying fruits is the statement of the resurrected Jesus, applying to this Church, in Revelation 3:8: ‘I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it; for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my Word, and hast not denied my name.’

“Being faithful to GOD’S WORD is the chief qualifying requirement. That includes believing God’s Word, and proclaiming God’s Word — but also obeying it, being faithful never to compromise with it, actually living it!”

Good News Magazine, “ARE YOU SURE that we are the Church of God”, Herbert W Armstrong, May 1964

*With sincerity and love
And in Christ’s service,*



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