

THERE CAME A **FALLING** **AWAY**

by David C. Pack

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Herbert W. Armstrong led the Worldwide Church of God for 52 years, teaching hundreds of true doctrines. He proved them from the Bible and told us to do the same. His successors changed them *all*. Do you think *some* changes were right? Do you realize ALL were wrong? Have you recognized them? Here they are!

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DEDICATION

The final edition of this book is dedicated to Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong, who would have wanted someone to preserve the truth that God established through him—and to the sheep he so faithfully served, who needed a shepherd's help in retrieving what had been stolen from them.

PROLOGUE

We are pleased to present you with a copy of *There Came a Falling Away*. It is a different kind of book from the others written to those in the splinter offshoots of the Worldwide Church of God (WCG). In fact, it was originally prepared for those still *in* the WCG because most of the organizations that eventually broke away had not yet formed. The passing of time has made it into more of a reference and history book. And it can be studied over time before, during or after your final decision regarding our *Splinter Explanation Packet* (SEP).

It took a staggering number of hours and the help of many people to make this very large volume a reality. I am most grateful for their assistance. It would be difficult to know where to start and stop in thanking the contributors. God knows who they are, and He will reward them.

This effort began in the spring of 1993. The result was a thick ringbinder then called *Except There Came a Falling Away*, which comes from a prophecy in II Thessalonians 2:3. This was really the first edition of this “newer” book, *There Came a Falling Away*. Over the next year, as more doctrinal changes occurred in the WCG, six more editions were offered. In the spring of 1995, an extensive appendix was added to the seventh edition. During the next five years, there were no substantive additional changes, editions or appendices. Different editions have circulated (almost 24,000 by the Spring of 2006), with no *one* edition in the hands of all readers.

While I have returned to amend, expand and improve the book many times over the years, this is the final edition, and also my final effort to tell the story and explain at least certain basic elements of the true meaning of the apostasy in the Worldwide Church of God (WCG). I pray that it will continue to help more see what happened there with full and correct clarity.

Much has been added to this final edition—clarifications, adjustments, additional author's notes, also this Prologue, etc. It is still not perfect, but no effort of this type could be. It is hoped the reader will understand that an initially small staff of basically untrained (in publishing), but very dedicated, people “pulled off” a project that would normally only be tackled by a large publishing house.

The book now includes an *Author's Statement* followed by a *Biographical Foreword*, which are then followed by several sections, each offering important elements of what happened.

Realize that a book of this type defies the normal tradition of writing in the form of a story flow. The apostasy must be viewed from different perspectives to see the entire picture. *What* were the changes? *How* did they come about? *Why* was the apostates' seduction so effective? What exactly did God prophesy would happen? Why was this great trial sent upon God's people? Did Mr. Armstrong ever warn the Church that it was coming? How was the idea for this book formed? Why did I feel that I must undertake the project of compiling and presenting it? What should a true Christian who wants to *fully* hold fast do about the material in this book? These are all part of why this extensive volume was written as it was.

Carefully reading (and possibly *studying*) all of the material is vital to seeing the whole picture that is presented. Although this could occur over time, you will commit an injustice against yourself if you do not read all parts. Seeing all of the contrasting quotes on point after point carries its own weight of convincing authority as to the *two minds*—in reality, **TWO SPIRITS**—that were in conflict during the apostasy. I suggest the following approach: Read the book straight through in the order in which it is written, without deviating, sometime *after* first reading our absolutely vital book *The True Church – One Organization, or Many?*, if you have not done so already. That book should be followed by the equally important books “*Anoint Your Eyes*” – *Christ's Warning to His People, The Government of God – Understanding Offices and Duties* and *The Work of God – Its Final Chapter!*, in that order. Finally, be sure to read *Why The Restored Church of God? – Should You Join?*)

There Came a Falling Away steps on many toes. While no author actually sets out to do this, in the case of this book, it is not only unavoidable, but for everyone who survived the apostasy, it is necessary. If what you learn deeply sobers you, then it will have served its purpose. Also, some of those it offends have turned and attacked its source. Since “men love darkness because their deeds are evil” (John 3:19-21), there have been some who have gotten very angry about the light this book sheds on the darkness they prefer. Of course, we are living in the darkest age in history. No converted person doubts this. Since Christ and all His disciples “are the light of the world,” then this alone puts true Christians in harm’s way—just as much as it did Christ Himself. After 40 years in the truth, I was not naïve about the level of persecution this much “bright light” would produce—and neither should you be.

Some people wish to be secret admirers of God’s truth and way, meaning they “love” the truth as long as they can remain unseen “in a closet.” It takes spiritual courage to be true Christians, because they are part of “a city set on a hill that cannot be hid.” Jesus Christ said that Philadelphians have “not denied My name” (Rev. 3:8). It is apparent that one of the ways many have done this (those of the seventh era) is that they will have been embarrassed by certain truths that left them feeling “uncomfortable” when under scrutiny from worldly peers. Many have gone to certain organizations because they determined in advance that they could be more “comfortable” there. They may have convinced themselves that they should shed some of God’s more “difficult” truths. Of course, these “embarrassing” doctrines—those that brethren are often *ashamed* of—vary from person to person.

Many do not want to appear extreme by holding to *all* that God’s people once treasured. Others have found a wonderful convenience in being able to declare they “grew out of” certain teachings. Coincidentally, these will probably be the same doctrines they considered embarrassing. Of course, they cannot see that they denied Christ’s authority (His name) by saying, in effect, He was too weak to fully guide His apostle. This means some will *have to conclude* that the many times Mr. Armstrong told the Church, “Christ puts truth into the Church through apostles” were merely misguided statements of a sincere man, but one who was occasionally doctrinally confused. They may further conclude that he *was* an apostle—but one who taught wrong doctrines.

Some demand *written* proof that The Restored Church of God is committed to exact doctrinal integrity. That is certainly fair! This book, along with all of the others prepared for the splinters, publicly and

permanently removes all doubt. No other organization is willing to go *on record* as clearly or thoroughly as Restored. This way, other organizations can remain “fluid” with certain doctrines—and I do not apologize for the strength of this statement! I have often said, “If I ever tried to forsake parts of the truth, I could never get away with it, because people could simply confront me with my own books”—and if they didn’t, they probably should.

Also, this book, and *The Work of God – Its Final Chapter!*, basically silences those who say that either The Restored Church of God or I am not committed to doing the Work of preaching the gospel to the world. Let me explain. While we are also using other means, and I have personally rewritten every one of the truths contained in Mr. Armstrong’s books, booklets and articles, a synopsis of most of God’s doctrines *could* be placed in the hands of new prospective members *in just this one book!* In fact, note that the Work being done here today is already otherwise immense in size, compared to all other groups.

Millions once heard and read the words of Herbert W. Armstrong. The majority of these people are still alive and scattered around the world, still searching and wondering what happened. Some have contacted us, and this is increasing as time passes. It is no accident that the very *first* doctrinal change documented in this book is the replacement of the *true gospel* with the Protestant counterfeit that Jesus Christ *is* the gospel, instead of the Messenger of it. This has *always* been the first change listed in the book. The replacement of the doctrine of the soon-coming kingdom of God, with the false idea that the kingdom is here now, is second. For all who have eyes to see, this was its own plain statement about our determination to do the Work very early on!

Because of the passing of time and further advancement of events *post-apostasy*, I repeat that this extensive compilation of information is now more of a reference work—one very helpful for research and comparison of organizations *claiming* to teach the truth, but which can be proven to teach false doctrines where some truth once stood. The book is still able to present extremely helpful facts and very interesting information in regard to elements of truth large and small that the reader has almost certainly lost. How ironic that the reader will discover so many splinter leaders saying the very same thing this book demonstrates that Joseph W. Tkach and the other apostates taught.

May God help all who examine this book to see what they have lost and to deeply desire to have all of it back again!

AUTHOR'S STATEMENT

In December 1992, I sat down in a restaurant with a notepad and a cup of coffee. I had decided to make a list of every doctrinal change I could think of that had occurred in the Worldwide Church of God (WCG) to that point. Working from simple recall, my very first list exceeded 30 in number. Over the next ten weeks, until I was fired from the WCG in early 1993, the list slowly grew to 75. Within a month after my termination, I had discovered well over 100. By early May, I had created a somewhat more formal list of 154 changes, which I typed out for distribution to anyone who asked for it. Somehow this list found its way to Joseph W. Tkach, Sr. It is the list to which he referred in the quote shown on the back cover of this book.

An Idea Was Born

Within three days of being fired from the WCG on March 2, 1993, my phone began to almost literally “ring off the hook.” Nearly everyone I spoke to had the same two questions, always phrased about the same: “What *are* the changes?” and “What do we *do* about them?” Throughout the apostasy, these remained the two biggest questions in people’s minds. And they become central to the thinking of every true Christian who faces the painful reality that false leaders have captured the visible, meaning in this age *corporate*, sheepfold. I spent a staggering number of hours repeatedly answering these two questions. (In fact,

circumstances in the splinters have kept these two questions alive and well, as they will be throughout the age.)

I was soon worn out by the endless long days of wading through proof of the doctrinal changes, *one by one*, with each person, *one by one*, and the biblical reasons, *one by one*, for following the truth. Many were the days I never made it out of my pajamas or even had time to eat. I barely had time to stop for a drink of water as the crush of phone calls became never-ending. Initially, there were no other pastors who had yet been fired or had resigned from the WCG who could help me. Slowly, I realized that I had to try to record the changes in a book that could be offered to anyone who wished to have it. As enormous as the task appeared to be, various editions began to emerge over the next two years. This book became my attempt to answer the question, “What *are* the changes?”

At this same time, I began to produce a three-part sermon series, each having a slightly different title, but containing the words “30 Reasons to Follow the Truth.” That series complemented this book and reflected 90 *biblical reasons* why Christians should always follow the truth and not a human government that *left* the truth. These tapes were generally enclosed with the book from 1993 through 1997.

These sermons actually represent the biblical perspective of a very large doctrine that was *never really taught* in the Church in any coherent way. This teaching is best summarized by the question, “What does *God (not men)* say to do in an apostasy when false leaders have captured the corporate ‘Church’?” This doctrine was never seriously addressed (Mr. Armstrong did periodically refer to false leaders who brought the onset of the “lost century” in early Church history) because the Church did not understand that it needed to research and explain it. Why? Because in the past, it was felt that a full-blown apostasy simply *could not happen!* Since Christ was the Head of the Church, we assumed false leaders could never capture the corporation! Since He was in charge, He would surely “put the Church back on track,” just as Mr. Armstrong did in the 1970s, when the Church had grown liberal. One simply needed to be patient until God did this.

To leave “God’s government in the Worldwide Church of God” was inconceivable—incomprehensible—for most people. For many, it was completely out of the question. So I was forced, over the next 21 months, to carefully, thoroughly research what God instructs Christians to DO under these circumstances. I was amazed at how much the Bible had to say about this largely overlooked and misunderstood subject. These sermons became my attempt to answer the *second* of the above two questions, “What do we *DO* about the changes?”

It has been estimated that 10,000 to 15,000 people heard those tapes and left the WCG to go to one of several major “splinter” groups. Many more than this hold various editions of this book.

A Killer and Destroyer at Work

God inspired the apostle Paul to compare heresy to both leaven and cancer. Everyone understands that leaven always spreads until it *fills* its host (Gal. 5:7-9). Similarly, cancer always spreads until it *kills* its host (II Tim. 2:16-18—the margin allows for a translation of “gangrene,” which functions in the same way as cancer). No one can dispute how these two agents work. Certainly God has always understood this, and must have carefully chosen these terms as the best comparisons for false teaching. While *people* have *forgotten* how they spread, *God* has not! But everyone knows that cancer and gangrene are *killers*!

With this introduction in mind, examine the entire 10th chapter of John. This fascinating chapter of scripture is particularly instructive today. There, in addition to calling false leaders “wolves” and “strangers,” Christ also calls them “thieves and robbers.” In verse 10, He explains, “The thief comes not, but for to *steal, kill, and to destroy*.” God calls the devil a *murderer* (John 8:44) and a *destroyer* (Rev. 9:11). Satan loves to *kill* people, physically and spiritually, and would *destroy*—do away with—the truth however he could. He has never wanted human beings to have the salvation that has been denied him.

As you read, consider the *amount of truth* that Satan and his agents have successfully subverted from the minds of God’s people. Also consider the *number of people* who have been spiritually “slaughtered” by this long process. What has occurred could only be described as a Church of God “holocaust.” The survivors among God’s people have literally been witness to a *spiritual holocaust* in the WCG.

A thief is a thief! He is one who *steals* what is not his. Why does Christ label false leaders, who have crept into His Church, as “thieves”? The answer is simple! They always *steal* at least three things: (1) *PEOPLE* who belong to Christ—that He has “bought with a price” (I Cor. 6:20); (2) *TITHES*, which belong to God (Lev. 27:30)! (hundreds of millions of God’s tithe dollars have been stolen from Him by false leaders over a period of years); and (3) *TRUTH* from the *visible* Church.

No one who loves the truth of God can question that Mr. Armstrong led the Philadelphian Era of Christ’s Church. We could then ask: How could this man—or this era—have been wrong on so many basic, vital,

important doctrinal truths and have received *no* criticism from Christ in the book of Revelation (3:7-14)? (The Philadelphia and Smyrna eras are the only two eras for which Christ had no correction, though both *did* have problems with a special fraternity of liars called the “synagogue of Satan.”) One must rectify this apparent enormous scriptural discrepancy in order to believe that either these wholesale changes or *any* changes—supposedly *toward* the truth instead of *away from* it—are correct.

Since Philadelphians are told, “Hold that fast which you have” (Rev. 3:11), and this is tied directly to retaining their crown, then accepting *any* of the changes becomes its own real problem. Consider this statement carefully! However, anyone who chooses to reject *all* of the changes is invariably called “an Armstrong worshipper,” to deliberately obscure the fact that he is really “a truth of God lover.” But it certainly does “play in Peoria” better if these are depicted as worshiping Mr. Armstrong.

An Old Pattern Returns

The 280 doctrinal changes listed in this book are not random and meaningless. The great architect of false religion always leaves the same footprints. While Satan is extremely cunning and deceptive, he is largely *unoriginal!* These changes reflect a direct return to the long-held, popular teachings and beliefs of this world’s churches. Some reflect Catholicism. Others reflect Protestantism. Still others reflect Greek Orthodoxy. And still others reflect the rudiments of this world’s philosophies. Do not ever disconnect this central master plan, and result, from what all these false teachings represent—what they mean! The WCG is *not returning* to the world—it is *already there*, just as much as any other Sunday-keeping group is—and has been there since 1995! (Most or all WCG congregations now keep Sunday.) Sadly, many people’s recollection of the teachings of the churches *from which God originally called them*, has faded. Many have re-accepted their same pre-calling, pagan beliefs, without proper recognition, merely because of different, more clever packaging—and because of a highly aggressive marketing campaign to sell them to the membership. (Thousands in the splinters have done the same.)

II Thessalonians 2:3 reveals that a “falling away” (Greek—*apostasia*—“a defection from truth”) would precede Christ’s Second Coming. Verses 10 and 13 explain that receiving salvation is attached to both a “*love* of the truth” and a “*belief* of the truth.” Everything that happened in the WCG was foretold nearly 2,000 years ago. No one should any longer doubt that these events occurred *exactly on schedule*. While many seem

terribly confused by what occurred, they should be *encouraged* and *excited*. Prophecy is right on schedule! Nothing is out of control! In its own way, this should excite and inspire brethren who can now see through what has happened, and is *still happening* to the scattered brethren throughout the splinters—to those who are not *fully* holding fast! (To learn more about the “falling away” of II Thessalonians 2:3 being fulfilled in the WCG, and how the Living Church of God now claims this verse is a *future* worldwide rebellion/revolt led by the man of sin, read the article covering this subject in my book *Surviving “Perilous Times.”*)

Titus 3:9-11 says heretics are to be rejected and *avoided*. Two thousand years of Church history demonstrate that people of truth and courage (*always* the small *minority*) have been willing to follow this biblical command. (To understand much more, listen to the sermons “God’s Way: Small, Little, Few” and the “90 Reasons” series.)

What Is the Church?

Many brethren never stop to consider whether there is a Bible definition of the Church. There is!—and it is found in I Timothy 3:15. Consider the following translations of this scripture as you evaluate where the living, active, TRUE Church of God is *always* found: “...the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the *pillar and ground* of the truth” (KJV), “...the pillar and *foundation* of the truth” (Goodspeed), “...and the *support* of the truth” (Berkley NT), “...and *buttress* of the truth” (Weymouth), “...and *bulwark* of the truth” (Moffatt), “...and *mainstay* of the truth” (Montgomery NT), “...and *stay*—the *prop and support*—of the truth” (Amplified), “...and the *base* of what is true” (Basic English NT), “...the *foundation* upon which the *truth rests*” (Knox NT).

With this framework, consider this quote from Mr. Armstrong, from a broadcast of approximately 30 years ago. It is found almost verbatim in his booklet *The Plain Truth About Easter* (pp. 15-16). The powerful impact of its message is an amazing parallel of today. Of course, the emphasis is mine throughout:

“And even in Paul’s day many among those attending at Antioch, at Jerusalem, at Ephesus, at Corinth, and other places began to apostatize and to turn away from the truth. Divisions [Author’s note: *Notice that Mr. Armstrong understood that the first century apostasy produced numerous groups, holding to a variety of different wrong ideas mixed with truth.*]

sprang up and those individuals unconverted or turned from God’s truth and way of life were no part of God’s true Church though visibly assem-

bling with those who were. The mystery of iniquity was already working as the Apostle Paul wrote in *II Thessalonians*, the 2nd chapter, and it was working inside of the *visible churches*. This apostasy increased and by the year of 125 A.D. *the majority* in most churches now, the majority assembling for services in most churches [were continuing in many of their old pagan beliefs and practices, though professing to be Christians]. *And, incidentally, they still assembled on the Sabbath day* – believe it or not – that's the day we call Saturday...Now, gradually, a smaller and smaller portion of the *visible churches* going by the name Christian remained truly yielded to God and to His truth and led by His Spirit. And after Emperor Constantine took virtual control of the *visible professing church*, *in the early 4th century, the visible organization became almost wholly pagan and they began excommunicating and persecuting all who held to the true Word of God – the Bible!* And finally it became necessary for all real Christians, even as a scattered people, it became necessary for them to flee. And they, the ones that were led by the Spirit of God, the ones in whom Jesus Christ was living His life in them, they alone composed the true Church and they had to flee the jurisdiction of the government in order to truly worship God. That's what's happened my friends, to the Church, but GOD STILL HAS HIS MINISTERS. GOD STILL HAS HIS CHURCH. I want to tell you that God's truth is still written in the pages of your Bible if you'll blow the dust off of it and look at it as it is."

No Intention of Attacking People

I tried as hard as humanly possible not to write this book in a spirit of attack or hostility, and I am neither bitter nor angry, though I have been accused of this. But I do hope that many brethren will have "righteous indignation" in a proper way over what took place in God's Church. These feelings are not wrong and are actually scriptural in certain circumstances—and this can keep people zealous for *full* solutions—not *partial* ones. Jesus taught, "Be not angry with your brother *without a cause*." God says that He "is angry with the wicked *every day*," and that He will be angry at the entire world for a *full year* during the "Year of God's Wrath," usually called the "Day of the Lord." Mr. Armstrong was not bitter or angry when he powerfully pointed out the false doctrines and errors of this world's churches. And then only *physical* destruction was at stake for those who did not heed. Should I be less thorough or fervent when *eternal life* is at stake for those who will not listen?

The Bible contains a long list of God's servants who had to point out error even though it brought them accusation from their detractors. I am

neither villain nor hero. I know that I have the pearl of great price and I am determined to keep it full, round and smooth, and none of it can be allowed to be chipped away. My ordination as a minister, and training by Mr. Armstrong, *require me* to help as many sheep as possible to do the same.

I have no interest in attacking personalities as some do—that is Satan's role! True ministers are *for* the truth, not *against* individuals.

Comprehensive Record

This is a truly exhaustive compilation of virtually every WCG doctrinal and policy change through 1995. To my knowledge, it is the only published *attempt* to capture the full scope of what happened there. While some of these changes are smaller and less significant, others are huge and have a devastating impact on belief and practice. Also, many of the changes involved numerous re-explanations of individual scriptures that could have been listed separately, thus making this list almost unending.

Note that changes 236-280 were originally recorded in an Appendix, separate from the book. They reflected the final wholesale abandonment, in late December 1994, of the central biblical teachings that involve and require obedience to God, and on numerous vital matters. Earlier reported changes that I listed did not reflect that *this* had yet happened. Basically, I recorded changes in the order that they occurred! Therefore, some author's notes may not appear to reflect a clear recognition of what would *later* be a more obvious and open abandonment of certain truths.

A more comprehensive approach was carried out, at the risk of being called picky or twiggy, because the final product would demonstrate that wrong doctrine eventually leavens everything that it touches. In this regard, carefully note the *Section II* lead-in, “Why So Many Changes are Included.”

Although not always possible, I have also tried to keep edits and commentary to a minimum throughout in order to allow the reader to be convicted by the weight of the changes themselves. In some instances, author's notes are necessary to make clear the apostates' overall strategic and/or tactical thinking.

“Proving All Things”

Space does not allow for the inclusion of all the information needed to prove the old teachings correct. This is not the purpose of the book. (The Restored Church of God has a vast array of *other* literature that does this,

and in exhaustive detail.) But it is hoped that this record will spur as many as possible to their own research and conclusions, and our literature is very helpful in cementing—or recementing—God’s doctrines into the mind.

Truth has always had its own attraction to those who love it. If someone deeply covets the truth of God, I have often said that he will “run through fire barefoot, over broken glass, jump deadly snakes and swim through alligators” to reach it! Make no mistake! This book will challenge—and is in part intended and written to challenge—you deeply on how much you love God’s truth and His way of life. Again, this means that you may find some personal research is necessary after you finish it.

Between 1,500 and 2,000 quotes are included in the book. Assuming that the truth could be quantified, this book demonstrates that nearly 100% of what Herbert W. Armstrong taught God’s people was thrown from the WCG! Possibly, some *tiny fragments* of a few truths *may* still remain there. I stopped counting years ago. Even the name of the church has now changed.

Title Revised

The original title of the first editions of this book was in a different tense, having been *Except There Come a Falling Away* (again, a reference to Paul’s prophesied warning in II Thessalonians 2:3). Since the worst part of the falling away is now behind the Church, I decided that the title should come to reflect past tense. However, in one sense, the falling away from some aspects of the truth is *still occurring* in numerous ways within the splinters and slivers. It is most crucial to understand this. Therefore, the reader will occasionally see a reference to these groups—“splinters”—among the author’s notes. One large section (“Endless False Doctrines”) of our book *Surviving “Perilous Times”* discusses this widespread continuing problem in much greater detail. So do virtually all of the others to the splinters, with *THE TRUE CHURCH*, “ANOINT YOUR EYES,” *THE GOVERNMENT OF GOD*, *THE WORK OF GOD* and *WHY THE RESTORED CHURCH OF GOD?* being the centerpiece books.

Repeating a note from the Prologue, a side note is important here: Understand. The Worldwide Church of God has long since gone back to the world. What is presented in this book are largely established facts of history, now involving a look back at a period of time—the early- to mid-1990s—when these things were actually happening. The author’s notes all through the book have slowly come to reflect a time

period that is over. Some do not. Today, many would be written differently—from the perspective of the early 21st century, as though they had happened years ago. But continually altering the book as the years pass becomes an unnecessary and complex endeavor toward no real helpful end. So periodically remind yourself of why much (not all) of the book is written in present tense—I was trying to help people who were becoming entangled *at that time*, rather than offering a review of a time long past from today's perspective.

No Further Editions

The book now contains 280 doctrinal changes. In 1993, I realized that eventually the WCG leadership would throw away *everything* that God used Herbert W. Armstrong to teach to His Church. Therefore, I wanted a record for all who wished to know *everything* that had been changed, and how and where they could have it restored. I repeat: The scope of what happened is now a matter of public, and even historic, record. This book attempts to capture this record in an organized way for the many who have asked (and for a few who may still be asking), “What *were* the changes?” All with eyes to see and ears to hear will understand that 280 documented changes are more than sufficient to convict the follower of truth that he must leave error—wherever it is being taught!

I encourage you to read the entire book to grasp the full scope of what happened. The *same* process led by the *same* spirit is still at work within the splinters, but it is simply happening at a slower pace! To hop around or only read selected parts of the book will greatly obscure the complete story, including this part!

It became inevitable that this book would fall into the hands of people whose goal would be to attack and discredit it. I claim it to be neither complete nor perfect. My book *Should Accusers Be Answered?* explains *why* I rarely answer critics. Do not let yourself worry about what people will say as you decide what to do! Remember, critics always seem to know exactly how to critique the work of others, while being too lazy or weak to ever attempt that same work themselves! (You may also wish to read the thorough brochure *Do You Know “David Pack”? – My Life and Ministry—Rumors and Lies vs. Facts and Truth.*)

Clever arguments can probably *appear* to explain away a few of these changes. Will you permit that to obscure the massive scope of probably the greatest apostasy in history? Or will you prove all things, hold fast that which is good and only follow teachers of the full *restored* truth?

Also note that the changes are listed in the general order that they were introduced within the apostasy. This means that the reader must recognize the worst and most obvious changes appeared later, after the Church had been conditioned and inoculated to the way the process worked when lower-profile truths were being thrown away.

Mr. Armstrong's Warning

Mr. Armstrong left a message for everyone today. We need not wonder exactly what he would say if he suddenly reappeared to survey the devastation. In 1934, when he decided to leave the Sardis era of the Church *over* (what some consider) *relatively minor issues of truth*, he demonstrated by his *actions* what he would do. At the individual level, he saw people depart from the truth over and over in his lifetime:

“Rather astonishing, isn’t it, that people who have heard God’s TRUTH preached for many years – people who at first accepted it in the love of God, professed it, started out practicing it – should, through the years, *fall away* from the truth...[and] begin to embrace false doctrines and errors...

“What is God’s sentence upon them? Listen!

“It is IMPOSSIBLE for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted of the good Word of God...if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh’ (Heb. 6:4-6). ‘Let it be a warning to ALL, and let all FEAR, and TREMBLE before the all-powerful WORD OF GOD!””

Herbert W. Armstrong, “Why Local Churches?”, GN, March 1957

A Final Thought

It is too late to help many thousands who have completely fallen away from God’s truth. It *is* impossible “to renew them again unto repentance” (Heb. 6:6). The incredible destruction that swept so many away caused me to often ask, how could *so many* give up *so much so fast* because of the deception of *so few*? The answer lies in this famous quote by Adolf Hitler: “What luck for rulers that men do not think.”

Do not let yourself be one of those people who “do not think”! Pray, study—and THINK—as you read this book, and decide how you will act upon it!

BIOGRAPHICAL FOREWORD

Many have asked about me personally—who I am and why I prepared *There Came a Falling Away*. Why did I separate from the WCG when I did, in early 1993? Why did I choose the original Church affiliation that I did?

Here is a personal background, describing in the briefest way certain key events in my ministry. (Much more can be learned by reading my 2-volume biography—*The Authorized Biography of David C. Pack*.)

God called me in 1966 when I was 17 years old and living in Lima, Ohio. I went to Ambassador College (Pasadena) a little over a year later in 1967 and graduated in 1971. My first field assignment was as a summer assistant in Indianapolis, Indiana, in 1970. Upon graduation, I married Miss Shirley Ochs of Milwaukee, Wisconsin (who died in 2007), and was again assigned to Indianapolis.

My wife had been Mr. Armstrong's secretary, off and on, for a period that spanned eight years until 1971 and included her years as a student. She graduated in 1968 and had become his secretary again for one and a half years before we were married. I still remember his counseling her before our wedding for about two hours, via long distance from the Philippines. In fact, it was my wife's position as Mr. Armstrong's secretary that led me into a special friendship with him, which lasted until his death. The teaching and observations I gleaned from him could form its own separate book.

My entire ministry was a continuous series of assignments replacing ministers who were either fired, suspended or who had quit their pastor-

ates and the Church. As a result, I continually found myself serving where people were divided, embattled, experiencing false teaching and generally confused. Sometimes, many brethren had just left the Church, 165 in one area. While the details would be tedious to read, these assignments became experiences that defined and galvanized my ministry into what it is today.

Unfortunately, addressing the problems that existed in pastorates that I had inherited made it impossible to avoid a whole variety of tough decisions. Because I was determined to always squarely face those decisions, I developed a reputation for being “tough and mean,” when all I had really done was administer a basic distinction between right and wrong. While most others apparently found this difficult, for those who follow Scripture it is simply what you have to do. Taking the political route or avoiding these decisions would have made my life much easier in the short run, but I would have neglected the true needs of the flock in the long run.

The greatest lesson that I learned through those many difficult years is that true—uncompromising—leadership can be terribly lonely. I spent much of my ministry “in trouble” because I would not cover my eyes to, or sweep under the rug, matters of clear right and wrong—and what I must do about what I saw.

Demoted to Associate Pastor

Just before Mr. Armstrong died, his soon-to-be successor demoted me to Associate Pastor. After serving a large pastorate in Buffalo, New York, my wife, three children and I were sent to serve in the most difficult parts of New York City. This man intensely despised me and had often directly threatened me because of my relationship with Mr. Armstrong. My demotion lasted for over four years, and during this time I was permitted to do very little, even when compared to the regular duties of an Associate Pastor.

During this punishment period (the late 1980s), in order to avoid bitterness while waiting for God to deliver me, I spent a great many hours writing out, by hand, thousands of scriptures on every biblical subject I could think of. I determined to never forget the painful, humbling period that God allowed me to endure upon my removal from perhaps the Church’s largest pastorate, at least shortly before that time. I still review these handwritten verses.

In February 1990, I was sent to Akron, Ohio, and allowed to serve as a full pastor once again. The timing of this transfer coincided with the

replacement of a minister who had been fired in late 1989 and started his own group. By this time, I had begun to notice certain subtle doctrinal changes slipping into the Church's literature. One year later, a headquarters minister (who was at the time my best friend) was sent to "reason with me" about the changes I was resisting. I had been registering my complaints with this particular man since the 1989 Feast, when we discussed future changes that he hinted were "coming downstream."

Key Conversations

In this February 1991 visit, I raised four specific concerns: the issue of Christians being "born again" in this life, the idea that trying to "imitate Christ" was now being seen as a "false hope," men wearing earrings, and the most early beginnings of the trinity doctrine. Several of these issues had appeared in a January 1991 *Pastor General's Report*. At the same time, the bi-monthly publication for ministers, known as *Reviews You Can Use*, also hinted that the trinity was on the way, but most ministers were missing the clues. To say that our discussions were "vigorous" would be an understatement! Since this man had been sent to "quiet me down," it was only his friendship that apparently kept me from being fired or demoted at that time.

I slowly developed a crisis of conscience until May of 1992, when I flew to Pasadena for the ministerial "Refresher Program." I met with this same minister for a period of 11 hours, at lunch, then dinner, and afterward at his home. It was during this discussion that he explained the new headquarters "vision." What he said shocked and stunned me beyond belief: "We [various key men in Pasadena involved in the plan] believe Herbert Armstrong was a cult leader who built the Church on sand and filled it full of prophecy freaks [his words]. He never built on Jesus Christ. We're going to blow all the sand and prophecy freaks from the Church, even if we lose half the members, and build on Christ for the first time. Furthermore, Mr. Armstrong was a dictator, a plagiarizer, a hype-artist who exaggerated everything, and an autocrat who was lost in the 19th century."

This man also said (and here I am paraphrasing): "I doubt that some of the senior evangelists were ever converted because we are finding they are so hopelessly filled with 'Armstrongism.'" It became obvious that he was one of the key architects of the previous, and yet-to-be-announced, doctrinal destruction, which he related with such excitement. (Sadly, and this is still an unfolding surprise to those who are carefully investigating, later history demonstrated that *all* of those senior evangelists he refer-

enced were not as *filled* with so-called “Armstrongism” as *many* supposed.)

No Turnaround Coming

At this point, I realized that there was no hope for a turnaround in the Worldwide Church of God. And I had been privately warning of this, since early 1991, to many friends in the ministry. They shared *some* of my concerns, but none shared them all. I also focused on trying to reach as many as possible in my pastorate. At that time, I had not a hint, inkling or clue that God wanted me to “start another church.” I did realize that He had to raise up *someone* who would hold fast to the full truth that Mr. Armstrong had taught (and the Church had proven to be correct). I assumed that this had to be a senior evangelist, and I thought at the time that I knew who this man might be.

I determined to wait patiently until God raised up the man who would hold to all that God had taught the Church, without compromise. One other pastor had left (I briefly referred to him earlier) in December 1989. I knew, however, that, in addition to being untrained and insufficiently experienced, this man’s thinking and writings were even then—and he is much worse now—so unsound and bizarre that it was not possible that God would use him to lead the reorganization of His Church. So I waited, from May 1992, for God to raise up one whom I thought He would use.

Because of God’s overall plan and lesson-learning that He had in mind for me, it never occurred to me once, for even a split second, to strike out on my own. While this may trouble some who think that I should have done this earlier, the timing would have been all wrong, from the perspective of God’s purpose. (Details of this, including my training and preparation, are thoroughly covered in other SEP books.) I was determined, however, to *never* consciously compromise, and to speak out forcefully against *all* false teaching whenever I saw it. I recognized that I would not remain undiscovered for long.

Another “god”

In the fall of 1992, the infamous *God Is...* booklet was introduced to the Church. Through this booklet, it was clear that a false, pagan, 1,700-year-old, manmade, non-existent “god” was being presented to the Church in place of the true God. This was a tremendous shot across the bow of the Church that went largely unrecognized. I knew that the acknowledgment

and adoration of the pagan cross must soon follow. In fact, this happened in January of 1993. It became clear that my time had run out. At that time, I thought that the WCG had become the Laodicean Church. It was not until some time later that I realized the leadership would depart from God altogether. Though I am jumping ahead, it was in 1994 and 1995 that it became clear that people of TWO KINDS OF THINKING were fleeing the apostasy, in an essentially *co-mingled* condition! Some had accepted wrong teachings, but desired the full truth—and others had knowingly accepted different doctrines, but had no interest in returning to what they considered “old ideas.”

The Bible demonstrates that God’s people *must* depart the organization when a new god is introduced—and that *this change* is always the doctrinal “point of no return.” Once the true God is disfellowshipped from the Church, it cannot possibly be the Church *of God* any longer. Literally, it would then become the “church of ANOTHER god!”—and we could add “another Jesus” (II Cor. 11:4). I Corinthians 10:6-15 states bluntly that people must flee when confronted by idolatry and the worship of a false god. Carefully note verse 14 and the phrase “flee from idolatry.” I recognized that Revelation 3:20 pictured the true Christ *outside* Laodicea “knocking on each man’s door.”

In December 1992, the minister who would start the Global Church of God (on January 2, 1993) was fired from the WCG. He was an older evangelist who had entered Ambassador College in 1949. I had always thought him to be doctrinally sound. After he was fired, he spoke of “restarting the Work” and “preaching the full truth” again, and I believed him. This man and I were, literally, family to one another (in-laws through marriage) and had been relatively close friends for well over 20 years. Another senior evangelist spoke privately to me of joining him. This man was also a friend *and* “family.” I had always also thought this second man to be doctrinally sound, one who respected the Work and who would defend *all* of Mr. Armstrong’s teachings.

I now believed I had received a clear signal from God as to where He wanted me to go. I thought this leader would be used to gather and lead the remnant of the Philadelphian era. (My “90 Reasons” series reflects that I have *always* felt that we must leave the Laodicean Church to remain Philadelphian. *“Anoint Your Eyes” – Christ’s Warning to His People* includes an explanation why I have never departed from this biblical understanding.)

So I began to make preparations for what had become another imminent termination and gave blunter warnings to various friends and brethren over the next two-month period. I became even more active in speaking against the doctrinal changes. Since a local deacon and an elder in

the Akron congregation were carefully monitoring me and reporting to Pasadena, it became clear that I would not survive much longer in the Worldwide Church of God.

A Final Sermon

With time short and events tightening around me, I determined that I should give a special, powerful sermon on February 27, 1993, on the word *truth* as it is found throughout the Bible. I decided to include, as many as I could possibly fit into one sermon, *all* of the important aspects of this single word, simply titling the sermon “Truth!” I surveyed a great many scriptures, from Genesis to Revelation, and demonstrated that this one word represented the single most important subject in the entire Bible, and that it is the umbrella that overarches every other subject. Though numerous false stories have been spread concerning my separation, this is all that I did on that date. (This sermon is available on our website.)

On that particular Sabbath, there were a number of guests visiting from surrounding areas. A firestorm arose *immediately* after I finished. A tape of the message was overnighted to Pasadena, and I was summarily fired on Tuesday, three days later, without proper, or even any, notice. Several ministers, who have since gone with the largest splinter, turned me in, and I actually learned of my termination by word of mouth.

I gave this sermon because of a personal admonition given to me by Mr. Armstrong fourteen years before. Had this not happened, I might not have known exactly what to do. He told me directly, face-to-face, “If false leaders ever take control of the Church, I hope you won’t teach their false ideas.” Many long-time ministers can remember him making similar statements openly, more than once, in meetings back in the 50s and 60s. He would say words to this effect: “If you men ever get rid of me, Loma and I will just walk across the street and start over.” This is still public record.

A true minister of God must be willing to give up friendships, through disfellowshipment, to continue teaching God’s truth. He must always be willing to “lay down his life” for the sheep. I did not believe for a minute that “quietly resigning” satisfied this command, and I could not conceive of Mr. Armstrong doing that. (Of course, most ministers quietly slipped from the WCG having issued essentially *no* real or in any sense thorough warning to *anyone*.) Three times, when I attempted to fight for God’s people (in 1993, 1998 and 1999), three different Church headquarters called me a liar. This was sufficient for the majority who heard these charges to presume they must be true. Yet, it is its own great irony in our time that those who will not *teach* the truth are seemingly

presumed to always *tell* the truth—especially about people who will *not* compromise doctrinal truth.

One of the tasks of a true minister has always been fulfilling Titus 1:9-11, in which it speaks of selecting men for ordination into the ministry. One must be found “holding fast the faithful word *as he has been taught*, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.” The next two verses explain that he must fight to protect whole households from “vain talkers and deceivers” who are “subverting” them.

Change 280 will make clear, and in painstaking detail, the duty of all true shepherds. On page 262 of *MYSTERY OF THE AGES*, Mr. Armstrong wrote the following: “It is the duty of Christ’s TRUE ministers (and how scarce today) to PROTECT the begotten but yet unborn saints from *false doctrines, and false ministers*.” (Emphasis his.) It is this and other quotes like it that still lead and motivate me as I strive to preserve God’s precious truth for all who still care about it.

Global Church of God Minister

I was fired from the WCG ministry, after 22 years, and became a minister of the Global Church of God (GCG), serving a wide region of the United States from Akron, Ohio. Over time, I found myself establishing dozens of “video groups” (as we called them) throughout the northeast, southeast and central portions of the country. By mid-1994, I became a Regional Pastor supervising the full-time ministry in this general part of the United States and Canada. In early 1995, at its outset, I was appointed to the Global Council of Elders. Periodically, I also wrote for various publications that this group produced. The six years and two months that I spent in GCG was a time of vast lesson-learning and of gaining much valuable experience.

By 1996, I had already expressed several small doctrinal concerns in which Global was drifting from what the Bible and Mr. Armstrong had taught. I ALWAYS presented these concerns to the Council and rarely was anything ever resolved. The leader, Roderick Meredith, had his own doctrinal agenda. This indicated the path that the organization would eventually take. Each time I stood up for doctrinal truth, within my region or in the GCG Council of Elders, I found myself “in trouble.”

A familiar pattern was returning.

By the end of 1996, I was removed as a Regional Pastor and replaced by a man who was terribly liberal in his doctrinal understanding and approach to the ministry. This was a very clear statement to me! I strove through 1997 to take a strong stand on doctrinal and administrative matters, which demanded no compromise. I boldly confronted the leader

(first alone and then with witnesses) about his doctrinal drift and other matters. Slowly, all throughout 1998, a definite division grew in the Council, involving the leader's teachings and conduct. (It serves no useful purpose to cover particulars, and I am determined to never attack the personal character of specific splinter leaders. I will, however, always fight vigorously for true doctrine.)

By early fall of 1998, I was privately warned that I was being "targeted" by the leader for removal and termination. I had been hearing rumblings for a solid year that he had this in mind for me. However, each time I asked him about it, he denied it. On November 7, I determined, once again (as in 1993), to give a powerful sermon, while visiting in Michigan, titled, "Eight Signs of a True Philadelphian." Just as I understood what was at stake almost six years earlier in similar circumstances, I recognized what was likely to happen again if I were to give a sermon on that topic.

In this sermon, I forcefully stated that numerous false doctrines had entered GCG, and the problem was growing, but that Philadelphians are commanded by God to "hold that fast which you have." Again, I saw that I had reached the same crossroads that I had faced at the end of 1992 and early 1993, and that I was in a Laodicean organization. The leader's ambition had blinded him to the role in which God used Mr. Armstrong, and there would be no reconsideration on his part.

Just four days later (at a previously scheduled Council meeting), I was, *quite literally*, put on trial, lasting eight hours—all day!—because I would not compromise the doctrines that were being trampled by the leader. Of course, the usual charges of "sowing division and discord" were thrown at me, just as they had been when I was fired from the WCG. In a fascinating twist, with complications too numerous to relate, GCG's leader, Roderick Meredith, was himself fired (over unrelated matters) by the Board of Directors about ten days later. Approximately 80% of the Global Church of God followed him in establishing his new "Living" Church of God, believing him to be merely the victim of a rebellious conspiracy. And his growing list of now over fifty separate doctrinal errors remained largely but not entirely ignored until the beginning of 2005, when brethren finally began to leave him and his organization in large numbers.

This leader's long-designated successor remained with the remnant of Global. I fervently hoped this man would set the church "back on track." But, because of tremendous financial problems that ensued from the Global split, not only did things *not* get better doctrinally, but financial implosion eventually resulted. The previous leader had left the Church with massive debt and little chance of ever repaying it. (Almost ten months later, in September 1999, that previous Global leader's direct

assistant actually sued the Global Church of God out of existence. A very sad chapter was ended!)

The New (Post-Split) Global

By March of 1999, it became clear that certain GCG pastors, who were now more openly teaching *mass* heresy (now in the *remnant* of GCG), were not going to be reined in by the new leadership anymore than the previous leader would rein in himself. I stepped up my complaints to headquarters and the process of directly warning brethren that numerous false doctrines (large and small) were still growing like cancer within the Church. In early April, I was warned for the last time, now by this *new* leadership, to “go along and keep quiet”—in almost these exact words. Once again, I was told that I was “sowing division and discord.”

By late April, a particular pastor, actually an untrained local church elder who had been hired and promoted, brought formal “charges” against me before the Council of Elders. I was once again officially *put on trial* for another eight-hour period that spanned parts of two days. My “sentence,” among other things, was that I was cast from the Council, had my pastoral responsibilities reduced, was told to be quiet and go along and was ordered to apologize to the two worst outright heretics whose false teachings I had withstood.

These terms were impossible, and I told the Council that I would get back to them shortly before I “did” anything. I intended to respond in three days. The very next day, however, the Council carefully ambushed me by announcing throughout Global and on the Internet what they had done to me. I responded to these charges on my personal website on the Sabbath of May 1, *after* first notifying the GCG headquarters (as I had already intended to do) that I could not accept the terms of their sentence. I fully understood what this meant.

I was fired two days later, on May 3, 1999, after six years and two months in the Global Church of God!

A Realization Had Been Dawning

It was not until late March or early April of 1999 that it first occurred to me that not one senior minister (or organization) was remotely holding to *all* that the Church had been taught by Mr. Armstrong. This left me with two clear choices!

ONE: Seek to join some other organization, this time clearly knowing *in advance* that I must compromise to do this. Two: Like Mr. Armstrong,

when he departed from the divided organizations that comprised Sardis, be willing to recognize that *all* of the groups had doctrinally and in works drifted into Laodicean thinking, and forsake *all* of them. I had come to realize that, collectively, they comprised the seventh, scattered, divided, dominant and final era of the Church—and I had to leave them all!

I remembered my promise to Mr. Armstrong—that I would not consciously teach doctrinal error under any circumstances. I determined that if I found that I had ever drifted into a departure from any part of the full truth of the Bible’s teachings that God gave us through Mr. Armstrong, that I would acknowledge it (publicly, if necessary) and return to the correct teaching immediately. I had no choice but to proceed forward alone, doing what Mr. Armstrong did, trying to restructure the Church after the pattern and teaching that we all understood. (No minister can start a “new” Church. Christ did that in A.D. 31.) I realized that *all* of the people with God’s Spirit—and who wished to return to the Philadelphian condition, meaning those who would “anoint their eyes” as Christ commanded in Revelation 3:18—had to be slowly gathered by Christ out of the numerous groups that developed after the apostasy.

For many reasons, I understood that it was ABSOLUTELY IMPOSSIBLE for Christ to gather all Philadelphians at the *time of flight* to the Place of Safety. (You may read my splinter book on *THE TRUE CHURCH* and hear my vital sermon series on the “Body of Christ” to understand *why* this is true. You may also wish to read our extensive booklet *Promised Protection – Secret Rapture or Place of Safety?* to recapture the fullness of what God promises to all *true* Philadelphians.)

So, The Restored Church of God is not a “new church.” It is the reorganization—the continuation—of the only Church that Jesus Christ founded, now almost 2,000 years ago. (You may read our book *Where is the True Church? – and Its Incredible History!*, as well as *The Government of God – Understanding Offices and Duties*, among over 200 other books, booklets, articles and Bible lessons, plus our three magazines, to learn more about us.)

HOW THE SEDUCTION SUCCEEDED *OR* THE STORY OF THREE METHODS

The Worldwide Church of God had about 155,000 people in 1990 (151,601 attended the Feast that year). Over 110,000 appear to have been completely seduced and taken out of God's Way. Of course, many thousands of these had never been converted. It is also true that almost all of the rest have been partially seduced. This is a truly staggering statement, but true nevertheless. Many will refuse to accept this and will ignore the facts. (The majority of those who left the truth will never be reached or helped by this book, or the rest of what we have written for those in the splinters.) The fact remains—it did happen! The question is not *whether* it happened, but, rather, *how*. The *methods* used in a mass seduction of this scope bear their own examination!

There were three great hallmarks of Herbert W. Armstrong's teachings. FIRST, he used plain, simple, truthful language. SECOND, he challenged people to accept no belief until they had seen it absolutely proven from their Bible. THIRD, he repeatedly emphasized obeying and holding to those *proven* beliefs, no matter what ANY man tried to teach otherwise. The WCG's biggest and most profound change was the abandonment of these three great tools of learning, and the change in most people's thinking to allow it.

In their place now stand three counterfeits—three classic hallmarks of false teaching! FIRST is the use of confusing, complicated, deceptive double-talk. SECOND is the employment of psychological tricks to induce people to believe things that they have not seen proven. THIRD is the cult-

like emphasis on going along with new, unproven beliefs out of the fear of Church government.

Before we are ready to study the changes themselves, we must examine how the three original hallmarks used by Mr. Armstrong were so successfully exchanged for their counterfeits. SECTION I gives an overview of these original three hallmarks of WCG teaching and their three cunning, serpentine substitutes.

METHOD ONE

Sound Teaching: Based on Plain Truth or Confusing Double-Talk?

OLD TEACHING:

“Immediately I set out to develop a distinct and effective style. It had to be fast-moving, vigorous, yet simple, interesting, making the message plain and **UNDERSTANDABLE**.”

“Some speakers and writers seem to think they impress their audiences or readers by their ability to use big words beyond the comprehension of the audience. Others succumb to the temptation to become too ‘scholarly,’ speaking over the minds of their hearers – but never plainly into their minds.”

“*Plain Truth* and *Good News* articles and the *Correspondence Course* lessons are **INTERESTING** – they SAY SOMETHING, and say it in a manner extremely easy to read!”

“In any event, this early training resulted in literally thousands of letters during recent years from radio listeners and readers of *The Plain Truth*, saying that the FACTS are being made more plain, more clear and understandable than they ever heard them before!”

“But there is another principle...even more important than any of these. That is to be honest – to stick to the **TRUTH!**”

Autobiography of Herbert W. Armstrong, Vol. 1, 1986,
pp. 62, 66, 67

“Even at the beginning when Mr. Armstrong put me in charge of the Church’s publications, he insisted that all of the publications be of the highest quality to reflect God’s standards, and to sound with clarity long-hidden truths written simply and plainly. Never must anyone misunderstand God’s truth because of a poorly written article or sloppy design, he emphasized over and over again.”

D. Faulkner, “Editor in Chief Lives On Through Training of Staff,”
WN, Feb. 10, 1986

"I have often been asked, 'How was Mr. Armstrong received?' For those who already had met him the reception was warm and affectionate. To those meeting him for the first time, they quickly saw him as a man of understanding and wisdom. As Mr. Armstrong would say, 'It makes sense, and it is the only explanation that does.'"

Aaron Dean, "Inside Mr. Armstrong's Travels," WN, Feb. 10, 1986

"...the major part of [Mr. Armstrong's] drive and energy came from his knowledge of the spiritual significance of his message. He had a burning desire to challenge and grip the listeners. He wanted to make the truth plain to them."

N. Smith, "Evangelist Remembers Early Broadcasts," WN, Feb. 10, 1986

"*The Star-News* published interviews with Church members after the funeral."

"[One] church member said her most lasting memory of Armstrong is "his speaking ability, his teachings and his writings. He had a way of writing that anyone could understand, and he was a powerful speaker.""

Jeff Zhorne, "Media Mark Death of Herbert W. Armstrong," WN, Feb. 10, 1986

"My life was affected for good from the very first time I heard Pastor General Herbert W. Armstrong on the radio in January, 1951. As the years passed it was affected more profoundly."

"I thought he knew far more about his subject than anyone else I had heard. I soon concluded, 'No man ever spoke like this man!'"

Leroy Neff, "HWA's Favorite Subject: The Work of God," WN, Feb. 10, 1986

"What Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong valued most, and what he labored hardest to build was his understanding."

"He turned his energy and his formidable ability to concentrate on searching out the answers to some of life's most important questions: Does God really exist? And if He does, what does He expect of us? What was His purpose in creating man?"

"Mr. Armstrong was not prepared to accept fuzzy and often muddled concepts that masquerade as answers to these questions. He wanted the truth."

"*Mystery of the Ages* is the product of that understanding. Mr. Armstrong did not underestimate the importance of this last work, for it contained vital keys to understanding the plan of God as revealed in the Bible."

Joseph W. Tkach, "He Remembered You," PT, Nov.-Dec. 1986

NEW TEACHING:

“Some brethren feel that God’s Church is always changing. You know, they are right.”

“After a while, I realized the errors in the [*Mystery of the Ages*] could make the whole subject seem unreliable, and I had to do what I perhaps should have done to begin with.”

“When the book was finished, Mr. Armstrong made some very strong claims regarding the book.”

“He was human, and...he simply got carried away in his description of it.”

“So what was I to do? How could I before God continue to print the book, knowing it contains errors...?”

“Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,” WN, May 21, 1990

“**double-talk 1:** language that appears to be in earnest and meaningful but in fact is a mixture of sense and nonsense **2:** inflated, involved, and often deliberately ambiguous language”

Webster’s New Collegiate Dictionary (1976), p. 342

“We have found that we have used certain language in the past that didn’t really describe what we believed and we have attached our own internal meanings to them...And so we have, as a result of discussions with Dr. Tucker and other people, re-evaluated certain things.”

Michael Snyder, WMUZ radio interview, Detroit, Michigan, Dec. 13, 1991

“We frankly are troubled by what appears to be a double standard in the Worldwide Church of God material.”

McDowell and Stewart, The Deceivers: What Cults Believe/How They Lure Followers (1992), p. 286

“In a slightly different category is the teleological argument, also known as the argument from design. This argument claims, from an analysis of objects in the world, that there is evidence of design. Then it reasons that design demands a designer, defined to be God.”

“The central issue in the debate over the validity of the teleological argument is whether the universe shows evidence of design. If there is design, then the argument is valid. However, design would only prove the existence at some time in the past of a designer; it would not prove that this designer still exists or that the designer is the God of the Bible.”

God Is...(1992), p. 6

“The concept of conversion as a rebirth was common, and any Jewish leader would have understood.”

“The Talmud says, ‘A man who became a proselyte is like a child newly born.’”

“To interpret ‘born again’ as the resurrection would run counter to the commonly understood meaning of that concept. Why would Christ use that concept for something totally different from its known and accepted meaning?”

“For that matter, if a resurrection was meant, why not simply say resurrection? Why use a figure of speech at all? Christ used a figure of speech to convey the difficult and new concept of conversion. The resurrection was neither difficult nor new, and thus not in need of an illustrating figure of speech.”

B.W. Schnippert, “The Breathtaking Miracle of Being Born from Above,”

WN, Feb. 3, 1992

“Someone might say, ‘I see the need to change when we’re wrong, Mr. Tkach, but if we thought we were right before, but now we see we’re wrong, how can we be sure we are right this time?’

“This is an important question. How can we be sure we are right this time?

“The answer to this question makes sense only if we walk in the humility of Jesus Christ. Since we look to God to lead and guide us, we must at all times remain willing to undertake even further change if and when we find that our understanding is still incomplete.

“Do we all understand the importance of that attitude?”

“Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,”

WN, June 24, 1991

“Some may say, ‘Well, I guess we are saying we just don’t know what the Holy Spirit is.’ It is true that our present position is less explicit and dogmatic than the positions we have taken before. We feel we have erred in the past by being simplistic and superficial. We attempted to oversimplify the transcendence of God – a subject that does not have simple answers.

“The nature of the Holy Spirit is one of the most profound concepts within Scripture. As the booklet took pains to show, the Holy Spirit has been the subject of intense debate for nearly two millennia.”

Joseph Tkach Jr., “Church Administration,”

PGR, Dec. 8, 1992

METHOD TWO

Accepting or Changing Belief: Based on Proof or Psychological Tricks?

OLD TEACHING:

"It is US Satan is seeking to deceive. He will deceive even the very elect IF POSSIBLE. And it is possible if we are careless, and assume things without careful study of all sides, and ample PROOF from the Scripture. We must be continually ON OUR GUARD never trusting any man, or even a board or group of men, but God alone, through His holy word!"

"The scriptures speak of FALSE apostles, and of 'them which SAY they are apostles, and are not, but hast found them LIARS.' (II Cor. 11:13; Rev. 2:2). Let us beware being deceived. It is the COMMANDMENT KEEPERS whom the Devil seeks, in these latter days, to deceive!"

Herbert W. Armstrong, "Did Christ Reorganize the Church?", GN, Feb. 1939

"And just remember my friends, that your salvation doesn't depend on some group or organization of men that may scoff. Your salvation is a private, personal thing between you and your God. And you're going to be held accountable. So you look this over. And you look in your Bible and you believe what you find in your Bible."

"Now I can't accept error. I can't just swallow every wind of doctrine that comes around. Well, neither should you, my friends! Now maybe I'm just giving you some new wind of doctrine...you shouldn't swallow everything that comes along. But let me tell you, my friends, your eternity is at stake, and it's a personal, private matter between you and God. And your Bible says many deceivers, many false prophets, are gone out into the world. And many of them are absolutely sincere."

"You know, people that have ever tried to change me find that I don't change easily or quickly, but my mind is open. But I need to be sure."

"But of course you need to be very careful and your Bible says 'PROVE ALL THINGS' – don't just carelessly accept something. Now this booklet...I've talked to you about, *if it isn't proved don't accept it!*"

"This whole world – human nature is good and evil mixed – and in this world you find truth and error mixed. And we have to get the truth and prove it, my friends! Prove all things and be careful."

"Do you know how I studied this question originally?...I got down on my knees and I would read it awhile, and then I would close my eyes and pray to God about it, and ask, 'Oh God, open my eyes, open my understanding. Help me not to be misled or deceived, but whatever is

truth help me to see it and receive it.' Why don't you study it that way – with your Bible – and believe what you see in your Bible?"

Herbert W. Armstrong, "Proving the Truth," WT Radio Broadcast, #9879

"Would you, had you lived there and then, have gone to the big religious organizations and asked whether Jesus spoke the truth?"

"Any who are teaching things different from CHRIST'S OWN GOSPEL...will naturally disagree, oppose this true message, probably accuse us, today, of being false prophets.

"They may even attempt to discredit – to impute evil and diabolical motives – to accuse of dishonesty – to try to assassinate character. Possibly they will malign, impugn, use every *psychological trick* to set up PREJUDICE, so that you won't listen or check up, for yourself, in your own Bible!"

"BELIEVE GOD'S WORD, regardless of men."

Herbert W. Armstrong, "If You Had Lived in the Time of Christ,"

GN, Oct.-Nov. 1983

NEW TEACHING:

Author's note: Most remember the many ways changes were introduced while we were told that nothing was really changing. I decided to count all the ways that changes were described as "non-changes." Here is the list I originally created. How many do you remember?

1. This change is not a change.
2. It's a matter of semantics or re-wording.
3. It is only a clarification.
4. It is only a change in explanation not in doctrine.
5. It's not a big change or the trunk of the tree.
6. Details will come later (but they don't).
7. We must not major in the minors.
8. Mature Christians will see it (and no one wants to feel they're immature).
9. We must grow in grace and knowledge or, translated, "change is growth."
10. We were trapped by a paradigm or this is a paradigm shift.
11. We are just putting the emphasis where it always should have been.
12. Be patient with the weaker brethren who can't see it yet (which appeals to people's nobler motives to accept the change).
13. They say nothing and just change it.

14. They cloak it so deeply in the language of scholarship that no one recognizes a change was made.
15. “This change will not lead to that change” (known as the red herring tactic that diverts attention from the change being made).
16. The belief is still true poetically, or symbolically, or metaphorically, or analogically, or parabolically, or even “theologically,” just not literally.
17. We must have faith and courage to change when we’re wrong (and no one wants to appear to lack either one).
18. The change has nothing to do with salvation.
19. Most scholars agree the change is correct.
20. The change will help to avoid unnecessarily offending the world.
21. God is leading His Church to see these changes must be made.
22. The Holy Spirit is leading us to see these changes must be made.
23. This change is made by the authority of Jesus Christ.
24. Anyone who cannot accept the changes isn’t satisfied with the leadership God has provided for His Church.
25. This new interpretation is balanced.
26. They misrepresent old teachings to make them look ridiculous and then change them (known as building straw men to knock them down).
27. Anyone who resists these changes is “spiritually rich and increased with goods.”
28. We have known for years that this change needed to be made.
29. We should not reject a point just because it is Protestant.
30. This change is not really Protestant (they point out a minor detail that is different).
31. There haven’t really been any changes (as they make another change).
32. There was an impure underlying motive for teaching this in the past so we aren’t going to teach it anymore.
33. A thorough investigation has been made.
34. Mr. Armstrong would have agreed with and made these changes himself.
35. Mr. Armstrong changed doctrine often and we must follow his example.
36. Mr. Armstrong once believed the doctrine this way.
37. Mr. Armstrong said privately before his death to make this change.
38. Mr. Armstrong had strong beliefs and sometimes exaggerated because of it.
39. Mr. Armstrong was not a scholar.

40. Mr. Armstrong always secretly believed this change.
41. Anyone who resists these changes is only interested in glorifying the memory of a man.
42. This change will not affect how we worship God.
43. A bitter, Satanic mind does not want to accept these new truths.

These gimmicks, ploys and psychological tricks are all still used, and even more effectively, throughout the “splinters.”

METHOD THREE

Unconditional Obedience:
To the Bible or to Church Government?

OLD TEACHING:

“The thing is, whoever is the Apostle, whoever is guiding and putting the truth into the Church *must be honest with the Word of God!* Now, if you ever find me dishonest with the Word of God *you reject me as God’s Apostle.*”

*Herbert W. Armstrong, taped Bible study on II Cor. 2,
Tucson, AZ, Dec. 6, 1980*

“Messrs. Ray and Oberg immediately offered a resolution that I be required, if I remained in the conference, to baptize people their way instead of the Scriptural way...

“As soon as I heard of the action taken, I immediately wrote a letter canceling the \$3 per week salary...”

“As for me and my house,’ I then said firmly, ‘we shall serve the Eternal our God, and Him ONLY shall we serve. If MEN pay us a salary – even as small as \$3 per week – we have now learned we must preach only what MEN order us to preach. If we are to WORK FOR GOD we must look to God as our EMPLOYER, AND TRUST HIM TO SUPPLY OUR EVERY MATERIAL NEED.”

“This final crucial test had proved that I would be FAITHFUL to God and His Word, even at the cost of giving up everything!

“I know of evangelists who probably are sincere in supposing they are serving God – and who would like to be free to proclaim many truths they now hold back. They reason something like this: ‘If I go further, and preach those things, I’ll lose all my support. I’d be cut off from the ministry altogether. Then I could preach NOTHING. Better serve God by preaching as much of the Biblical truth as possible, than to be prevented from preaching anything.’

“They are relying on the financial support of MEN. Or of organizations of men. Anyone in that predicament is the SERVANT OF MEN, and NOT OF GOD, whether he realizes it or not.”

“Repentance means GIVING UP your way – the world’s way – the world’s opinion of you! It means turning to the WAY OF GOD – the way of His law! It means SURRENDER – unconditional surrender – to live by EVERY WORD OF GOD. Since the Bible is the Word of God, it means to live by the Bible! It means utter voluntary submission to the AUTHORITY of God, as expressed in HIS WORD!”

“It really did hurt Mrs. Armstrong and me, and all very loyal to God’s true Work, very deeply to see some we loved very much willing to be misled by greedy and self-willed little powerless preachers. But such is life, and such is this world!”

Autobiography of Herbert W. Armstrong, Vol. I (1986), pp. 524-525, 528, 597, 635

“Even in Paul’s day, many among those attending at Antioch, at Jerusalem, at Ephesus, at Corinth, and other places, began to apostatize and turn from the truth. Divisions sprang up. Those individuals unconverted or turned from God’s truth and way of life, were no part of God’s true Church, though visibly assembling with those who were. The ‘mystery of iniquity’ was already working inside these visible churches. This apostasy increased! By the year A.D. 125 the *majority* in most churches, especially those Gentile-born, were continuing in many of their old pagan beliefs and practices, though professing to be Christians! Gradually, a smaller and smaller portion of the visible churches...remained truly yielded to God and His truth, and led of His Spirit. After Constantine took virtual control of the visible, professing Church in the early fourth century, this visible organization became almost wholly pagan, and began excommunicating and persecuting all who held to the true Word of God!

Finally, it became necessary for real Christians, who, even as scattered people, alone composed the true Christian Church, to flee from the jurisdiction of Rome in order truly to worship God!”

Herbert W. Armstrong, The Plain Truth About Easter (1973), pp. 15-16

“So, as the first step in this test, I wrote up an exposition of some 16 typewritten pages proving clearly, plainly, and beyond contradiction that a certain minor point of doctrine proclaimed by this Church, based on an erroneous interpretation of a certain verse of Scripture, was in error.”

“The answer came back from their head man, editor of their paper and president of their ‘General Conference.’ He was forced to admit, in plain words, that their teaching on this point was false and in error. But,

he explained, he feared that if any attempt was made to correct this false doctrine and publicly confess the truth, many of their members, especially those of older standing and heavy tithe payers, would be unable to accept it. He feared they would lose confidence in the Church if they found it had been in error on any point. He said he feared many would withdraw their financial support, and it might divide the Church. And therefore he felt the Church could do nothing but continue to teach and preach this doctrine which he admitted in writing to be false.

“Naturally, this shook my confidence considerably. This Church leader, if not the church itself, was looking to people as the SOURCE of belief, instead of to God!”

Autobiography of Herbert W. Armstrong, Vol. 1 (1986), pp. 360-361

“I asked him WHY the Quakers did not believe in water baptism.”

“Well, Herbert,’ he said finally, ‘I’ll have to confess I can’t honestly justify our church position by the Bible. This very thing bothered me a great deal when I first felt called into the ministry. At first, I felt I could not consistently become a minister in the Friends Church because this stand on water baptism really bothered me. But then, I looked at some of the great preachers of the church (naming several, including my own great-uncle Thomas Armstrong), and they all seemed to be holy men of God. And so I decided that if such great and holy men could preach against water baptism, so could I.’

“Here was a man who looked into the WORD OF GOD, and saw one thing. Then he LOOKED TO MEN, who appeared to be righteous and holy, and he followed the example of MEN instead of the teachings of God!”

“This was only the start of my disillusionment about preachers. I had to...trust only God, but to have love and charity for all men.”

Autobiography of Herbert W. Armstrong, Vol. 1 (1967), pp. 303-305

“These CHIEF ministers of the BIG established and reputed denominations said Jesus, the very Christ, was a false prophet.”

“NOWHERE does your Bible tell you to RELY on MEN. Don’t go to MEN to learn whether we preach the TRUTH!”

“BELIEVE YOUR BIBLE! BELIEVE GOD, not man!”

*Herbert W. Armstrong, “If You Had Lived in the Time of Christ,”
GN, Oct.-Nov. 1983*

“One young man had made quite a splash in the ministry. He started out accepting the sponsorship and backing of human religious organizations. To be free of narrow sectarian bias he reasoned he

should remain interdenominational. But this did not increase freedom to declare God's TRUTH, but, on the contrary, further restricted it! He soon found that he was limited, in what he was free to preach, to those few doctrines which all of these sponsoring, but differing, denominations approved.

"God has shown me that when a man sets out to answer God's call to serve HIM, he must rely on God alone. If he relies on MEN, he must serve MEN – not God."

Herbert W. Armstrong, "Why This Work Is Unique," GN, Dec. 1984

"Jesus said that His Church would be persecuted. Why? Because His Church is composed of those that have forsaken their own ideas and the customs and the ways of society, and they're living by every word of God. They're the people who look on the Bible with respect and with awe and as the supreme authority and who recognize the authority of the word of God, who look upon God as the Supreme Authority.

"What do most people do? Well, they look on their own conscience as their authority, or they look on the proclamations of men or the decisions of their church board. They say, 'Well now, our Church looks at it like this...' And the person who says that usually had no voice in the matter. That's what the committee at the top decided the Church would believe.

"And all of them, you know, well they're just like little children that had funnels stuck in their head and the committee at the top of the church decides what the church is going to believe, and that's their ready-made propaganda or their doctrine, and they go pouring it out a pitcher down the funnel into the brains of these people and they say, 'Now this is the way our church believes on this. And so and so is the way some other church believes on it.'

"Now the real people of God have forsaken all of that sort of thing and they look on God as the Supreme Authority. And how do you know what God says? Why, the Bible is His Word. And that makes the Bible a Supreme Authority. And it is the authority over their lives and they obey it and they tremble before the Word of God."

Herbert W. Armstrong, "True Church," WT Radio Broadcast, #9797

"It was but natural to look upon the man whose prayer God had so miraculously answered in healing my wife as a 'man of God.' So even though I felt sure this truth was proved, I wanted to be doubly sure."

"Well, did you [and your pastor] find any error in what I wrote?" I persisted.

“Well, no, Brother,’ he admitted, ‘we couldn’t find anything wrong with it. It does seem to be according to the Scriptures, but Brother, we feel that studying into that kind of subject is likely to be dangerous. It might get you all mixed up...It’s best just to keep your mind on Christ.’

“But,’ I rejoined, suddenly disillusioned, ‘if the resurrection was on the Sabbath, and not on Sunday, the only reason anyone has for Sunday observance is gone...’

“Well, now, Brother,’ he tried to reassure me, ‘that’s just the trouble. You see how it could get you all upset. All the churches observe Sunday. We can’t start to fight all the churches. Now we are saved by GRACE, not works...Better just get your mind off of such things.’

“I walked back to our home...grieved and sorrowfully disillusioned. I had had a lot of confidence in this man. Now here he was...advising a newly converted man who had confidence in him to reject THE WORD OF GOD!

“Arriving home, I happened to turn to Hosea 4:6, where God says that because we have rejected His knowledge, He will reject us.”

“God used this man no more.”

Autobiography of Herbert W. Armstrong, Vol. 1 (1967) pp. 327-329

“...inferiority manifests itself in a desire to belong to a group, club, society, church, group, organization to which one belongs. One would fear to be disloyal, lest the others in this factional group consider him as a traitor...”

“Yes, it is human to fear the society to which we have become attached in the way that we should fear the Creator God!”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “Why God Is Not Real to Most People,” Reprint Article #186

“Christians must be alert to the prophecy that even from among their leaders some would arise speaking perverse things – twisting God’s Word (Acts 20:29-31).”

“So respect and obey God’s true ministers, but constantly study to acquire the mind of Christ (Phil. 2:5) and to perceive a deceiver who might arise.”

“And even then, if there is ever a case when you have a real conviction that one of God’s ministers is teaching something contrary to His will, you ought to ‘obey God rather than men’ (Acts 5:29).”

“In all matters, then, it’s God’s opinion that really counts! He is the final authority!”

Roderick C. Meredith, “The Final Authority,” GN, June-July 1979

NEW TEACHING:

“The truth is, God places no human under the unconditional authority of another human.”

“Was [Abigail] disrespectful to her husband because she did not sit still while he caused himself and his family to be destroyed? Hardly. She was responsible and faithful even though Nabal was a fool and she had to act contrary to his desires.”

“The same principle applies in a local congregation...we must in all due respect and without resentment refuse to disobey God whether or not the government over us demands it.”

“Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,” WN, June 27, 1988

“People who decide to leave the Church because they have not come to understand changes in the doctrine should not be treated as enemies.”

“If they choose to go someplace where they can be with people who believe as they do on their points of difference, that is up to them, and that does not make them our enemies.”

“Mr. Armstrong set the example in that way decades ago when he continued to have a friendly relationship with the Church of God (Seventh Day).

“There were instances when our members even attended congregations of that church when there was not one of our congregations available.”

“If their motivation is selfish, that is, if they are seeking status and recognition, *regardless of where they decide to attend* they will still have to deal with that selfishness before *they can have a positive relationship with God* – before *their increased level of service will be meaningful*.”

“Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,” WN, Nov. 17, 1992

**Response to questions WCG received
regarding the above quoted “Personal”:**

“We know we are the true Church of God. But we also know that we are not all there is to the true Church of God. The definition of a Christian is one in whom the spirit of God dwells.”

“Did the article imply that disfellowshipped people can go attend some other church and still maintain their relationship with God?”

“We must understand that this is not always a question we can answer in every case...We do not need to make judgments about their relationship with God. The Church does not have power over a person’s access to God.”

Computer Memo: Worldwide Church of God ministry

WHY SO MANY CHANGES ARE INCLUDED

By the time I wrote the appendix to the Seventh Edition of this book (June 1995), the list of doctrinal changes included had reached 280. There were over 25 other false doctrines that I decided to omit because everything in life has a limit. Although other changes have been made in the years since, I had to ask: What would be gained by making more editions—at great time and expense—to a book already proving overwhelmingly that an apostasy had occurred? At what point is enough, enough? Sufficient evidence had been presented to readers to convince even the most ardent “doubting Thomas”—if one had even a slightly open mind.

However, over time, various critics arose who at least *generally* agreed with the book. But they had different ideas about what it should contain, how long or short it should be, which might be the best quotes to prove this or that point, etc. Eventually, decisions had to be made about what to include, and someone had to make them.

The “buck stops here,” with me.

Some have suggested that certain changes included here are picky or trivial. I disagree. But, if this were true, the problem would have been identifying those of which it may have been true. Removing them or categorizing them as “less significant changes” is fraught with problems. In effect, I would be assigning God’s truth a value, and would receive two-sided criticism. On the one hand, some might say, “I think such-and-such change should have been included among the more trivial changes.” On the other hand, others might say, “How could you put change such-

and-so among the smaller, more trivial ones? It's *big*." Experience has shown that no two people agree on what is "picky" or what is "big." You are left to decide which are smaller and which are bigger.

The WCG defended "small" changes in the following way: "When we find that we've been wrong, regardless of how small the point may be...we have an obligation before God to change it" (*Personal from Joseph W. Tkach, WN, June 24, 1991*).

Therefore, if an idea was considered important enough to *teach* in the first place, and considered important enough to *change* later, I felt it was important enough to *acknowledge* here. Also, the WCG said that it felt dutybound to change any doctrine it felt was wrong "no matter how significant or insignificant it might seem to be" (*Joseph W. Tkach, WN, Nov. 17, 1992*). Should I have been less thorough in detailing and preserving God's truth than they were in erasing it?

I have also noticed that those who feel certain changes are minor or insignificant, invariably *AGREE* with *some* of the changes and/or want to make *their own* changes! This should not be lost in your thinking.

Some have asked about the publication *Reviews You Can Use*, quoted often in this book. At the time of this writing, *Reviews You Can Use* was a bi-monthly publication of the WCG that was only sent to the ministry. An article titled "How Authoritative is *Reviews*?" by Ralph Orr, in the March-April 1994 issue, describes its purpose in this way: "We edit *Reviews* with the ministry in mind. They should feel free to use anything in *Reviews* that will help their ministry. Care is taken to assure that each article is in general biblically sound and supports the Church's doctrines, positions and policies...*Reviews* is written with the ministry in mind. They should feel free to use it with confidence."

For those who are interested, the quotes are taken from the letters to the ministry in the *Pastor General's Report* (PGR) but are also found in *The Worldwide News* (WN). These same letters appeared in the WN as "Personals," generally about two weeks after the date of the PGR.

Occasional confusion has arisen over page numbers found in the literature references that follow each quote in the book. If you cannot find a quote on the given page number in the literature you have, look a few pages backward or forward. You probably have a different printing of the book or booklet than the one quoted. Even though the copyright dates may have remained the same, the layout of books often changed from printing to printing, shifting the text.

Following the summary list of 280 doctrinal changes is a "Topical Index of Changes" to assist in finding specific changes more quickly. Note that some are listed under more than one heading.

SUMMARY LIST OF CHANGES

- 1. The Gospel—Kingdom of God or Jesus Christ?**
- 2. Kingdom of God—Future or Present?**
- 3. Prophesied Elijah—HWA a Type of or Only the Church?**
- 4. Matthew 24:14—Prophecy for Us or Wrong Focus?**
- 5. Warning the World—Commanded Duty or Self-Righteous Stench?**
- 6. United States and Britain—Identity Revealed to HWA or Not?**
- 7. National Identity of Israel—U.S. and Britain or Jesus Christ?**
- 8. Purpose of Prophecy—Warning or Encouragement?**
- 9. Christ’s Return—Imminent or Far Off?**
- 10. 7,000 Year Plan—Reality or Unfounded Myth?**
- 11. Trinity Doctrine—False or True?**
- 12. Family of God—God Is One or Has One?**
- 13. God and Christ—Persons or Entities?**
- 14. God’s Body—Literal and Actual or Metaphoric and Formless?**
- 15. Image of God—Man Looks Like God or Not?**
- 16. World’s Religions—Source of False Knowledge or Knowledge of True God?**
- 17. Sons of God—Real or Adopted?**
- 18. Christ’s Death—He Really Did Die or He Really Didn’t Die?**
- 19. Father and Son—Literal Relationship or Metaphor?**
- 20. Antichrist—One Who Denies Christ Could Sin or Anyone Against Christ?**
- 21. Imitating Christ’s Example—Way To Eternal Life or False Hope?**
- 22. Crucifixion Instrument—Stake or Cross?**
- 23. The Cross—Utterly Pagan Symbol or Symbol For WCG?**
- 24. Interracial Marriage—Wrong or Right?**
- 25. Marrying Unbelievers—Means Those Outside Church or Can’t Be Narrowly Defined?**
- 26. “Unequally Yoked Together”—Many Applications or Needs Redefining?**
- 27. Divorce and Remarriage—Few Exceptions or Many Acceptable Reasons?**

- 28. Marriage Annulment—For Fraud or For Whim?**
- 29. Place of Safety—Real Hope or Selfish “Save-Your-Skin” Motivation?**
- 30. Church Eras—Important Detailed Prophecy or Generalized Instruction?**
- 31. Church History—One Church or Many?**
- 32. True Church—Narrowly or Broadly Defined?**
- 33. Salvation—Saved Later or Saved Now?**
- 34. The World—Cut Off From God or Not?**
- 35. Social Activism—Christ’s Job At His Return or Duty For Christians Now?**
- 36. Personal Evangelizing—Not Member’s Role or Is Member’s Role?**
- 37. Evangelism—Role Of Evangelist or Gift For Lay Member?**
- 38. Church Functions—Restricted To Members or “Open Door” Policy?**
- 39. Ekklesia—Ones “Called Out” or Ones “Called Together?”**
- 40. World’s Salvation—Future or Now?**
- 41. Prospective Member—Invited By Ministers or Invited By Members?**
- 42. Worldly Organizations—Shouldn’t Be Joined or Should Be Joined?**
- 43. Grace and Works—Both or Grace Alone?**
- 44. “New Testament Christianity”—Old Testament Needed or New Testament Enough?**
- 45. Definition of a Christian—Based On True Doctrine or Love?**
- 46. Obedience and the Holy Spirit—Which Comes First?**
- 47. Baptism—Required or Not?**
- 48. Laying on of Hands—Fundamental Doctrine or Not?**
- 49. Members—Produced Through Baptism or Loosely Defined?**
- 50. Focus of Literature—Overcoming Sin or Grace, etc.?**
- 51. Character Development—Necessity or Not?**
- 52. False Christianity—Plain Historic Fact or Self-Righteous Accusation?**
- 53. The Ten Commandments—Foundation of Obedience or Just One Small Part?**
- 54. Liberalism—Wrong or Right?**
- 55. Co-workers—Non-Members or Brothers and Sisters In Christ?**
- 56. Politics and Voting—Spiritual Harlotry or Personal Preference?**
- 57. Third Tithe—Every Third Year or Compute Annually?**
- 58. Tithing—Command or Concept?**
- 59. Abortion—Murder or Not Equated With Murder?**
- 60. Earrings for Men—Inappropriate or Acceptable?**
- 61. Proper Hair Length—Can or Can’t Be Determined?**
- 62. Smoking—Stay Home and Overcome It or Attend Services and Do The Best You Can?**
- 63. Repeating the “Lord’s Prayer”—Vain Repetition or Not?**
- 64. Prayer Attitude—Godly Fear and Humility or Any Carnal Attitude?**
- 65. Proper Sabbath Attire—Important or Not?**
- 66. The 144,000—True Church of God or Unknown Group?**
- 67. Prophetic Charts—Valuable or To Be Avoided?**

- 68. The Beast**—*Holy Roman Empire or Racism?*
- 69. Amount of Prophecy**—*Over 33% or Less Than 22%?*
- 70. “Many Will Come in My Name”**—*False Christian Ministers or Political Leaders?*
- 71. Woman Astride Beast**—*Catholic Church or Unknown System?*
- 72. Babylon**—*Present or Future?*
- 73. God’s Holy Days**—*Picture God’s Plan or Celebrate and Honor Jesus Christ?*
- 74. Colossians 2:16-17**—*Shadows of Things To Come or Shadows of No Value?*
- 75. The Azazel Goat**—*Satan or Christ?*
- 76. Focus of the Bible**—*God The Father or Jesus Christ?*
- 77. The Christmas Tree**—*Condemned By God or Not?*
- 78. Church Steeples**—*Pagan Fertility Symbol or Acceptable Christian Architecture?*
- 79. Passover Bread**—*Christ’s Body Only or Church Also?*
- 80. Body of Christ**—*Literal Spiritual Organism of Church or Mere Metaphor?*
- 81. Sign of Jonah**—*Three Days And Three Nights or The Resurrection?*
- 82. Three Days and Three Nights**—*Exactly or About?*
- 83. Christ’s Resurrected Body**—*Spiritual or Physical?*
- 84. Eating Unleavened Bread**—*Symbol of Obedience or Symbol of Grace?*
- 85. Easter**—*Utterly Abominable Paganism or Venerated Christian Holiday?*
- 86. Crucifixion Date**—*31 A.D. (Wed. Passover) or 30/33 A.D. (Fri. Passover)?*
- 87. Day of Passover**—*14th OR 15th of Nisan?*
- 88. Leaven**—*Type of Sin or Not?*
- 89. Christ’s Body and Blood**—*Dual or Singular Sacrifice?*
- 90. Medical Science**—*Rely on God More or Rely on Both?*
- 91. Physical Sin**—*Fact or Fiction?*
- 92. Emotional Turmoil**—*Control It or Get Anointed For It?*
- 93. Persecution**—*Fact of Life or Embarrassment to be Avoided?*
- 94. Anointing Oil**—*Symbolic of Holy Spirit Alone or Symbolic of Medicine Also?*
- 95. Treating Disease**—*Harmless Remedies Acceptable or Methods Make No Difference?*
- 96. Signs to Accompany Gospel**—*For Us Today or For First Century Church Only?*
- 97. Transgressing Laws**—*Breaking or Contravening?*
- 98. Masturbation**—*Perversion or Release Of Tension?*
- 99. Disease as Punishment**—*Biblical Fact or Unmerciful Condemnation?*
- 100. Purpose of Disease**—*Teaches Lawkeeping or Teaches Faithfulness While Suffering?*

- 101. 7 Keys to Understanding the Bible—Keep Them or Throw Them Out?**
- 102. Amount of Holy Spirit—Can or Can't Be Increased?**
- 103. Church Growth—Proof God Is Pleased or Unreliable Superstitious Thermometer?**
- 104. Blessing for Obedience—Bible Promise or Deceitful Hype?**
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DOCUMENTATION OF 280 DOCTRINAL CHANGES

1. THE GOSPEL

The Kingdom of God or Jesus Christ?

OLD TEACHING:

“Soon after Christ’s ascension to heaven and the founding of the church in A.D. 31, a violent controversy arose, according to church history, as to whether the gospel to be proclaimed was the gospel OF Christ, or a gospel ABOUT Christ. The latter won out. False prophets did arise in the first century, saying Jesus was the Christ, but omitting altogether Jesus’ gospel which was the message of the coming world ruling kingdom of God to rule all nations after Christ’s Second Coming.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Are We In The Last Days? (1985), p. 8

“Jesus Christ said it is necessary to BELIEVE THE GOSPEL to be saved!

Yet the many – the hundreds of millions – today, do not know what the Gospel is!”

“But, one may ask, don’t we need to believe on Jesus? Of course. Other scriptures teach that. But at this particular time Jesus said we must believe Him – believe what He said – believe the Gospel of the Kingdom of God!”

“We hear a great deal today of the gospel of MEN about the PERSON of Jesus Christ – confining the message solely to the things ABOUT Jesus. As a result, millions believe on Christ, who do not BELIEVE CHRIST!”

*Herbert W. Armstrong, What Is the True Gospel? (1972),
pp. 4, 6, 7*

NEW TEACHING:

“I am occasionally criticized by certain ones who think we are not preaching the gospel...But, much to their chagrin, I don’t listen.”

“I listen to the true gospel, the real good news...Jesus Christ and him crucified...which is the gospel of the kingdom of God!”

“But what about the gospel of the kingdom of God?...For the sake of answering our scripturally confused, dissident friends, let me digress a moment.”

“It is sheer nonsense to say that one of these is the gospel and the other is a false gospel.”

“Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,” WN, Aug. 11, 1989

“...I was particularly happy with the powerful focus of these issues on the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ – in other words, the true gospel and its true meaning for humanity.”

*Joseph W. Tkach, letter to the ministry,
PGR, Apr. 20, 1993*

“The letter-writer stated his concerns in these words: ‘A new gospel, about the person of Christ, is being substituted for the glorious truth about the kingdom of God.’”

“The message about the person of Christ is...assumed to be different from, or a ‘substitute’ for, the message about the kingdom of God.”

“He was both the messenger and the message.”

“I hope the letter-writer I quoted above is the only one who has been laboring under those false assumptions. If not, I hope this has been helpful in refocusing our attention on the true gospel.”

*“Personal from Joseph W. Tkach: Understanding the True Gospel,”
WN, May 25, 1993*

“Why has the Church been preaching so much about Jesus Christ? Because Jesus Christ is what the gospel is all about.”

“That is why the Church is preaching about Jesus Christ so much! And that is precisely what the Church is going to continue to do.”

*Joseph W. Tkach, letter to the ministry,
PGR, Aug. 4, 1992*

“During his lecture tour of the United States in 1962, Swiss theologian and author Karl Barth...was asked what his most important theological discovery was.”

“In this oft-told account, Dr. Barth is reputed to have said: ‘Jesus loves me this I know/For the Bible tells me so.’”

“How right he was.”

“The gospel is the good news that the long-awaited Messiah has come.”

Neil Earle, “Amnesty for Sinners,” PT, Nov.-Dec. 1994

Author's note: Much was being said about Christ. Great focus and attention were given to His Person as though this was coming to more spiritual maturity. The WCG commonly quoted the New

International Version (NIV) in their new, revised literature. The NIV translates Hebrews 6:1 as follows: "Let us LEAVE the elementary teachings about Christ and go on to maturity..."

The NKJV also adds helpful insight into this verse's true meaning: "Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection..."

Notice what Mr. Tkach wrote: "God is right now calling many of the people in this church to Jesus Christ for the first time, and the sad part is, some of them do not want to go. They didn't have Christ where they came from, they don't have Christ right now, and they are still refusing to listen to the voice of the One who is right now calling them to Christ."

"God still demands one thing of you: believe in Jesus Christ. Nothing of any value at all has been taken away, and the focus has been placed on the one and only thing of eternal value: Jesus Christ."

"That is what the Church is teaching today."

Letter to member, Feb. 9, 1994

2. KINGDOM OF GOD

Future or Present?

OLD TEACHING:

"Haven't you heard men speak of the Kingdom of God something like this: 'By Christians every-where working together to bring about world peace, tolerance and brotherly love, the Kingdom of God may at last be established in the hearts of men.'"

"Notice – read it in your own Bible: Jesus 'added and spake a parable... because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear' (Luke 19:11). WHY did Jesus speak this parable? Because some, even then, mistakenly thought the Kingdom should immediately appear – because some thought it would be THE CHURCH!"

Herbert W. Armstrong, Just What Do You Mean...Kingdom of God? (1972), pp. 8, 20

"World leaders today are virtually unanimous in concluding that man's only hope of being saved alive for even another generation lies in establishing an all-powerful super world government. Yet all confess that nations are utterly unable to bring it about."

"But doesn't it make you want to shout for joy, to realize what a civilization – what a world – is actually coming?"

"Doesn't it make you want to really put your heart into your prayers, praying earnestly, 'Oh God! Thy kingdom come'"

Herbert W. Armstrong, The Wonderful World Tomorrow, pp. 68, 73

“We must know whether the Kingdom of God is here NOW, or coming later...whether it is literal or figurative, real or unreal. And on many of these things, a great many people are ALL MIXED UP!”

“In Jesus’ prayer, so commonly called ‘The Lord’s Prayer,’ He prayed, ‘THY KINGDOM COME’ – then it wasn’t here yet, and it isn’t here yet, today – but He taught us to pray for it to COME, for His KINGDOM and that ALONE shall bring PEACE and HAPPINESS to this sin-sick, war-weary earth!”

Herbert W. Armstrong, What Is The True Gospel?, pp. 8, 11

NEW TEACHING:

“We have entered God’s Kingdom, and it absolutely changes our perspective.”

Ted Johnston, “From Birth to Inheritance: Entering the Kingdom of God,” WN, Dec. 29, 1992

“The kingdom is present...It exists right now.”

*“Sermonette: When Is the Kingdom?”,
Reviews You Can Use, Mar.-Apr. 1993*

“The long-awaited rule of God was near. This message was called the gospel, the good news. Many thousands were eager to hear and respond to this message of John and Jesus.

“But consider for a moment what the response would have been like if they had preached, ‘The kingdom of God is 2,000 years away.’ The message would have been disappointing news...‘The kingdom is far away’ would have been considered neither news nor good.”

“John and Jesus preached a soon-coming kingdom, something that was near in time to their audiences.”

*M. Morrison, “The Present and Future Kingdom of God,”
Reviews You Can Use, Mar.-Apr. 1993*

“Another overworked and misleading statement, ‘We can’t solve humanity’s problems,’ is, again, nothing more than an excuse by some to do nothing.”

“...we are called to participate in the kingdom of God! That means we, like Jesus, must get involved in relieving suffering.”

*“Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,”
WN, Jan. 12, 1993*

“God’s purpose was that Adam and Eve and their descendants expand the Garden of Eden until it filled the whole earth (Genesis 1:27-28). In the same manner, He means for Christians to expand what He has given us spiritually – the kingdom of God – until it fills the whole earth.”

*Sheila Graham, “Stop Abusing God’s Creation,”
PT, Mar. 1993*

“Jesus was in the midst of the Pharisees but he lives within Christians. Jesus Christ brought the kingdom in his person.”

“In the same way, as he now lives in us, he inaugurates the kingdom of God.”

Norman L. Shoaf, “Jesus Christ Is Coming,” PT, Sep. 1993

“But we must submit our lives to *the rule of Jesus Christ here and now* if we are to enter his realm in the future. If we remain under *the rule of the kingdom of God*, our eternal future has already begun.”

Paul Kroll, “Your Place in the Kingdom of God,” PT, Oct. 1993

3. PROPHESIED ELIJAH

Herbert W. Armstrong a Type of or Only the Church

OLD TEACHING:

“Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.”

Malachi 4:5 (NKJV)

“Elijah truly shall first come, and restore all things.”

Matthew 17:11 (KJV)

“...John the Baptist was a man in the power and spirit of Elijah. John the Baptist came to prepare the way before the First Coming of Christ. He was a type of someone to prepare the way for the Second Coming of Christ.”

“So now prior to the Second Coming of Christ, there is someone...with a voice in the spiritual wilderness...crying out amid religious confusion... and preparing the way not for a physical Jesus, but a glorified Christ coming in all the supreme power and glory...”

“...the job God has called me to do is a prophesied job.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “Congress of Leading Ministers...,” WN, Mar. 6, 1981

Author's note: While the Church's former understanding is included here as a matter of historical record, this has been supplanted by the crystal-clear, irrefutable truth that Mr. Armstrong actually fulfilled a GREATER prophetic role—that of the end-time Moses, to be followed later by another who would be the final Elijah (Mal. 4:4-6). My sermon series “First a MOSES, Now ELIJAH—130 Proofs!” brings a massive—and conclusive—body of evidence on this subject.

NEW TEACHING:

“Just as Malachi prophesied of John the Baptist and just as the angel Gabriel expounded, a people would be prepared for God. From the Ephesian

era until now, *the Church of God fulfills that role of preparing a people for God.*"

"Personal from Joseph W. Tkach," WN, Feb. 15, 1988

4. MATTHEW 24:14

Prophecy for Us or Wrong Focus?

OLD TEACHING:

"...there was a violent controversy over whether the gospel to be proclaimed was a gospel ABOUT Christ, or the gospel OF Christ. For nearly 1,900 years Christ's Gospel of the Kingdom of God was thereafter NOT PROCLAIMED *to the world*. But Jesus had said, '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.'"

"It is now true that this Gospel has been proclaimed within EVERY NATION ON EARTH BY THE WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD. NO OTHER CHURCH has proclaimed THIS true Gospel at all!"

Herbert W. Armstrong, Co-worker Letter, Jan. 1986

"Meanwhile, prophecy is being fulfilled by GOD'S Church. When Jesus was asked for the sign that His coming was near, He said, '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' (Matt. 24:14). While you have been backing me proclaiming that Gospel for the first time in 1,900 years into ALL THE WORLD, the weapons of mass destruction have been produced that could ERASE ALL LIFE FROM THE EARTH. That had to happen before the Great Tribulation. All prophecies leading to the END OF THIS WORLD are being rapidly fulfilled."

Herbert W. Armstrong, Co-worker Letter, June 22, 1983

NEW TEACHING:

"[Mr. Ronald Kelly] also noted that the Church was not always accurate in its understanding of prophecy."

"The Church's commission is based on Matthew 28:19, 20, which says to go into all the world, not Matthew 24:14, continued Mr. Kelly."

"We've refocused on the main crux of Christianity, the message of Jesus Christ."

"Forum and Assembly," The Portfolio, Mar. 4, 1993

"Mr. [Michael] Snyder's letter to us, dated April 29, 1991, stated: 'The Church no longer makes the claim that the gospel was not preached for eighteen and a half centuries.'"

McDowell and Stewart, The Deceivers: What Cults Believe (1992), p. 286

5. WARNING THE WORLD

Commanded Duty or Self-Righteous Stench?

OLD TEACHING:

“Through the years, *The Plain Truth* has continued to act as a ‘watchman’ of world events (Luke 21:36; Ezek. 33), to explain what certain trends mean in light of Bible prophecy and warn our readers of perilous times that lie just ahead.”

“Instead of retaining false hopes of human-devised world government, *The Plain Truth* has for 50 years pointed to the ultimate solution for solving mankind’s overwhelming problems. We announce the restoration of the government of God by justice and true mercy to a confused world.”

“*Where We Have Been*,” *PT*, Sep. 1985

“God Almighty has called and authorized me to ‘CRY ALOUD, AND SPARE NOT, AND SHOW OUR PEOPLE THEIR SINS! [Isaiah 58:1.]’”

“*Personal from Herbert W. Armstrong*,” *PT*, Sep. 1985

“Ezekiel’s message is NOT to the Jewish slaves among whom Ezekiel was living. It was to the HOUSE OF ISRAEL (Ezek. 2:3 and 3:1). The prophet Ezekiel was never able to break loose from Babylonish slavery and proclaim his message to the kingdom of Israel, by then dwelling in western Europe and Britain. THE MESSAGE OF THE BOOK OF EZEKIEL IS GOD’S MESSAGE TO US TODAY – FOR WE ARE THE PEOPLE of the ancient house of ISRAEL, of the tribe of Manasseh.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “*Now God Speaks to You Ministers*,”
GN, Oct.-Nov. 1979

NEW TEACHING:

“When we cut down the religious beliefs of others we were a self-righteous stench in the nostrils of God! Isaiah 58:1 isn’t even talking about the world – it’s talking about the Church!”

Joseph W. Tkach, *sermon preached at Detroit, Michigan*, 1990

“[A disfellowshipped evangelist] clings to the error that Ezekiel 33:1-7 is a commission to the Church...”

“*Personal from Joseph W. Tkach*,” *WN*, Jan. 26, 1993

“*The Plain Truth* has been redesigned ‘cover to cover’ according to Pastor General Joseph W. Tkach, publisher of the magazine.”

“Mr. [Greg] Albrecht said the new design ‘firmly positions the magazine with our readers as a religious magazine with a dignified, thoughtful, friendly approach, while avoiding an overly dogmatic feel.’”

Sheila Graham, “*Redesign of The Plain Truth...*,” *WN*, Dec. 29, 1992

“Ezekiel’s timeless warning preceded Babylon’s final destruction of Jerusalem. The Jews did not respond to his call for repentance and active social involvement.”

“The same message applies to Christians today.”

“Groups such as the Salvation Army epitomize the Christian mission to participate by standing together against the forces that are eroding and destroying our societies and families.”

“Christians refuse to stand by and watch the world crumble.”

Greg Albrecht, “Making a Difference,” PT, Feb. 1994

6. UNITED STATES AND BRITAIN – IDENTITY

Revealed to Mr. Armstrong or Not?

OLD TEACHING:

“After exhaustive study and research, I had found it PROVED that the so called ‘lost Ten Tribes’ of Israel had migrated to Northwestern Europe, the British Isles, and later the United States – that the British were the descendants of Ephraim, younger son of Joseph, and the United States modern-day Manasseh, elder son of Joseph – and that we possessed the national wealth and resources of the Birthright which God had promised to Abraham through Isaac, Jacob and Joseph.”

“Did this Church accept and proclaim this vital new truth – the KEY that unlocks the doors to all PROPHECY? Here was the KEY to understanding one-third of the whole Bible. But this church refused to accept it to this day...”

Autobiography of Herbert W. Armstrong, Vol. 1 (1986), pp. 361-362

“Concerning your question about how I as a professional historian feel about attaching my name to any rewrite of *The United States and Britain in Prophecy*, I have no qualms about being included...The new publication will, of course, be more a theological statement than a historical one. As Dr. Hoeh has observed, ‘there is some fragmentary evidence in history, but the proof is in prophecy.’”

“Is there historical evidence to make the case? Absolutely! In fact, there is far more than we could ever use...”

“While our thesis may not be welcomed or accepted by every member of the scholarly community, no one has submitted any more plausible an argument. At the risk of repeating myself, history cannot prove our position wrong. Indeed, history provides us with a substantial body of evidence to build our case.”

Names withheld, Ambassador College interoffice memo, Dec. 5, 1991

NEW TEACHING:

“I would not preach on the topic of Israel in end-time prophecy...All it will do is generate more questions and possibly more confusion. To directly answer your question, I would not stick my neck out on it at all.”

“When you stop and consider the significance of Acts 4:12 (neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved) *the teaching of US & BC has no significance. The national identity is of no consequence given Christ’s sacrifice.*”

“In light of the New Testament, and the centrality of Christ in God’s plan of salvation (as mentioned above) much of *the relevance of our teaching on US & BC is reduced to – so what!*”

“All of our traditional proofs are based upon *folklore, legend, myth, and superstition.*”

“It is not possible to say that this was revealed to Mr. Armstrong...”

Joseph Tkach Jr, message to field minister, Aug. 10, 1992

7. NATIONAL IDENTITY OF ISRAEL

United States and Britain or Jesus Christ?

OLD TEACHING:

“Notice the twofold promise: 1) ‘I will make of thee A GREAT NATION’ – the national, material promise that his flesh-born children should become a great nation – a promise of RACE; 2) ‘...and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed’ – the spiritual promise of GRACE.”

“This is a pivotal point. This is the point where professing ‘Christians’ and their teachers jump the track of truth. This is the point where they switch off the track that would lead them to the missing master key to the prophecies. They miss the fact that God gave Abraham promises of physical RACE as well as spiritual GRACE.”

“The spiritual promises – the promise of the ‘one seed,’ Christ, and of salvation through Him – the Bible calls the sceptre. But the material and national promises relating to many nations, national wealth, prosperity and power, and possession of the Holy Land, the Bible calls the birthright.”

“The sceptre shall not depart from Judah...” (Gen. 49:10.)”

“...But the birthright was Joseph’s (I Chron. 5:2.”

“These material promises for this life, then, belonged to an altogether different tribe among the children of Israel than the sceptre promise of the kingly line culminating in Jesus Christ, which spiritual promise belonged in the tribe of Judah!”

“Of proof that our white, English-speaking peoples today – Britain and America – are actually and truly the birthright tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh of the ‘lost’ house of Israel there is so much we shall have space for but a small portion in this book.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, The U.S. and Britain in Prophecy, (1980), pp. 22, 23, 35, 36, 49, 119

NEW TEACHING:

“It is also interesting to study why these genealogies were included in the Gospels.”

"[Matthew] showed that the ultimate purpose of Israel's history, including the lives of its most famous people, was to accomplish the birth of Christ. Jesus Christ fulfilled the major purpose of the national identity of Israel."

"Q & A," PT, Nov.-Dec. 1992

"We have removed *The United States and Britain in Prophecy* from circulation because of several problems. The Church has never addressed the fact that many of the covenants and promises in the Old Testament were fulfilled. Additionally, we have never addressed how these promises should be understood with respect to the sacrifice of Christ."

David G. Hunsberger, WCG PCD
Letter to Member, July 22, 1993

8. PURPOSE OF PROPHECY

Warning or Encouragement?

OLD TEACHING:

"God inspired His Prophet Amos to tell us, 'The Lord Eternal never does anything without telling his servants the prophets' (Amos 3:7, Moffat translation)."

"Before God intervenes in the affairs of a nation, or the world, He first sends His servants to warn those who will be directly affected by what He intends to do."

"The purpose of prophecy, therefore, is threefold. First, it is given in love to encourage people to repent of their sins so they can escape punishment. Second, it is given for those who don't repent at first, so that when their punishment comes, they will then acknowledge their sins and repent toward the God who will then deliver and rescue them! (Deut. 4:25-31) Third, it announces in advance the coming Kingdom of God, the wonderful world tomorrow – a time of the restoration of this earth to a condition of prosperity, peace and abundant well-being."

How to Understand Prophecy (1972), pp. 5-6

NEW TEACHING:

"God has led us to see that the purpose of prophecy is to guide us to Him...to remind us that He is Judge...to assure us of His love, mercy, faithfulness and justice, as well as to encourage us and to reassure us that our faith is not in vain."

"God promises to see us through hard times, not prevent them."

"Personal from Joseph W. Tkach," WN, Aug. 19, 1991

"For some ministers and members, it can be as real an addiction as dependence on drugs. I know this is difficult for some of you to read. I know because I used to be somewhat of a prophecy addict also."

"If you begin to think that this is 'Armstrong bashing,' then please realize that you may have a more serious case of prediction addiction. Please discontinue such misrepresentation of reality."

"We need to assist people in breaking through the first stages of denial (of prediction addiction) and help them overcome it."

Joseph Tkach Jr., "Church Administration," PGR, Mar. 17, 1993

9. CHRIST'S RETURN

Imminent or Far Off?

OLD TEACHING:

"The KINGDOM of GOD is, simply the world-ruling GOVERNMENT of God. It is absolutely not a sentimental, ethereal, imaginary something 'set up in the hearts of men.' It is something REAL! It is SOON COMING!"

"And Jesus Christ was born to be the KING of the WORLD GOVERNMENT (Luke 1: 30-33; John 18:36-37; Revelation 11:15; 19:11-16). As Jesus so promised His disciples that He would return – so, now soon He will return to RULE THE WHOLE EARTH and bring us peace at last!"

Herbert W. Armstrong, "What Is Now Prophesied!" PT, Mar. 1980

"World events are moving swiftly toward the grand-smash climax at the CLOSE of this world – THIS CIVILIZATION!...indications now are that God will allow Satan to SPEED UP his wrath, for he knows he has but a short time! The devil knows it because Jesus' SIGN we are near the END OF THIS WORLD (Matt. 24:14), which YOU have backed me in proclaiming to the world – the Gospel of THE KINGDOM OF GOD – has been going to the world in great POWER!"

"Yes, we are running out of time! World events are moving now swiftly!"

Herbert W. Armstrong, Co-worker Letter, Sep. 17, 1982

NEW TEACHING:

"We tended to look at all prophecy primarily in the light of the end time – the future."

"Personal from Joseph W. Tkach," WN, Nov. 25, 1991

"As we look at today's rapidly changing political world, we must not be deceived into believing that *the end of the age is imminent*."

Joseph W. Tkach, Co-worker Letter, Apr. 22, 1992

"...we should have learned our lesson. But...we continued to proclaim...that worldwide calamity followed by Jesus' return was unquestionably imminent."

Joseph W. Tkach, "Prediction Addiction," PT, Sep. 1993

Author's note: Christ said, "But if that evil servant says in his heart, 'My master is delaying his coming,' and begins to beat his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunkards, the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for him and at an hour that he is not aware of, and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matt. 24:48-51, NKJV). The WCG began voicing the idea that "100 years and 3 more world wars" could precede Christ's Return.

10. 7,000-YEAR PLAN

Reality or Unfounded Myth?

OLD TEACHING:

"[God's] Master Plan involves a duration of 7,000 years. The seven literal days of creation were a type."

"With God, 'one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years is as one day' (II Peter 3:8)."

"So, in other words, the first 6,000 years were allotted to allow Satan to labor at his work of deceiving the world, followed by 1,000 years (one millennial day) when Satan shall not be allowed to do any of his work of deception. Put another way, God marked out six millennial days to allow man to indulge in the spiritual labor of sin, followed by a millennium of spiritual rest, under the enforced Government of God."

Herbert W. Armstrong, The Wonderful World Tomorrow (1979), pp. 47-48

NEW TEACHING:

"We will undoubtedly hear prophetic speculations about the end of the world as the year 2000 approaches."

"According to this concept, the seven days of the week or the seven days of creation are considered types of this 7,000-year plan...interpreted by the 'one day is as a thousand years' statement of II Peter 3:8."

"[Peter] used the thousand-years statement as a metaphor of God's eternity, that human measurements of time mean nothing to God."

"Personal Answers," PT, July 1992

"Based on the seven-day week, and on the seven days of creation, some have reasoned that God has also set aside some 7000 years to work with man. Verse 8 in 2 Peter 3, which includes the words 'one day is as a thousand years,' is used to support this view."

"It is not wise to use this reference to establish a set method for calculating biblical chronology that God has not clearly revealed."

“God’s plan centers around his power, love, and saving grace, not chronologies and ‘endless genealogies, which cause disputes’ (I Timothy 1:4).”

WCG PCD Letter L057

11. TRINITY DOCTRINE

False or True?

OLD TEACHING:

“GOD IS NOW A FAMILY of Persons, composed so far of only the TWO – God the Father and Christ the Son...all being filled and led by God’s Spirit shall become BORN sons of God. The GOD FAMILY will then RULE ALL NATIONS with the GOVERNMENT OF GOD RESTORED!”

“The Trinity doctrine limits God to a supposed three Persons. It DESTROYS the very gospel of Jesus Christ! His gospel is the good news of the now soon-coming KINGDOM OF GOD – the only hope of this world and its mixed-up mankind!”

“The word trinity is not used anywhere in the Bible.”

“The counterfeit Christianity spawned by Simon the Sorcerer was promoting it vigorously along with the pagan Easter. But the true Church of God vigorously resisted it. The controversy became so violent it threatened the peace of the world.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Mystery of the Ages (1985), pp. 50-51, 54-55

“No one can possibly understand the ‘three in one.’ When pointedly questioned concerning the belief in a Triune or three-in-one God, the answer is in effect – WHO KNOWS? It is something we must accept in faith.”

“‘The mind of man cannot fully understand the mystery of the Trinity. He who would try to understand the mystery fully will lose his mind. But he who would deny the Trinity will lose his soul’ (Harold Lindsell and Charles J. Woodbridge, *A Handbook of Christian Truth*, pp. 51-52).”

“Why has Satan palmed off the doctrine of the Trinity on the world? Because he doesn’t want YOU to rule in his place.”

“If they can make you believe in the Trinity, you will be deceived into thinking that the Godhead consists of only three persons. You would then never in your wildest dreams ever imagine that YOU were created to be born into the GOD FAMILY and actually share in ruling the universe.”

The God Family and the Holy Spirit, pp. 7, 12, 13

NEW TEACHING:

“The Bible does reveal three entities within the one Godhead – the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.”

“All Christians realize that any humanly worded formula cannot really describe God with complete clarity. Thus the Trinity doctrine has been accepted as a mystery – part of the ‘mystery of godliness’ (I Timothy 3:16).”

It is accepted on faith, with the admission that it cannot be perfectly understood.”

God Is..., pp. 41, 44

“The one true God – the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit – created all that is.”

Joseph W. Tkach, “The Greatest Scientist,” PT, July 1993

“*We are teaching a form of the Trinity*, though not the exact variations of the concept that have been commonly taught. We find flaws in most Trinitarian teachings that we are attempting to avoid. The word ‘trinity’ originally meant ‘three’ and we have always believed that the one God is somehow three – Father, Son and Holy Spirit as mentioned by Jesus in Matthew 28:19.”

David G. Hunsberger, Letter to Member, WCG PCD, Sep. 23, 1993

“*The Worldwide Church of God does teach a form of the Trinity* since we believe there is One God who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit.”

“Is [your second question] a restatement of number one? Or do you mean something else by the term ‘Trinitarian Church’?”

“*Since we do teach a form of the Trinity*, this question is negated.”

David G. Hunsberger, WCG PCD letter, Jan. 11, 1994

“God, by the testimony of Scripture, is one divine Being in three eternal, coessential, yet distinct hypostases, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.”

“God,” Statement of Beliefs (1993)

“Yes, the Worldwide Church of God believes in a form of the Trinity. This is explained in our latest edition of the booklet *God Is...*”

“The Church has been reviewing this doctrine for several years and formally announced it to the membership last summer.”

David G. Hunsberger, WCG PCD Letter, Mar. 1, 1994

“Another heresy is the idea that...the one God is sometimes the Father, sometimes the Son, and sometimes the Holy Spirit, *but not all three all the time.*”

Joseph W. Tkach, PGR, July 27, 1993

Author's note: Carried to the end of this thinking, that God is “all three all the time,” where was the Father when Christ was on the earth? And if God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit were sort of “Siamese triplets,” how could one-third of one being die? By this definition, mankind has no Savior. We have a Christ who stayed alive, inextricably bound into a three-in-one godhead, with what must only have been a “discarded body” when He died. (See change 18, where this

concept is clearly developed.) The term “Siamese triplets” is not meant to be irreverent or disrespectful. It is merely used to explain the classic trinitarian concept of three-in-oneness. A trinitarian believes there are three distinct God “hypostases” within one indistinct spirit that permeates all things all the time. Hence, the term “Siamese triplets”—where one is the other two all the time.

“In this letter I want to focus on why we have chosen the word *hypostases* over the word *persons*...When we express the biblical truth that God is one and at the same time three, we need to use words that do not imply three Gods, or three separate God beings.”

Joseph W. Tkach, PGR, Aug. 27, 1993

Author's note: “The Worldwide Church of God's term of choice for God is *hypostases*. Following are the Webster's Unabridged Dictionary definitions of the word. Certain of the definitions have to do with medical terminology...pertaining to the blood, are not relevant, and have not been included: 'hypostases 2a. in the original Nicene use: the essence or the substance of the triune Godhead—called also *ousia*; b. in later use (1): one of the persons the Godhead or Trinity (2): the individual as subject or substance; c. the whole personality of Christ as distinguished from his human and divine nature... 4. *philos* a. *plotinism* [as taught by Plotinos, 205-265 A.D.]: any of the three aspects or essential principles constituting the Godhead (1): the transcendent one (2): *nous*, or spirit (3): *Logos*, world soul; b. *Thomism*: the substance or rational nature of an individual or person; also: personal, individual; c. substance as an ontological entity or category: a self subsistent reality or mode of being; d. a hypothetical or conceptual entity: a reified abstraction.”

“The Church puts all questions about the nature of God in perspective by recognizing that their importance is primarily historical...”

“...the Worldwide Church of God has made a clear distinction between issues that are strictly biblical, and issues that are essentially theological or philosophical.”

K.J. Stavrinides, Reviews You Can Use, Jan.-Feb. 1991 (Doctrinal Statements...within the WCG, 1991 Tanner Lectures, Trinity Evangelical School, pp. 7, 8)

“We need to keep this subject [the nature of God] in its proper place. The Church [K.J. Stavrinides] has stated that understanding ‘the nature of God’ is not necessary for salvation. It has been admitted to be a peripheral issue.”

K. Williams, Letter from pastor to member, Rochester, New York, Sept. 1, 1993

Author's note: This entire new teaching amounted to the absolute disfellowshipping of the true God from the Worldwide Church of God.

“I was first challenged on this point when I put a ‘Personal’ in *The Plain Truth*, in which I set forth the traditional arguments against the Trinity. In response, I received a letter from a priest, who said he had respected *The Plain Truth*, but now realized we had no idea of what we were talking about.”

“I put several men to work on it, and what we began to find, after a short time, was that most of what we had written on the development and history of the Trinity doctrine was at best superficial and based on misunderstanding, and at worst, just plain false.”

“Mr. Armstrong, as I said, was simply never formally challenged on this point, or I’m confident he would have changed it himself.”

“Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,” WN, Aug. 3, 1993

“In the centuries following the apostolic age, reflections on the nature of God...became ‘Trinitarian’ in order to combat heresies...not to foster ‘pagan’ beliefs.”

Joseph Tkach Jr., “Church Administration,” PGR, Jan. 11, 1994

“In February of 1991, two authorities of the Worldwide Church of God were invited to Trinity Evangelical Divinity School (Deerfield, Illinois) to speak about their doctrinal changes at the Tanner Lecture Series. Dr. Ruth A. Tucker, along with several noted theologians and apologists, listened and responded with questions to the speakers. The Worldwide Church of God was changing positions on doctrines and was asking for the input of Christian leaders.”

“The Worldwide Church of God representatives were Michael A. Snyder, David Hulme (Director of Communications and Public Affairs), and J. Michael Feazell (Executive Assistant to Joseph Tkach, Pastor General).”

“There will be ongoing dialogue with the leadership of the Worldwide Church of God. Since their doctrines are in a stage of transition, we have placed them in this special section of our book.”

“When we got to the rejection of the Trinity, we found that there were some unsettled questions among the authorities. We were assured that they are still studying on it and it is not a closed subject with them.”

“On the subject of the Holy Spirit we saw that one of the authorities was willing to call Him by the personal pronouns found in John 14, 15, and 16 – He, Him, His. The gentleman said he cannot deny what John has written and promised more study in the future.”

McDowell and Stewart, The Deceivers: What Cults Believe, p. 286

"The Worldwide Church of God teaches the full divinity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and affirms the oneness of God."

"The Worldwide Church of God teaches the full divinity of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit – the biblical foundation for all Trinitarian discussions."

"The doctrine of grace...is as fundamental to Christianity as the doctrine of the nature of God."

"Even though the Worldwide Church of God considers some positions of the Trinity to be heretical (for example, all forms of Arianism), it sees the Eastern, Western, Protestant, and modernist views of the nature of God as genuine attempts to reach a deeper understanding of God's nature."

K.J. Stavrinides, Reviews You Can Use, Jan.-Feb. 1991

(Quoted in Summary of Doctrinal Statements...within the WCG, 1991 Tanner Lectures, Trinity Evangelical School, pp. intro, 7, 8)

Author's note: The above quotes reveal an astonishing sequence of events. They were written and prepared in 1991 as the official public position of the Worldwide Church of God on the doctrine of the trinity. This was a full two and a half years before it was admitted to the brethren for the first time. The incredible truth this picture represents is that Church leadership had carefully and deliberately planned years before to make this change while denying it over and over to the Church. Anyone who tried to say the new teaching defining God as three hypostases in one being was the trinity was deemed a rumormonger and liar. Incredible! (See change 174 for one such denial that preceded the coming reality of what was denied.)

"With regard to the current issue of your publication...the headlines on the lower front cover, 'Insiders Report: Worldwide poised to adopt Doctrine of the Trinity,' and on page 3, 'Worldwide Church of God Accepts Trinity Doctrine,' do not reflect the vital distinctions and definitions that have been made."

"It is no secret that Mr. Tkach wants to improve the doctrines of the Church wherever this is necessary. Neither is it a secret that some splinter groups have been formed...*There is a sensitive way of presenting this material to the members so as not to encourage them into the arms of splinter groups.*"

"You are torpedoing the efforts of the Church to represent the truth in the right way."

D. Hulme, Letter to James Walker of the Watchman Fellowship, Aug. 3, 1993

"Thank you, Dr. Tucker, and good afternoon to you all."

"Allow me to take you through some of the present thinking then of the Worldwide Church of God. We had a pretty vigorous discussion yesterday

with a number of senior members of the Trinity faculty and we were appreciative of their views. What I did was to take them through some of the same material that you'll find in the handout."

Author's note: The handout referred to above was the Summary of Doctrinal Statements and Recent Changes within the Worldwide Church of God, which was quoted from under change 11.

"What I will do is try to take you through some of the more important changes that have occurred in the last four to five years. I think sitting down and exploring some of these things in an open environment, which I certainly had the feeling yesterday we were in, is a very encouraging development. So we're here for two reasons: to open a dialogue with other major religious groups, and to hopefully clear up some of the misconceptions that exist."

"...the publication of Herbert Armstrong's work *Mystery of the Ages*, which was his last book, was an attempt on his part to catalog the major beliefs of the Church, drawing mostly on previously published material. He himself considered that work to be in need of revision almost as soon as it had been published and said so on videotape which we have. But then he died and we were left with the quandary then what we'd do with this book that he himself had said needed revising. We were already in the process of making a number of changes so we decided to pull that book from circulation. That book is no longer circulated in the Worldwide Church of God."

"Shortly after Herbert Armstrong's death, Joseph Tkach organized a senior group of Worldwide Church of God ministers into a doctrinal review team. *I sit on that panel along with a number of others. and we've been extensively examining all of the major beliefs of the Church. That's a process that will go on for many months to come.*"

"Most of you probably haven't realized the degree of influence that theologians and religious scholars have played over the years within in the Church of God. I'm talking about scholars external to the Worldwide Church of God."

"*We recently issued a new paper on the subject of the Trinity.* which was drafted by a senior Church minister who is a graduate of the University of London, studied under Christopher Evans, [unintelligible word] New Testament, at King's College. We consider yesterday's discussion here on that subject to be very helpful. Michael Snyder and I went home last night and thought a great deal and talked a great deal about what we heard yesterday from a number of scholars here."

"Let me come to our *Statement of Beliefs* then. I think it's profitable to review some of the items from the latest *Statement*."

"Now. *I should also mention at this stage that we published a fairly scholarly paper on the Trinity, which has been sent to some theologians.* I invited the gentlemen yesterday to write a critique of that paper. Not to indicate anybody here, but so far I have had – we have received – no critique of that paper. Now, if we're to have an honest exchange, then someone has to

give us something in response to what we give, and we'd be happy to consider it."

[Reading from the Statement of Beliefs:] The Worldwide Church of God teaches the full divinity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and affirms the oneness of God."

Author's note: The above statement is the trinity by all definitions.

[Reading from Dr. Stavrinides' paper on the Trinity:] 'The Worldwide Church of God teaches the full divinity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit – the biblical foundation for all Trinitarian discussions. It accepts every facet of God's self-disclosure as found in the Holy Scriptures. It does not teach an eastern or a western formula, and it does not endorse a particular philosophical or theological position as preferable.

“The Church puts all questions about the nature of God in perspective by recognizing that their importance is primarily historical. Had the early churches not been plagued with this problem, the nature of God would not need to be isolated above other doctrines. Of course, the nature of God should be but one of many doctrines that need to be constantly searched for a better understanding and better formulation, and a greater refinement.

“Speaking from the perspective of God's Word, there is no reason for the Church today to hold the doctrine of God's nature in isolation as a criterion of orthodoxy or heresy. What the Church needs to see is its own role in a broader light to confront modern issues and to overcome obstacles that affect its worldwide mission. In order to facilitate this goal, the Worldwide Church of God has made a clear distinction between issues that are strictly biblical and issues that are essentially theological or philosophical.’ (And a missing statement) – ‘The former are easily accessible through the Bible in any translation, while the latter requires special training or expertise.

“*The Worldwide Church of God has made all biblical truths an indispensable part of its teaching including the teaching that God is one but not the specific way in which God is one, which is entirely a philosophical matter.* It teaches the full divinity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, but it does not argue whether God is an essential, a personal, or a super-personal being in the way these terms are used by theologians.

“The Church highly respects the need for deeper theological work. It believes that a full and accurate statement on the nature of God would be a major achievement in the history of dogmatic, but, in the meantime, it defers to experts whose task is to dissect, analyze, and define what normally lies beyond the resources of the vast majority of believers.

“Even though the Worldwide Church of God considers some positions on the Trinity to be heretical – for example: all forms of arianism – it sees the eastern, western, Protestant, and modernist views of the nature of God as genuine attempts to reach a deeper understanding of God's nature. The impact of each view on the other issues is colossal. After all, the interrela-

tionships we ascribe to the godhead are bound to be reflected in the daily life of the Church.' (An issue that came up yesterday.) 'Furthermore, all truth is precious, and only through a continuing sincere and healthy dialogue can some truths be firmly established.' Written by a Greek scholar, K.J. Stavrinides, January-February 1991.

"Mike Snyder is going to take a session in a few minutes. Well, thank you for your attention."

*D. Hulme, WCG Director, "Recent Trendy," Tanner Lecture Series,
Trinity Evangelical Divinity Seminary, Feb. 1991*

"The Triune nature of God is an essential part of Worldwide Church of God doctrine. Many people find the doctrine of the Trinity mystifying. But it need not be a barrier to faith. We publish a booklet entitled *God Is...* to help readers understand the three-fold nature of God."

We're Often Asked (1994), p. 4

"Concerning the nature of God, for example, we used to teach what amounted to a polytheistic view: two God beings."

"Therefore, we now teach what the Bible teaches – one God and only one God. He exists as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit...Three distinct (but not separate) hypostases, or three divine Persons...but one and only one God, who is always Father, Son, and Holy Spirit...We have also produced a new, revised edition of the booklet, *God Is...*, which goes into detail explaining that this doctrine is essential to the Bible's revelation of God."

"Unless the official Church doctrine on the nature of God is biblically correct, the door is left open to all kinds of damaging heresies."

Joseph W. Tkach, Letter to Ministry, PGR, June 8, 1994

Author's note: This last statement is true. This is because when you open the heresy of the trinity, one must necessarily drag with it many other damaging heresies into official teaching.

"The Bible tells us there is one and only one God, and then presents us with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, all eternal, and all doing things only God can do."

"At first glance, the concept of 'one in three' and 'three in one' appears illogical to human reason. Yet we believe it, even though it is not simple or easy to explain, because the Bible reveals it."

"In trying to express the oneness and threeness of God, Greek-speaking Christians used a special word..."

"*Hypostasis* or, in plural form, *hypostases*, is appropriate to use of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit."

"Mainstream Christianity adopted belief in the Trinity, which describes God as one divine Being existing in three, co-essential hypostases, or persons, at the Council of Constantinople (A.D. 381)."

“This article is excerpted from the booklet *God Is...*”

“*God Is...*”, PT, July 1994

“You asked if the Worldwide Church of God is a Trinitarian church. The Church believes, and has publicly stated, that there is one God (Romans 3:30) who is revealed in the Bible to be Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19). This is considered to be a Trinitarian teaching. The word *trinity* means ‘three’ and the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are three in one sense and one in another sense. This is explained in our booklet *God Is...*”

D. Hunsberger, Letter to Member, PCD, Apr. 24, 1994

“The Worldwide Church of God believes in one God (Deut. 6:4). In this context, it teaches the full divinity of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit – the biblical foundation for all Trinitarian discussions.”

WCG PCD Letter L308

“You mentioned that it has not yet been made clear to you whether our teaching about the nature of God is Trinitarian. Yes, our teaching is Trinitarian.”

“If someone asks you if we are Trinitarian, you can simply say ‘yes’ and this will be correct.”

David G. Hunsberger, Letter to Member, Jan. 14, 1994

Author’s note: As shown above, the WCG began at that time plainly admitting to its membership that it was a trinitarian church. As pointed out in change 11 of this book, the administration was in the process of accepting the doctrine of the trinity years before it confessed such a belief to the membership. Change 174 proves that the leadership was denying it believed the trinity as late as August of 1993, in spite of the fact that it was being taught in the *God Is...* booklet in 1992. Phillip Arnn of the *Watchman Expositor* explains why a full admission took so long.

“In our opinion, the leadership of the WCG is caught between a rock and a hard place.”

“Many of their top ministers are attending bible schools outside of the church and are being exposed to orthodox theology. They are bringing these doctrines, these new doctrinal understandings, back into the church and actually changing church doctrine – the doctrine of who God is, the doctrine of ‘born again’ – these have all been changed to conform more with orthodox Christian thinking.”

“So we applaud them for their research and their understanding. But at the same time, to make such a drastic change, they are concerned that they’re going to lose a lot of members, ‘cause these are 180 degrees opposite of what they have always taught. *So they are actually telling the members that*

they are not making any changes whatsoever; but that they're just explaining the old doctrines in a different way."

"The new scholarship that's coming into the church, into the leadership, is moving towards and really is indistinguishable from the Trinitarian view of God."

"Talking about the Holy Spirit, they said that the Holy Spirit is Divine the Holy Spirit is Divinity. Now when you say that you paint yourself into a corner. There is no way of saying that the Holy Spirit is Deity without saying at the same time that the Holy Spirit is everything that the Father is and everything that the Son is. So they have accepted the Trinity doctrine, even though for the sake of their membership they will not actually use the term trinity. So it's a major doctrinal shift."

"We understand the position that the church is in. We really don't have a problem if they don't use the term *trinity* as long as they teach the Trinity. They have a problem with their membership perceiving that they've accepted a doctrine that historically they have taught was pagan. The membership had been taught for 59 years that the trinity was a pagan doctrine, and now all of a sudden the church is teaching that. *So they have to use a different language with the membership, than they are with the orthodox Christian community. And we can understand their position.*"

Dr. D. Kennedy, interview with Phillip Arnn, "Truths That Transform," 1993

Author's note: How revealing—a “Christian” man condoning what the WCG has done in lying to and deceiving its membership! Let's not forget that while the WCG leadership was admitting to the world in FEBRUARY OF 1991 that it was coming to accept the doctrine of the trinity as legitimate it was still telling its membership the following in July of 1991.

“How are we any different from the Protestant churches?” one person asked. ‘What makes us unique anymore?’”

“At the risk of sounding silly, let me remind you of just a few ways in which we differ.”

“We do not believe the doctrine of the Trinity.”

Joseph W. Tkach, “Personal,” WN, July 22, 1991

Author's note: The next quote illustrates the point that Philip Arnn was making.

“The newly printed *Statement of Beliefs of the Worldwide Church of God* will be mailed to you soon.”

“In the statement about God, you will notice that the final sentence reads:

“The Church affirms the oneness of God and the full divinity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.”

“Someone may ask. ‘Does this mean we now accent the doctrine of the Trinity?’ No. It does not.”

“Someone may ask, ‘Why does the statement use the word *divinity* in reference to the Holy Spirit?’”

“We need to understand that the Holy Spirit is divine and eternal.”

“We affirm what the Bible reveals: the oneness of God and the *divinity* and unity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.”

“Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,” WN, Dec. 23, 1991

12. FAMILY OF GOD

God Is One or Has One?

OLD TEACHING:

“The fourth word in all the Bible is ‘God’ (Gen. 1:1). And the original Hebrew word is *Elohim*, a uni-plural [collective] noun like the word family, church or group. The family is God. There is one God – the one Family, but more than one Person.”

“God...purposed to reproduce Himself, through humans, made in His image and likeness, but made first from material flesh and blood, subject to death if there is sin unrepented of – yet with the possibility of being born into the Divine Family begotten by God the Father.”

“And that is why God put man on the earth.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, The Incredible Human Potential, p. 54

“How ridiculous – how nonsensical – for professing Christians to claim they are ‘children of God’ – to call one another ‘brethren in the Lord’ and to call God ‘Father,’ and then to deny that God is a FAMILY, and that we may actually be BORN INTO His very divine FAMILY – becoming Spirit as He is – becoming DIVINE as He is divine!”

“And how BLIND to deny this plain and simple BIBLE TEACHING and follow with the deceived Christian-professing crowd the false teachings of the false prophets! When the blind lead the blind, they all fall into the ditch of ignorance, superstition and deception!”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Why Marriage Soon Obsolete?, p. 38

NEW TEACHING:

“The Bible tells us that, upon conversion, the Christian is ‘born again’ into the kingdom of God as one of the ‘children of God’ (John 3:3, I John 3:2). Thus we learn that God has a family.”

“It is not biblically accurate, however, to say that God is a family. For lack of clearer language – and human language falls short when we try to describe God – some Bible students have explained that the Hebrew term *Elohim* translated ‘God’...describes a family group of more than one Being. Most scholarship contradicts this interpretation of the word *Elohim*.”

“Thus, while God *has* a family, the word *Elohim* does not define God as *being* a family.”

God Is..., pp. 49, 50

“Yes, the Church once believed that God is a Family and that the saved would enter that Family upon being glorified. This belief is no longer held and was repudiated in our member newspaper, *The Worldwide News*, in 1991.”

D. Hunsberger, WCG PCD, Mar. 1, 1994

13. GOD AND CHRIST

Persons or Entities?

OLD TEACHING:

“So back to our question, ‘WHO and WHAT is God?’ Before anything else came into existence there was God and the Word, composed of spirit, not of matter, but nevertheless very real. TWO Persons – not three.”

“...God’s Word reveals that God and the Word – two supreme Personages – coexisted ALWAYS...”

“Is God, then limited to only two Persons? The false Trinity teaching does limit God to three Persons. But God is not limited. As God repeatedly reveals, His purpose is to reproduce Himself into what well may become billions of God persons. It is the false Trinity teaching that limits God, denies God’s purpose and has palpably deceived the whole Christian world.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Mystery of the Ages, pp. 43, 44, 45

NEW TEACHING:

“The Bible does reveal three entities within the one Godhead – the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.”

“...the word *person* is not exact enough.”

“...in recent years the word person has come under attack. Some prefer to speak of three ‘modes of existence’...The English word person (as well as any other word, for that matter) is at best a weak metaphor.”

“God is infinitely more than any human word can convey.”

God Is..., pp. 41, 44, 45

Question: “Michael...Herbert W. Armstrong...called the doctrine of the Trinity a heresy...In the current state of theological reflection of the WCG, what is the present status of the doctrine of the Trinity?”

Snyder: “we don’t use language any more as [you] previously described...”

Question: “OK, then let’s talk about the concept of ‘person.’ Would you describe the Godhead as one God subsisting as three persons?”

Snyder: “No...We talk about the fact that it is not even really an appropriate label to call God a person...We don’t believe in the Holy

Spirit as a separate person, but I don't think – and you may correct me if I am wrong – that many theologians would use that sort of language either."

*Interview with Michael Snyder, WMUZ radio,
Detroit, Michigan, Dec. 13, 1991*

"We do not believe that the Bible teaches that the Father and the Son are persons."

Letter to the Editor, PT, Jan. 1993

Author's note: Of course, they came to believe all three are persons. They first reduced the Father and Son to "not persons" in order to make them "equal" with the Holy Spirit. Then they said the Father and Son are persons and, since all three are "equal," this also made the Holy Spirit a person. (See change 174.)

14. GOD'S BODY

Literal and Actual or Metaphoric and Formless?

OLD TEACHING:

"In various parts of the Bible, it is revealed that God has a face, eyes, a nose, mouth and ears. He has hair on His head. It is revealed God has arms and legs. And God has hands and fingers."

"God has feet and toes and a body. God has a mind."

"If you know what a man looks like, you know what is the form and shape of GOD, for He made man in His image, after His very likeness!"

*Herbert W. Armstrong, Mystery of the Ages,
pp. 46-47*

NEW TEACHING:

"Human language describing God – even the language of God's inspired Word, the Bible – must be based on analogy."

"The Bible says God has a body...a head and hair...a nose and nostrils...a mouth...lips...a voice...a tongue and breath...arms, hands, and fingers...a chest...a back...a waist...and feet..."

"As all of these references demonstrate, much of the Bible is written in poetry, analogy, simile, metaphor and symbol. Therefore, we should not always interpret every Bible statement literally."

God Is..., pp. 19, 22

"God does not have or need a body..."

"If we cling to a belief that God has a body (a male body, many will attest)...then we have inadvertently reduced God to an 'image made to look like mortal man.'"

Joseph W. Tkach, PGR, July 27, 1993

15. IMAGE OF GOD

Man Looks Like God or Not?

OLD TEACHING:

“In Genesis 1:26, ‘God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.’ We know the form and shape of man. That is the image, likeness, form and shape of God.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Mystery of the Ages, p. 46

NEW TEACHING:

“Scholars have long debated the meaning of the expression ‘image of God’...”

“One view is...the ability of humans to think, to reason and to make decisions.”

“A second suggestion is...our capacity to have a relationship with God.”

“A third perspective is...the responsibility of dominion that God has given humans over the earth.”

“Perhaps the best understanding of the image of God is a combination of these three perspectives.”

Bill Palmer, “Three Historic Views,” PT, May-June 1994

16. WORLD’S RELIGIONS

Source of False Knowledge or Knowledge of True God?

OLD TEACHING:

“How did the whole world become so BLINDED – so mixed up – in such religious CONFUSION?...Satan has deceived the WHOLE WORLD (Rev. 12:9).

“That’s why in religions, religious leaders, deceived by Satan, blinded to GOD’S TRUTH, have started this world’s religions – Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, Shintoism, Hinduism, Islam, Christianity and Judaism.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “Billions Not Being Judged?”, GN, Jan. 1981

NEW TEACHING:

“When we cut down the religious beliefs of others, we were a self-righteous stench in the nostrils of God.”

Joseph W. Tkach, sermon preached at Detroit, Michigan, 1990

“The major religions have contributed to the search for who and what God is...”

“From the primal polytheistic religions comes a deep sense of the unity of all life.”

“Judaism emphasizes that God is One and Supreme...”

“Islam presents us with the concept of surrender to the immortal source and ruler of life.”

“Hinduism focuses on life’s hidden mysteries.”

“Buddhism points to the need for discipline in seeking answers.”

“Judaism. Christianity. Islam. These three great faiths all look to Abraham as their father.”

God Is..., pp. 4, 24

“Biblical scholar Philip Comfort answers the question of which translation is best with his own thought-provoking questions. He asks: ‘...best for whom? For young people? For adults? For Protestants? For Catholics? For Jews?’”

Paul Kroll, “Choosing a Bible?”, PT, May-June 1993

17. SONS OF GOD

Real or Adopted?

OLD TEACHING:

“[Genesis 1] says plainly God made whales after the whale kind – birds after the bird kind; cattle after the cattle kind, chimps after the chimp kind – but God made MAN after the GOD kind.”

“...the truly converted Christian, having God’s Holy Spirit dwelling within, being led by God’s Spirit, is a SON of God. In prayer he addresses God as ‘Father.’”

“The purpose of life is that in us God is really recreating His own kind – reproducing Himself after His own kind – for we are, upon real conversion, actually begotten as sons (yet unborn) of God.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Why Were You Born?, pp. 6, 28, 29

“In the KJV the word *adoption* is wrongly translated and should be rendered ‘sonship’ in the English, for it is speaking of becoming begotten and born sons of God, not adopted sons. Real sons!”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “The True Meaning of Predestination,” PT, 1976

NEW TEACHING:

“We should note that we become the children of God through a birth experience (John 3:3). Paul also uses the metaphor of adoption. We become God’s children through adoption when we are given the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:15-17).”

“The Greek word translated as ‘sonship’ in verse 15 is *huiosthesia*. The word can also be translated as ‘adoption.’”

Gene H. Hogberg, “The One Who Loves You,” PT, Sep. 1993

“...the teaching we once held – that the destiny of human beings is to become gods – [is] not one that we [can] support theologically.”

Joseph W. Tkach, PGR, July 27, 1993

“One of our old catchphrases (which we have not used for many years), ‘we are to become God as God is God,’ is an example of a statement that went beyond the biblical revelation.”

Joseph W. Tkach, “How Do You React to Change?”, WN, July 22, 1991

18. CHRIST’S DEATH

He Really Did Die or He Really Didn’t Die?

OLD TEACHING:

“For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living” (Romans 14:9). ”

“The expression ‘He was revived’ indicates Christ had been unconscious – that he was dead – not that he rose from a state of mental activity.”

“Yes, Jesus Christ died and was dead! But God the Father RAISED HIM FROM THE DEAD.”

“Some seem to believe...a BODY Christ lived in died, but CHRIST HIMSELF never died. Christ was God, and, they argue, God could not die!”

“They do not realize that Christ had given up his immortal life...for the purpose of DEATH.”

“If Christ did not die for their sins – if it was only a mortal body that died – then we have no Savior...”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “Why Christ Died and Rose Again,” PT, Mar. 1982

NEW TEACHING:

Author’s note: In a sermon sent to all ministers in 1991, Greg Albrecht stated that Christ resurrected Himself. If Christ resurrected Himself, then he never actually died (apparently because God can’t die). We can therefore have no real Savior.

“While [Christ] was on earth, he had two natures, human and divine. Now that he had been glorified...the limitations that define human nature... were taken away. This is what made it possible for Christ simply to materialize in the upper room.

“This is not to be confused with the eternal status of the Son hypostasis, which *continued to exist, unchanged, throughout infinity and eternity.*”

Joseph Tkach Jr., “Questions and Answers,” PGR, Oct. 1993

“The Son of God died in his human form, but he as a person couldn’t die.”

“The Son – hypostases – became flesh, but not the totality of the hypostases.”

“He [i.e. Christ] is in heaven and on earth at the same time.”

“Only the person died, not the Son hypostases.”

K.J. Stavrinides, Discussions on the nature of God sent to WCG churches, tape 12

19. FATHER AND SON

Literal Relationship or Metaphor?

OLD TEACHING:

“God gave you the precious gift of His Holy Spirit – He is now your FATHER! Not figuratively, but actually – REALLY!”

*Herbert W. Armstrong, “An Open Letter to Our Newly Begotten Brethren,”
GN, Mar. 1981*

“Humans, by repentance, surrender to God and acceptance of Christ, may be in mind and attitude converted – may receive God’s Holy Spirit. Thus, they are actually begotten as God’s children. They may have direct contact with God and call him FATHER! They are brought into a FATHER-AND-SON relationship with God!”

“Humans are, if converted through Jesus Christ, the heirs of the GOD FAMILY. They are to enter the divine FAMILY. They are, even now, the begotten children of God.”

*Herbert W. Armstrong, “The Family – God’s Plan for Mankind,”
PT, February 1985*

NEW TEACHING:

“...much of the Bible is written in poetry, analogy, simile, metaphor and symbol. Therefore, we should not always interpret every Bible statement literally.”

“The Bible also describes how God wants us to relate to him, often using familial language. Jesus taught us to pray to ‘Our Father in heaven’ (Matthew 6:9).”

“Yes, what Christians enjoy with God is a family relationship – but in analogy.”

God Is..., p.22

20. ANTICHRIST

One Who Denies Christ Could Sin or Anyone Against Christ?

OLD TEACHING:

“Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world.”

I John 4:1-3 (NKJV)

"The Satan-inspired doctrine that Jesus...did not really come 'in the flesh' as a normal human being – this is the doctrine of antichrist."

"...the idea of sinning entered Jesus' mind."

"But from birth, Jesus would always reject these wrong ideas, these temptations...He went to God the Father for POWER to always do right."

Herbert W. Armstrong, Millions Do Not Know What Christ Really Was!, pp. 3, 4

"...the growing child Jesus, filled with God's Spirit, resisted from infancy this magnetic 'pull' we call human nature."

"Jesus never had a carnal mind, hostile against God. His mind, from earliest childhood, was subject to the law of God. Thus He was constantly and continually overcoming Satan, in a manner no other human had experienced."

"After forty days and forty nights without a morsel of food or a drop of water, Jesus was physically weak but spiritually strong. Then ensued the most titanic battle ever fought – for the highest stakes of all time in the universe."

Herbert W. Armstrong, The Incredible Human Potential, p. 112

NEW TEACHING:

"The word antichrist simply means one who is 'in place of' or one who is 'against' Christ. A political or religious leader could be an 'antichrist,' but so could any number of quite ordinary people."

"Questions & Answers," GN, Aug. 1987

"...there was no possibility that Christ might sin, even while he was on the earth."

"...Jesus rejected Satan's suggestions immediately. There is no suggestion that Christ entertained even the thought that Satan's ideas might be attractive."

"Questions & Answers," PGR, Jan. 22, 1991

"I think this idea of Jesus taking a gamble or risk got started in our honest zeal to show how great Christ's sacrifice was."

"We tried to show that he was putting his very Godhead on the line for us, willing to take the great gamble that he might sin and therefore fail as Savior and remain dead forever."

"He was fully God and he was fully man, but the idea that his humanity was separate from his divinity is an old Gnostic idea."

"Personal from Joseph W. Tkach," WN, Oct. 28, 1991

21. IMITATING CHRIST'S EXAMPLE

Way to Eternal Life or False Hope?

OLD TEACHING:

"This is love, that we walk according to His commandments...For many deceivers have gone out into the world who do not confess Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist. Look to yourselves,

that we do not lose those things we worked for, but that we may receive a full reward."

II John 6-8 (NKJV)

"The underlying PURPOSE of Satan...in formulating the doctrine of an antichrist is...to deny the fact that a normal man...could, with the help of God's Holy Spirit...live in perfect obedience to the LAW OF GOD as Jesus Christ did."

"...His obedience was our EXAMPLE!"

Herbert W. Armstrong, Millions Do Not Know What Christ Really Was!, p. 3

NEW TEACHING:

"Did Christ come so that we can imitate his sinless life and thereby make it into God's Kingdom?"

"No. Christ was God clothed in human flesh; we are not. Christ came to destroy the works of Satan; we cannot do that. Christ was sinless; we are not."

"Trying to earn salvation by attempting to be sinless as Christ was sinless is make-believe, and the Christian who attempts such a course has a false hope – a hope that is nowhere echoed in the teachings of the New Testament."

Joseph Tkach Jr., "Questions and Answers," PGR, Jan. 22, 1991

Author's note: The term "earn salvation" was cleverly substituted for "strive to imitate," because the Church always taught that one could never earn salvation. The net effect was to prejudice people against continuing to do what we have always taught.

22. CRUCIFIXION INSTRUMENT

Stake or Cross?

OLD TEACHING:

"The New Testament does not specifically describe the instrument upon which Christ died, though Acts 5:30, 10:39 and 13:29 refer to it as a 'tree.'"

"There is absolutely no evidence that God's true Church ever used the cross symbol in any shape or form."

"Questions and Answers," GN, Feb. 1981

NEW TEACHING:

"*Stauros* refers to a pole with or without a crosspiece. Acts 5:30 and 10:39 tell us that Jesus was put to death on a tree (xulon in Greek). This word can mean a tree, club, stick or other wooden article. Though information is limited, historical and archaeological evidence shows that the Romans *generally* used a cross bar, not a vertical post alone, when crucifying individuals."

WCG PCD letter, WN, Feb. 9, 1993

"To summarize, though information is limited, it appears the Romans generally did use a crossbar along with a vertical post when crucifying individuals."

"It does describe the *probable* crucifixion device in the case of Jesus. At least, there is no justification for saying it was simply an upright stake."

Paul Kroll, "Should We Use The Word Cross?", WN, Feb. 9, 1993

Author's note: Christ may or may not have been crucified on a cross. The point is that it cannot be conclusively proven one way or the other—yet, the WCG wanted to make the cross its symbol and battle cry, wanted to wear it, display it, look to it for forgiveness and atonement, and ignore the fact that pagans have always used it (see change 23). God has nowhere commanded Christians to use crosses.

23. THE CROSS

Utterly Pagan Symbol or Symbol for WCG?

OLD TEACHING:

"The cross, in many shapes and forms, was used centuries before Christ by abject pagans!"

"There is absolutely no evidence that God's true Church ever used the cross symbol in any shape or form. Nowhere does the Bible command such a use, which it surely would if God intended this of Christians."

"Only after three centuries...do we find professing Christians using the symbol – and they adopted it from pagan worship."

"Questions and Answers," GN, Feb. 1981

NEW TEACHING:

"...why and how Christians began to use the symbol of the cross in their worship is somewhat obscure."

"But we cannot establish conclusively at this time whether or not the Christian cross came out of paganism."

*Paul Kroll, "Should We Use The Word Cross?",
WN, Feb. 9, 1993*

"What about those who have not yet accepted the cross of Christ as an atonement?...We need the forgiveness...that the cross makes possible."

"God is willing to apply the cross to us, and make us one with him..."

*Paul Kroll, "To Know Christ and Him Crucified,"
PT, Apr. 1993*

"For the Christian 'army,' however, there is only one battle cry, one fundamental reference point providing the courage, strength and morale to

endure to the end in the good fight of faith. That battle cry is: Remember the cross!"

Joseph W. Tkach, "The Christian Battle Cry," PT, May-June 1993

"Others have asked whether it would be wrong to have a cross on a bracelet, a necklace, in a picture, on a key chain, etc. Again, unless the cross becomes an object of worship, it is not a sin to wear or display one..."

"If a person wears a cross as a reminder of all these things, how can anyone gainsay that? We must not allow the misuse of the cross by some churches to dictate how we should view it in light of the Bible teaching."

"Personal from Joseph W. Tkach," WN, May 11, 1993

24. INTERRACIAL MARRIAGE Wrong or Right?

OLD TEACHING:

"You shall keep my statutes. You shall not let your livestock breed with another kind. You shall not sow your field with mixed seed. Nor shall a garment of mixed linen and wool come upon you."

Leviticus 19:19 (NKJV)

"For it is written in the Law of Moses, 'You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain.' Is it oxen God is concerned about? Or does He say it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt this was written...If we have sown spiritual things for you, is it a great thing if we reap your material things?"

I Corinthians 9:9-11 (NKJV)

"If you are a livestock breeder, planning to enter your prize animal in a livestock show...you will be sure to enter only thoroughbred or pedigreed stock! Mixing the breed alters the characteristics."

"God originally set the bounds of national borders, intending nations to be SEPARATED to prevent interracial marriage."

*Herbert W. Armstrong, Mystery of the Ages,
pp. 148-149*

NEW TEACHING:

"...in areas where society in general is tolerant of interracial marriage and both families accept the marriage, the Church would not refuse to perform the wedding ceremony on the basis of racial difference alone."

"On the other hand, the absence of a 'Thou shall not' does not mean that interracial marriage is divinely and universally approved."

"But the person who is looking for a 'Thus saith the Lord' in order to determine that interracial marriage is sin, will not find it in the Bible."

*"Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,"
WN, July 30, 1990*

25. MARRYING UNBELIEVERS

Means Those Outside Church or Can't be Narrowly Defined?

OLD TEACHING:

“A religious difference between husband and wife is a serious handicap. The Bible forbids a converted person from marrying an unconverted.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Should You Try to “Convert” Others?, p. 2

“One in God’s Church should never marry outside the Church. There should be like-mindedness spiritually and secularly.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, The Missing Dimension in Sex, p. 229

NEW TEACHING:

“When someone dates and marries outside the Church, it is important to remember that our policy is to deal with each case on an individual basis.”

“Some people wonder how 2 Corinthians 6:14 applies to such a situation. ‘Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers...’”

“The Church has traditionally interpreted a believer...in an extremely narrow sense to mean only a baptized member of the Worldwide Church of God.”

“Christians...are those who claim to believe in God and Christ. We may not agree with their interpretation of Scripture...but [that does not make them] ‘false Christians’...”

“...some...such as the Sacred Names assemblies, the Church of God International, the Global Church of God, the Philadelphia Church of God... [we] would not consider...to be candidates from which we would choose a mate...”

*Joseph Tkach Jr., “Church Administration,”
PGR, Apr. 20, 1993*

Author's note: Though the apostates believed members should only marry true Christians, it was amazing that Worldwide brethren were told that they can essentially marry *anyone* of *any* professing Christian denomination except one who had gone to a “splinter” group. Is this not a remarkable indictment in that they are stating it would be an equal yoking for a Worldwide member to marry nearly any *other* professing Christian? Ironically, one must, in fact, conclude that a “splinter” member *would* be unequally yoked in marriage to a Worldwide member. Again, though they were right for the wrong reason, what a remarkable self-indictment.

26. “UNEQUALLY YOKED TOGETHER”

Many Applications or Needs Redefining?

OLD TEACHING:

“Many have asked: ‘Would it make any difference if a Christian were to become engaged in a business partnership or similar close relationship with a nonbeliever?’”

“Notice II Corinthians 6:14-15 where we read: ‘Be (become) ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers:...for what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?’ This scripture has a direct application to any close relationship or partnership that one might enter.”

“Before concluding this letter it is important to ask the reader one question: Just what is a true Christian? Many think they are Christians, but are falling woefully short of living the type of life Christ lived.”

WCG PCD Letter L922

“SATAN, not God, built this house. Jesus did not come to REPAIR the improperly constructed building that is this world.”

“Instead, Jesus said: ‘Come out from among them [of this world], and be ye separate’ (II Cor. 6:17-18).”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Where Is the True Church?, p. 13

“Christians are called to separate from the world and *all its affiliations, whether social, political, economic or religious* (II Corinthians 6:17).”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “How Would Jesus Vote for President?”, GN, Oct.-Nov. 1984

NEW TEACHING:

“Some people wonder how 2 Corinthians 6:14 applies to such a situation. ‘Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?’ (King James Version).”

“In context, the verse is in a discussion of the problem of idolatry, not marriage. While we can extract a principle of not being tied to an idolatrous situation, it may be applied to marrying someone who is an atheist, agnostic, a witch or a pagan. But it would not be appropriate to apply the verse to everyone who does not understand scripture the way you do.”

“Christians, in the broad definition, are those who claim to believe in God and Christ.”

Joseph Tkach Jr., “Church Administration,” PGR, Apr. 20, 1993

Author's note: By the definition of a Christian given in the last line of the quote above, demons are not only Christians, but they are

better Christians than most because they believe and also *tremble* (James 2:19). Mr. Armstrong understood this—see change 212, end of his quote from *The Plain Truth About Healing*.

27. DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE

Few Exceptions or Many Acceptable Reasons?

OLD TEACHING:

“If any brother has a wife who does not believe, and she is willing to live with him, let him not divorce her. And a woman who has a husband who does not believe, and he is willing to live with her, let her not divorce him...For how do you know, O wife, whether you will save your husband? Or how do you know, O husband, whether you will save your wife?”

I Corinthians 7:12-13, 16 (NKJV)

“Servants, be submissive to your masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the harsh. For this is commendable, if because of conscience toward God one endures grief, suffering wrongfully.”

“Likewise you wives, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives, when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear.”

I Peter 2:18-19; 3:1-2 (NKJV)

“The believing member is not given grounds for breaking off the marriage. It is only IF the unbelieving one leaves – severs the marriage relationship – then and only then is the believer (Church member) no longer bound and free to obtain a divorce (I Cor. 7:15).”

*Herbert W. Armstrong, “Official Doctrine of Divorce and Remarriage,”
GN, Oct.-Nov. 1979*

“Paul was also inspired to write that a converted person must not leave or divorce a mate who is pleased to continue the marriage (I Cor. 7:10-13). To divorce a faithful mate and marry another is adultery (Matt. 19:9).”

“Although the unconverted world cannot receive Christ’s teaching, all who are His ought to obey Him implicitly, not only in refraining from divorce but also in using all their resources to build a truly loving relationship...”

WCG PCD Letter L054

NEW TEACHING:

“If divorce occurs’ because of ‘habitual conduct like that of an unbeliever’ then ‘remarriage is permitted.’ The ‘variety of ways’ that now con-

stitute grounds for divorce include ‘mental and physical abuse,’ ‘sexual abuse,’ ‘addictions,’ ‘emotional and spiritual abandonment of the relationship,’ ‘habitual immoral or criminal conduct,’ ‘involvement in spiritism,’ ‘impurity,’ ‘discord,’ ‘jealousy,’ ‘selfish ambition,’ ‘envy,’ ‘greed,’ and ‘slander.’”

Joseph W. Tkach, Official Divorce and Remarriage Policy, Apr. 20, 1993

28. MARRIAGE ANNULMENT

For Fraud or For Whim?

OLD TEACHING:

“But I say to you that whoever divorces his wife for any reason except sexual immorality [fornication] causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a woman who is divorced commits adultery.”

Matthew 5:32 (NKJV)

“First, just as we understood it in the Church before, Jesus gave fornication (prior to marriage) as the grounds for nullifying a marriage. This clearly was a form of fraud.”

“But the Church would not apply this annulment if the couple had continued living together for a period of time. There could be other types of fraud – such as marriage enforced at the point of a gun.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “Official Doctrine of Divorce and Remarriage,” GN, Oct.-Nov. 1979

NEW TEACHING:

“The Church will consider a marriage voidable...if either party informs the Church in the earliest months of the marriage that he or she regrets his or her decision to marry...or if a legal annulment is obtained.”

“In cases of annulment, it is as though the marriage never took place, and both parties are free to remarry.”

Joseph W. Tkach, Official Divorce and Remarriage Policy, Apr. 20, 1993

29. PLACE OF SAFETY

Real Hope or Selfish “Save Your Skin” Motivation?

OLD TEACHING:

“Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man.”

Luke 21:36 (NKJV)

“And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write...Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.”

Revelation 3:7, 10 (NKJV)

“[In] Luke 21:36, [Christ] was giving you and me a PROMISE of divine protection from these very things He had been describing – IF we do watch world events AS PROPHESIED, and remain obedient and continually in contact with God through prayer.”

“In [Rev. 3:10] is Christ’s PROMISE that because we have been faithful WITH HIS WORD [verse 8], He will also keep us from ‘the hour of temptation.’ But the marginal reading – the correct translation from the Greek original – is ‘trial’ or ‘Great Tribulation.’”

“Take heed and read the further promise of PROTECTION not only through the Great Tribulation, but also the PLAGUES of the Day of the Lord to follow, in the 91st psalm.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “There Is a Way of Escape,” PT, Dec. 1981

NEW TEACHING:

“Do any of our ministers or members believe Jesus promised that all the faithful at the end of time would be physically protected from harm in a place of safety?”

“The idea that only the weak in the faith will suffer persecution and that all the strong will be spared in a place of safety is simply not accurate.”

“Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,” WN, Aug. 27, 1990

“Prophecy programs [on *The World Tomorrow* telecast] will not lose sight of the gospel message by trading the true gospel for a ‘10-nation/save-your-skin’ gospel (Galatians 1:6-10).”

“To preach that if you repent and obey God, you will not be killed in a war, taken captive, go hungry or get a disease, is to preach ‘another gospel,’ not the gospel of Jesus Christ (II Timothy 3:12).”

“Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,” WN, Nov. 19, 1990

30. CHURCH ERAS

Important Detailed Prophecy or Generalized Instruction?

OLD TEACHING:

“...the final generation of the Church shall be LUKEWARM – not less emotional, but more ‘liberal,’ more secular and less spiritual – less strictly biblical – yet half of them shall be SAVED at Christ’s coming, though half shall be spewed out of Christ’s mouth...”

“Speaking of the present ‘Philadelphia’ era, it says...because we have kept God’s Word faithfully, not liberalizing nor watering down, God will

keep us from the ‘hour of temptation, which shall come upon all them that dwell on the earth’ to try and test them.”

“Personal from Herbert W. Armstrong,” *PT*, Aug. 1980

“But, the BAD NEWS, as it appears today, my dear brethren, is that we, undoubtedly of the Philadelphian era – my son’s ridicule notwithstanding – are in serious danger of BECOMING also the Laodicean era. I am personally much concerned about that. *If YOU are NOT concerned, then indeed we are in mortal DANGER.*”

“Personal from Herbert W. Armstrong,” *GN*, Aug. 1979

NEW TEACHING:

“Over the years, some have referred to the faithful in the Church as Philadelphians, and the unfaithful as Laodiceans.”

“It is simply not biblical to say that the best spiritual state is the state of being Philadelphian, and that we should strive to be Philadelphian above others.

“What the messages to the churches do tell us is that we should look carefully at our spiritual state, whatever it is, and repent whenever necessary, so that we will be ready when Jesus returns – no matter the century or the era.”

“The best spiritual state is that of being forgiven.”

“Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,”
WN, Jan. 9, 1989

31. CHURCH HISTORY

One Church or Many?

OLD TEACHING:

“We have a history of the true Church of God through every century from Christ until now.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Has Time Been Lost?, p. 20

“It is time you knew how to recognize the true Church which Jesus founded!

“Jesus Christ did not found many denominations! Christ said, ‘I will build my Church!’ He did build it! ONE Church...”

“But what do we find today? Hundreds of different and disagreeing sects, all founded by MEN...a modern religious babylon!”

“Nowhere is there any prophecy that the one true Church should become great and powerful...Jesus called it the ‘Little Flock’...despised, persecuted, scattered BY the world – separate from the world...”

“You have not read much of the history of THAT Church!”

Herman L. Hoeh, A True History of the True Church (1959), pp. 3, 4

“[The true Church] left few records. Occasionally they appear as a footnote of history, rejected as heretics, ridiculed, and hounded by their enemies.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Mystery of the Ages, p. 285

NEW TEACHING:

“...I would say that the current position of the Church is that we are not an exclusive body by any means...”

“We make no attempt to trace ourselves to the first century.”

*Michael Snyder (Assistant Public Relations Director to David Hulme),
interview on WMUZ radio, Detroit, Michigan, Dec. 13, 1991*

“Throughout history, Christians, individually and collectively, have had to face the challenges of growth.”

“Many events have forced Christians to look at themselves and see where they have fallen short of Jesus Christ’s example.”

“The bloodletting unleashed during the Crusades...the maniacal execution of those labeled witches in medieval Europe and Colonial North America...are two examples.”

Dan C. Taylor, “Growth With Conviction,” PT, July 1993

Author’s note: The WCG stopped printing all “true Church history” literature very early.

32. TRUE CHURCH

Narrowly or Broadly Defined?

OLD TEACHING:

“WHERE IS the original true Church that Jesus Christ founded – the one the living Jesus Christ STILL HEADS today?”

“...as in Romans 8:16, God’s Spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God – now begotten of God and to be born at the resurrection as spirit beings.”

“This tremendous TRUTH leads to understanding of WHY the Church, and WHICH IS the one true Church of God!”

“Many have appropriated God’s name, but are not proclaiming the KINGDOM OF GOD, as the GOVERNMENT of God, which we must OBEY – teaching obedience to God’s Law (Ten Commandments) – teaching REPENTANCE of rebellion and transgressing God’s Holy Law – teaching that we may be now BEGOTTEN into the KINGDOM (Family) of God, and may, by the resurrection, be BORN into the GOD FAMILY!”

“There is only ONE such Church [that teaches these things]!”

“It is doing THE WORK OF GOD. It is, as Jesus said it would be, a ‘little flock,’ persecuted, despised by the world.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Where Is the True Church?, pp. 1, 7, 8 26.

“The CHURCH is composed of those who are begotten CHILDREN OF GOD – of the FATHER of the divine Family. One becomes a begotten SON of God upon receiving within him the Holy Spirit of God.”

“...the true Church of God is a spiritual organism. It is NOT a human organization. This spiritual organism is the ‘Body of Christ’ existing for the PURPOSE of carrying on THE WORK OF GOD.”

“But it is a BIG, WORLDWIDE WORK. If every individual goes out alone, independently, trying to carry out the entire divine Commission in whatever way he sees fit, we shall have confusion, a house divided against itself.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “Just What Is the Church?”, WCG Article Reprint, 1970

“‘Joining’ a group that calls itself a church...does not make one in true fact a member of THE Church Jesus founded. Here is proof: ‘But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his’ (Romans 8:9).”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Where Is the True Church?, pp. 7, 8

“Can one who does not know of the true organized Body doing God’s Work and therefore is outside of it, be a member of the true Church which Christ built? The answer is yes – for it is possible for one to have truly repented, believed, and received God’s Spirit – and be following that Spirit as far as he sees and understands – who does not know of the organized Work Christ is using today. But surely God’s Spirit in him would lead one, in due time, into his part in the organized Body the living Christ is directing.”

“The answer is YES – I have known of a few. But in every case, either they came INTO the organized spiritual organism Christ is using in the real Work of God – or, when their eyes were opened to further light and truth, they rejected it and LOST the Spirit of God. And this was amply demonstrated by the fruits.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Where Is the True Church?, p. 10

NEW TEACHING:

“There are Christians in the Catholic Church, there are Christians in the Methodist Church, there are Christians in the Baptist Church, there are Christians all around this world!”

“‘Oh, how can there be, because the Sabbath is a sign between God and us, and that’s what sets us apart as Christians?’ ...The Jews have the Sabbath and the Holy Days as their sign. Are they Christians?”

“Someone will say, ‘Well, what about those people who are observing the Sabbath on Sunday?’ If God hasn’t revealed to them the importance of seeing the difference between Saturday and Sunday is that going to jeopardize their salvation if they have faith in Christ?”

Joseph W. Tkach, sermon given in Atlanta, Georgia, Dec. 17, 1994

"People who decide to leave the Church...should not be treated as enemies."

"If their motivation is selfish, that is, they are seeking status and recognition, regardless of where they decide to attend they will still have to deal with that selfishness before *they can have a positive relationship with God – before their increased level of service will be meaningful!*"

"Personal from Joseph W. Tkach," WN, Nov. 17, 1992

Question: "That sounds very, very noble and everything, but [Herbert Armstrong] had a sense of divine call...I had the understanding that he understood the WCG...as a special organization in an exclusive way..."

Snyder: "Well, he certainly wrote along those lines. But I would say that the current position of the Church is that we are not an exclusive body by any means..."

Interview with Michael Snyder, WMUZ radio, Detroit, Michigan, Dec. 13, 1991

"Another thing that I'm being accused of, that I no longer believe this is the true Church of God. I believe it with all my heart. You are my witnesses. And I'll add another factor in, too. We cannot limit where God chooses to work."

Joseph W. Tkach, "A Point of Light," sermon given at Columbus, Ohio, June 12, 1993, sent to be played in all churches Aug. 1993

Author's note: As stated in previous editions of this book, there is a difference between believing that the Worldwide Church of God is "the" true Church and believing that it is "the ONLY" true Church. The current administration eventually became willing to admit this difference.

"There is no question that we are God's true Church. The point I have made is that we are not all there is to God's true Church. *There is a monumental difference in those two statements.*"

"There is only one Church of God, not many. That one Church is made up of every person who has the Holy Spirit, *regardless of where they are, when they lived, or what organization they belong to.*"

Joseph W. Tkach, Letter to WCG field minister, Spring 1994

"The Bible...does not support any believer's attempts to become exclusive (Romans 12:18; Hebrews 12:14)."

Joseph Tkach Jr., "Church Administration," PGR, Jan. 11, 1994

"I believe that Mr. Hulme stated in the letter you enclosed, that any person who has the Holy Spirit is a child of God and therefore part of the Body of Christ, including all converted persons *in all denominations*, and that the membership of the Worldwide Church of God does not comprise the

entirety of the Body of Christ. On the other side of the coin, I believe there are people in the Worldwide Church of God, as well as in all other denominations, who are not, 'born from above' as evidenced by their obvious lack of commitment to Jesus Christ."

D. Register, Field Pastor (currently Director of Education of the largest splinter, including its college) Letter to P. Arnn of The Watchman's Expositor, Nov. 12, 1993

"We believe that the Church (the spiritual Body of Christ) includes all persons who are indwelt by the Holy Spirit, regardless of what denomination they may *fellowship with* currently."

"Faith in Christ and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit makes a person a Christian, *not the denomination he fellowships with*. We have always acknowledged that there are truly converted Christians who do not recognize the Sabbath."

David G. Hunsberger, WCG PCD, Mar. 1, 1994

"*God has commissioned us to lead people to Jesus Christ, not to ourselves.*"

Joseph W. Tkach, PGR, Jan. 11, 1994

"The point is, *God is bringing his people to Jesus Christ, not to any particular human organization*. The criterion for salvation is faith in Jesus Christ, not membership in a particular denomination."

"What makes *any* church a valid church? Faith in Jesus Christ. God does not give us special favor for being different or for being unique. He saved us, *just like everybody else*, by his grace through faith in Jesus Christ."

Joseph W. Tkach, Letter to Member, Feb. 9, 1994

"It is obvious, from the fruits, that some Sunday-keeping Christians have the Holy Spirit."

Joseph W. Tkach, Letter to WCG field minister, Apr. 12, 1994

"As you know, in my speaking and writing I have often commented that we cannot limit where and with whom God works when it comes to other Christian churches."

"...the true Church of God is *not limited* to any corporate entity nor any human organization."

"The true Church of God consists of converted people, all people who have the Holy Spirit. That is a point Mr. Armstrong frequently stressed. As he explained, it is not...the incorporated organization that constitutes the Church of God. It is the people in whom God dwells by his Spirit that makes up the Church, the Body of Christ."

"Therefore, we should understand that *we do not form all there is of the true Church of God*."

“God has called us to lead people to him, not to ourselves.”

“We preach the gospel so people will come to Christ, not so they will come to us.”

“God works where he pleases, and all converted people everywhere make up the true Church of God.”

“It is not correct to say that any particular church organization, including ours, is, of and by itself, the true Church.”

Joseph W. Tkach, Letter to Ministry, PGR, Apr. 26, 1994

Author's note: The point Mr. Armstrong stressed, referred to above, was that not all *Worldwide Church of God* members were converted. Only those who had truly received God's Spirit were. This point was twisted to imply Mr. Armstrong was referring to members in all churches, as though he had always taught that God's Spirit was dwelling in some members of every church. The splinter leaders bought their thinking wholesale.

“John wrote: ‘Everyone who believe that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well’ (I John 5:1). Accordingly, the Worldwide Church of God does not consider its membership to be all there is to the Body of Christ. Our position is that any person who has the Holy Spirit is a child of God, regardless of the church he or she belongs to, and we recognize that God works where he pleases. This is different from the position once held by the Church.”

David Hulme, letter to James Walker of the Watchman Fellowship, June 24 1993

“...we no longer condemn Christians who have chosen Sunday as their day of gathering together for their services to worship and praise God. Christianity is defined by the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit in the individual believer, not necessarily by outward customs or practices in group worship.”

David G. Hunsberger, WCG PCD, Nov. 18, 1994

“How sad that some among us were actually upset and angry to learn that there are true Christians in other churches besides ours. That in itself is an indicator of how far from Christ some of us have become – to the point that some of us actually find it unpleasant to know that God has called others besides us to salvation!”

“Isn't that selfish, arrogant attitude one that pervades Christian churches? Many churches believe that they and they alone are the truly faithful and obedient fellowship of believers. And just like so many of the others, we have been guilty of the same sin.”

“There are Christian churches, congregations and Bible societies that are also, just as we are, doing God's work in this dark world.”

“But as I have explained often, salvation is not in Sabbath and Holy Day keeping; salvation comes only by the generous grace of God and only through faith in Jesus Christ.”

“We should be able to exemplify the kingdom of God by extending the right hand of fellowship to believers who are different from ourselves.”

“But, true to human nature, some of us have allowed these blessings [the Sabbath and Holy Days] to become a snare by becoming arrogant and self-righteous about them...And, I’m sorry to say, it is one of the very things some among us have chosen not to repent of.”

“...we must not condemn and reject Christians God has called into other fellowships and given other tasks. I have explained before that the Sabbath was given as a sign of the special covenant relationship between God and his people, Israel. But the sign of God’s people in the New Testament is the Holy Spirit in them, expressing itself in love...”

“God will work with them as he sees fit.”

Joseph W. Tkach, Letter to the Ministry, PGR, Oct. 18, 1994

“Do [we] claim to be the one true Church?”

“The one ‘true’ Church is the Body of Christ, made up of all believers who are called by God and in whom the Holy Spirit abides. It is not limited to corporate entities or any single church organization. God works where he wills, and it is not the place of any church to limit God’s work to itself (Mark 9:38-40).”

We’re Often Asked (1994), p. 5

“More than a third of the world is Christian, making Christianity the religion with the largest number of adherents in the world.”

“One in Three Are Christian,” PT, Oct. 1994

“Africa not only has some of the world’s poorest countries, it also has some of the most Christian ones. An estimated 327 million Christians live in Africa...”

John Halford, “The Challenge of Africa,” PT, Nov.-Dec. 1994

“How can we say there are many Christians outside the Worldwide Church of God?”

“It might help to imagine yourself holding a 10-meter pole. You take the pole and cut off 1 meter. Now you have two poles. One is 9 meters long, the other 1 meter. Stand them on end beside each other in comparison to each other, which of the poles is little? The 1-meter pole, of course! That 1-meter pole represents 10 percent of the original pole. So 10 percent can be little.”

“Therefore, if 10 percent of the world’s population were converted, the Church would still be little and the world would still be deceived. With the world’s population soon to exceed 6 billion, 10 percent of that figure is 600 million. Yes, 600 million can still be little in a world of 6 billion.”

"This figure reminds me of John's vision of an innumerable multitude of converted (Revelation 7:9). That multitude is still a little flock living in a deceived world."

"Is 10 percent too big a figure? Then let's choose 1 percent. One percent of 6 billion is 60 million, still a hefty sum."

"...it seems evident from the Scriptures and from logic that Christ's little flock is many times bigger than we thought."

*Ralph Orr, "How Little Is Jesus' Flock?",
Reviews You Can Use, May-June 1995*

"Concluding the conference, Mr. Tkach Jr. spoke about...why dissident groups are not biblically viable alternatives to the Body of Christ."

Paul Monteith, "Mr. Tkach Outlines Vision," WN, June 14, 1994

Author's note: Although the WCG administration came to believe that there are hundreds of millions of Christians and hundreds of churches forming the "Body of Christ," it continues to make an exception when referring to groups like The Restored Church of God (or the "splinter" groups—see change 103). The only Church today that still holds to all of the biblical truths taught by Mr. Armstrong, changing *nothing*, is Restored.

33. SALVATION **Saved Later or Saved Now?**

OLD TEACHING:

"The popular denominations have taught, 'Just BELIEVE – that's all there is to it; believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you are that instant saved!'"

"The death of Christ did pay the penalty of sin in our stead – it wipes the slate clean of past sins – it saves us merely from the DEATH PENALTY – it removes that which separated us from God and reconciles us to God."

Herbert W. Armstrong, All About Water Baptism, p. 6

"'Justified' does not refer to the future – it has to do only with your guilty past!"

"So, continue: 'Much more then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved by Him.'"

"Look at it! It says 'we SHALL BE saved.' Not that we already are saved. It says 'being now justified' but it does not say 'being now saved.' It says 'we shall be' – yes, in the future – saved...Don't believe preachers who say you are already, now, saved!"

Herbert W. Armstrong, What Do You Mean—Salvation?, pp. 17-18

NEW TEACHING:

“Those whom God has justified, while still subject to physical death, are as good as alive forever.”

“Because we are saved by God’s grace, from his point of view, salvation is an accomplished fact.”

“When God saves us, we are his children forever.”

What Is Salvation? (1992), pp. 8, 12, 14

“We have entered God’s Kingdom, and it absolutely changes our perspective.”

Ted Johnston, “From Birth to Inheritance: Entering the Kingdom of God,” WN, Dec. 29, 1992

“Let us understand that entrance into the Kingdom of God is salvation. Being saved and entering the kingdom of God are the same thing!”

“Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,” WN, Aug. 11, 1992

“We call this renewal or rebirth *being saved*.”

Paul Kroll, “Grace Is Free...,” PT, Jan. 1994

“New birth. Eternal life. Salvation. The Kingdom of God. These terms all refer to the same transforming event of conversion.”

Paul Kroll, “Your Place in the Kingdom of God,” PT, Oct. 1993

34. THE WORLD

Cut Off From God or Not?

OLD TEACHING:

“Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.”

“In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God...”

“Do not marvel, my brethren, if the world hates you.”

“And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.”

“You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. They are of the world. Therefore they speak as of the world, and the world hears them. We are of God. He who knows God hears us; he who is not of God does not hear us.”

“By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome.”

“We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one. And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding, that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.”

I John 3:1, 10, 13, 22; 4:4-6; 5:2-3, 19-20 (NKJV)

“Remember that in New Testament language the pronoun ‘we’ or ‘us’ refers to converted Christians. (The unconverted are referred to as ‘they’ or ‘them.’)”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Just What Do You Mean – Born Again?, p. 38

“God has called ONLY A COMPARATIVE FEW...”

“If...you have received and are being led by His Holy Spirit, you are NO LONGER LIKE others around you, possibly your next-door neighbors.”

“THEY are confined to knowing and thinking ONLY about physical things.

“If YOU have received the HOLY SPIRIT OF GOD, that opens up your mind to comprehend SPIRITUAL things, to have SPIRITUAL knowledge...”

“But remember that before you received God’s Holy Spirit, you were just like your next-door neighbors, and you certainly should not feel any BETTER than they today – but you should be THANKFUL to the GOD OF GLORY that He has called you – made you PART of this CHOSEN GENERATION...”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “Now Christ Moves Swiftly to Make Church Ready!”, GN, June-July 1979

“We in GOD’S Church are not just one of all these churches. They are of this world...they are deceived.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “Why Did God Put You in His Church?”, GN, May 1974

“So REALIZE THIS! Pentecost is to remind us every year that we (the Church) are only the FIRST small harvest of God’s calling people for salvation OUT OF A WORLD THAT IS WHOLLY, except for us, CUT OFF FROM GOD, AND THAT HAS BEEN SINCE ADAM! The WORLD as a whole is still CUT OFF!”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “Why Many Don’t Understand Pentecost,” GN, May 1981

NEW TEACHING:

“How should a true Christian view people of ‘the world’?”

“Have we ever thought of our relationships with others with a kind of ‘we and they’ attitude?

“For example: ‘We are righteous; they are unrighteous.’”

“‘We have spiritual knowledge; they are spiritually blind.’ ‘We have understanding; they have none.’ ‘God hears our prayers; they are cut off from God.’”

“We are children of God; they are children of the devil.’ ‘We have spiritual understanding; they cannot understand spiritual matters.’”

“Whom did Jesus call children of the devil? Those who thought they were the only ones who could have a relationship with God. Their attitude of pompous spiritual superiority made them partakers of the attitude of the devil.”

“If we are truly Christians, we will not take on a superior-inferior attitude toward other people.”

“Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,” WN, Oct. 10, 1989

35. SOCIAL ACTIVISM

Christ’s Job at His Return or Duty for Christians Now?

OLD TEACHING:

“Did Christ become divided, taking part in the politics of this world, taking part in this world’s affairs, trying to clean up this world, and make it a better world...? Is that the Church that Jesus founded? Go back and look at the Church as it started out. You’ll find it in the book of Acts. Did they try to reform Caesar’s government and try to show him what was wrong? And to make it a better world? Or did they just try to pull people out of the world and make them better individuals without trying to make the world itself better?”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “True Church,” WT Radio Broadcast #9798

“A 22-page typed proposal has been submitted to me...by Mr. Stanley R. Rader.”

“Its purpose: to...provide a more workable solution to [the world’s] problems...”

“...we are forbidden to be OF the secular world. That precludes us from entering on such a project as outlined.”

“...we cannot...start a project ourselves in which WE...try to correct the world’s evils...That is going to require TWO THINGS: 1) Get rid of Satan the Devil, and 2) change human nature.”

“God has called me to...proclaim the coming soon...of Jesus Christ... Then with Satan gone, HE will do what we are NOT CALLED TO DO – change human nature.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “Proposal of an Armstrong Peace Foundation,” WN, 1980

NEW TEACHING:

“The old excuse, ‘People don’t need do-gooders, they need God’s government on earth,’ is nothing more than a cop-out to justify inaction.”

“Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,” WN, Jan. 12, 1993

“If we don’t participate in our community we are self-centered and self-righteous. Good grief. We were told to come out of the world and let our

light shine and we didn't know how to do it. A bitter, Satanic mind doesn't want to accept these new truths."

*Joseph W. Tkach, sermon taped on Nov. 21, 1992,
sent to be played in all churches*

36. PERSONAL EVANGELIZING

Not Member's Role or Is Member's Role?

OLD TEACHING:

"The GREAT COMMISSION was given to the APOSTLES...NOT the lay members of the Church."

"Their part was to back up the apostles – stand behind them with their prayers, encouragement, tithes and offerings."

"Why the Church?", WCG Reprint Article, 1978

"The individual lay member HAS HIS VITAL ROLE in proclaiming the GOOD NEWS (gospel) to the world. How? Not by going out and himself proclaiming Christ's message to the neighborhood or to the world. That is primarily done by the apostles, to some extent by evangelists, and to even a lesser extent in local areas by local pastors."

Herbert W. Armstrong, Mystery of the Ages, p. 266

"The Worldwide Church of God is completely non-proselytizing and always has been. We have no ministry program, have no program...for training missionaries."

"It is emphatically contrary to our belief and practice for any minister or representative of this Church to directly or personally solicit any potential member or urge anyone to become a member."

*Herbert W. Armstrong, "Update: AICF and WCG,"
GN, Oct. 1975*

"Now WHO added members to the Church? Not apostolic or evangelical salesmanship – but 'the LORD added to the Church daily such as should be saved [were to be saved]' (Acts 2:47)."

*Herbert W. Armstrong, "7 Proofs of God's True Church,"
PT, Apr. 1979*

"Jesus said none can come to Him (spiritually – religiously) except the Spirit of God draws him. We are humans. We cannot draw them. That is not our job – it is God's."

"Our No. 1 commission is to proclaim Jesus Christ's GOOD NEWS as a witness – not to try to force conversion of any. Only God can convert."

*"Personal from Herbert W. Armstrong,"
GN, Oct.-Nov. 1984*

NEW TEACHING:

“We have always narrowly defined proselytizing as recruiting by inducement. Since we believe God must call, our approach has been not to solicit people for membership or money.”

“The [World Tomorrow] announcer will...explain that interested viewers can request [Church] addresses along with the literature being advertised.”

“I’ve already spoken with each pastor in the market areas affected by the test. These men will prepare members in their congregations for visits from viewers.”

Joseph W. Tkach, “Members Are Vital Part in Reaching Out to People,”
WN, June 16, 1992

“...our message is not simply to warn people about God’s judgment and then ‘leave it in God’s hands.’ Our message is to be designed to lead people to Jesus Christ – to make disciples of them...”

“Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,” WN, June 30, 1992

“Is spreading the gospel just for the headquarters of the Church to do? Or is it something every one of us as individual Christians needs to be involved in too?”

“Shouldn’t we be involved in the same kinds of works of service that our Lord and Master Jesus Christ was? Jesus proclaimed the gospel and demonstrated its meaning as he gave mercy to those in need.”

Joseph W. Tkach, Brothers and Sisters Letter, Aug. 27, 1992

“Likewise, when God’s people are involved as a group in a project that reflects the light of Jesus Christ, there are bound to be people who will begin to inquire about the reasons behind such a labor of love.”

“And that [reason] does not lie in ‘just wanting to do our part’ or in ‘trying to get a good reputation in the community.’”

“Our hope lies in our personal and collective faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God, who died for our sins, and that is the kind of answer we give to those who ask.”

“Personal by Joseph W. Tkach,” WN, Dec. 29, 1992

“How easy it is to pass up a prime opportunity to share our faith with another person, simply because we are timid, afraid of what the person might think, or wondering if it is really the right thing to do.”

“God has called us out of the darkness of this world and into his kingdom, and has given us a job to do.”

Joseph W. Tkach, Brothers and Sisters Letter, Dec. 23, 1992

“...it is time that our local congregations begin taking an active role in the spreading of the gospel in their communities, *supported* by the collective work through headquarters.”

“We have too long seen evangelistic work as something that should primarily be done at headquarters by headquarters.”

“Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,” WN, Feb. 23 1993

“God has provided the ministry...to help equip and prepare his people so that they will be wise and faithful witnesses of Jesus Christ...”

“Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,” WN, Mar. 9, 1993

“Now, God is opening up new avenues for us to be witnesses of his kingdom – reaching out in the love of Christ as his ambassadors in our own communities...”

“We have a lifetime of work to do. So few people know what it means to believe on Christ, and to devote one’s life to him.”

Joseph W. Tkach, Brothers and Sisters Letter, Mar. 25, 1993

Author’s note: Several dozen of the changes in this book have their roots in Methodist theology. In light of the change toward personal evangelism, remember the old saying: “Methodists are always looking for a mission.”

“Personal evangelism can be put into two categories: 1) confrontational; 2) relational. Relational evangelism...Maybe we have never known that this is the proper term for the kind of evangelizing that the Bible describes.”

Joseph Tkach Jr., “Church Administration,” PGR, Aug. 24, 1993

Author’s note: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Jesus Christ, John the Baptist, Peter (in Acts 8), Stephen, Paul and others (including Herbert W. Armstrong) all practiced “confrontational evangelism.” All were threatened, and some died, because of this approach.

“Discipling (personal evangelism or sharing your faith) centers on the good news about Jesus Christ. Strictly speaking, making disciples does not mean advancing the claims of a specific church or ideology.”

Jeff Zhorne, “Lighting the Way,” PT, Nov.-Dec. 1993

“In putting on Christ, a Christian has the responsibility of proclaiming the gospel to others. In the early church, even in times of persecution, individual lay members did not shirk that responsibility (Acts 8:4). One church has a unique method of reminding those newly baptized of their God-given duty.”

“A part of the act of baptism in the Church of India is for the candidate to place his own hand on his head and say, ‘Woe is me if I preach not the gospel.’ This is part of the baptismal service of new members, not the ordination of ministers!”

E. Paul Hovey, “Baptism into Jesus Christ,” Reviews You Can Use, Mar.-Apr. 1994

Author's note: When did God's Church ever go to the Church of India for doctrinal example?

37. EVANGELISM

Role of Evangelist or Gift for Lay Members?

OLD TEACHING:

“The Church members, as a whole, are not called to ‘GO FORTH’ with the gospel message, but to back up, help, support the apostle in carrying the message into all the world.”

“The twelfth chapter of I Corinthians reveals that there are various offices of administration within the Church – and that God gives various spiritual gifts for those various functions.”

*Herbert W. Armstrong, “7 Proofs of God’s True Church,”
PT, Sep. 1979*

“And his gifts were, that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers” (Ephesians 4:11, RSV)."

“*Why the Church?*”, WCG Reprint Article, 1978

NEW TEACHING:

“A...way our local congregations can be involved in evangelism is by all members...feeling free to invite [people] to attend a Church function...”

“Not every member has the personality or the motivation to evangelize this way.”

“It just means that God has not given them the talent for knowing how to wisely invite someone to a Church function.”

“God gives each of us gifts as it pleases him...”

*“Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,”
WN, Mar. 9, 1993*

38. CHURCH FUNCTIONS

Restricted to Members or “Open Door” Policy?

OLD TEACHING:

Author's note: The long-standing WCG teaching was that for things to be done decently and in order, ministerial permission was needed to bring visitors to services or other Church functions.

NEW TEACHING:

“Since it is up to God to do the calling, we have tended to shy away from announcing that we have local congregations and from inviting interested listeners and readers to attend.”

“You should feel free to invite a truly interested friend or relative to attend with you as your guest.”

“Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,” WN, June 20, 1992

“Members should also be encouraged to introduce their guests to the pastor, who should make them feel welcome and appreciated.”

“Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,” WN, Mar. 9, 1993

39. EKKLESIA**Ones “Called Out” or Ones “Called Together”?****OLD TEACHING:**

“The English word *church* is translated from the original Greek word *ekklesia*. It means ‘called out ones’ – from *ek* (out), and *klesia* (called).”

“WHY call its members out from those of this world? That is answered by another question. What’s wrong with this world? It was founded on a faulty foundation. It is shot through and through with evils, causing human suffering, anguish, frustration and death.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Where Is the True Church?, pp. 9-10

NEW TEACHING:

“Many have broken down the word *ekklesia* to its two constituent parts and have defined the intended meaning by the etymology of the word. Approached from this perspective, the word means ‘call’ and ‘out of.’”

“On the basis of etymology, the word itself would be better translated ‘called together.’”

Greg R. Albrecht, “Why You Need the Church,” PT, May-June 1993

Author’s note: This article gave no explanation for this new definition of the word *ekklesia*. *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance* says *ekklesia* means a “calling out.”

40. WORLD’S SALVATION**Future or Now?****OLD TEACHING:**

“BY FAR THE MOST universal error and misunderstanding in fundamental Christianity of this world is the belief that NOW is the ONLY day of

salvation – that God is desperately TRYING to get everybody saved (spiritually) and Satan is cunningly trying to keep everybody ‘lost.’”

“*Personal from Herbert W. Armstrong,” GN, Dec. 1979*

“The principal purpose for which Christ is returning to earth is to spiritually develop in humanity Godly character, and to save the world. Most religious people, ministers, and evangelists (fundamentalists), have supposed that this time, now, is the only day of salvation. The verse of Scripture they rely on is a mistranslation (II Cor. 6:2). It should read ‘a day of salvation,’ not ‘the’ (quoted from Isaiah 49:8, where it is a not the). If Christ had been trying to ‘save’ the world, He would have saved the world. It hasn’t been ‘saved.’”

Herbert W. Armstrong, The Wonderful World Tomorrow, p. 67

“Some have construed the GREAT COMMISSION as being to the Church as a whole – to evangelize and ‘save’ the world – NOW. A large system of missionaries from traditional Christianity has resulted.”

“*Why the Church?”, WCG Article Reprint, 1978*

NEW TEACHING:

“Now is the time for the world’s salvation.”

David Hulme, WT Telecast, Mar. 29, 1992

“The commission Jesus gave his Church – to make disciples...involves nurturing and teaching people.”

“That is all part of active participation in his work, his work of reconciling the world to himself...”

“*Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,” WN, Feb. 9, 1993*

“Now, God is opening up new avenues for us to be witnesses of his kingdom – reaching out in the love of Christ as his ambassadors in our own communities...”

“We have a lifetime of work to do. So few people know what it means to believe on Christ...”

Joseph W. Tkach, Brothers and Sisters Letter, Mar. 25, 1993

41. PROSPECTIVE MEMBERS

Invited by Ministers or Invited by Members?

OLD TEACHING:

Author’s note: The WCG always taught that ministers should visit prospective members and determine if and when they should be invited to attend services.

NEW TEACHING:

“...we are currently exploring the feasibility of a visiting program in which member couples would be trained to call on *Plain Truth* subscribers...”

“Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,” WN, May 19, 1992

“Once a co-worker or subscriber visits with a member couple, that couple can invite the individual to attend services. In those cases, the member couple will host the guest, introducing them to the minister as well as to other members.”

Joseph Tkach Jr., “*Members Are Vital Part in Reaching Out to People*,”
WN, June 16, 1992

42. WORLDLY ORGANIZATIONS

Shouldn’t be Joined or Should be Joined?

OLD TEACHING:

“Christians are called to be separate from the world and all its affiliations, whether social, political, economic or religious (II Cor. 6:17). They are not to live by the philosophies, customs and ways of this world, but by EVERY WORD OF GOD (Luke 4:4).”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “*How Would Jesus Vote for President?*”,
GN, Oct.-Nov. 1984

“We are called to take Christ’s message TO the unconverted secular world. Yet we are forbidden to be OF the secular world.”

“...we cannot...correct the world’s evils, solve its problems and bring in world peace...ONLY CHRIST CAN DO THAT.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “*Proposal of an Armstrong Peace Foundation*,” WN, 1980

NEW TEACHING:

“When I first broached the subject of spiritual immaturity in my satellite Feast sermon, I used the word *dumb* to describe the past mindset of some who had criticized me for joining the Chamber of Commerce years ago.”

“We cannot be good neighbors to the community if we shun the community like the Pharisees of the New Testament.”

“Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,” WN, Nov. 17, 1992

“The kind of social action we should be involved in would include such things as promotion of mutual understanding between cultures, promotion of education and skills-training for underprivileged people, and involvement in curriculum development and safety in schools.”

“For some social concerns, our members can get involved personally or in groups in volunteer programs that help bring about positive moral and environmental changes in their local communities.”

“Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,” WN, Dec. 15, 1992

43. GRACE AND WORKS

Both or Grace Alone?

OLD TEACHING:

“A few persecutors have accused us of teaching ‘a salvation by works’...”

“[Let’s] get this point straight and plain right here – eternal life is not something you can earn, it is God’s gift through Christ!”

“True righteousness is keeping ‘all thy commandments’ (Psalm 119:172). It is performing God’s Spiritual law with the spiritual love which only GOD can supply.”

“Can you brag, or boast, then, about your righteousness? No – it is not your righteousness – it is God’s! If Christ, by His grace, erased your guilty past, gave you access to God, and now pours forth into and through you the spiritual love that keeps the Law, this is not your righteousness, but God’s.”

“Some religion teachers tell you Christ lived a righteous life FOR you over 1940 years ago, and since you ‘can’t keep the Law,’ as they claim, God ‘imputes’ Christ’s righteousness of 19 centuries ago to you – by sort of ‘kidning Himself’ that you are righteous...”

“It is ‘To him that overcometh’ that Christ will grant to sit with Him on HIS throne, when He returns to earth (Rev. 3:21). If you overcome – overcome your own carnal nature, the world and the devil – and keep Christ’s works (not your own works, but Christ’s – by His spirit in you) then you shall reign and rule all nations with Him, in the happy world tomorrow!”

Herbert W. Armstrong, What Do You Mean...Salvation?, pp. 7-8, 23, 24, 26

“A man may be naturally GOOD – but even the self-righteousness of a Job, God says, is like a filthy rag to Him! The only righteousness that is really good is the righteousness of GOD, imparted to us BY FAITH!”

“And the only goodness that is good is God’s own goodness, imparted, through God’s Holy Spirit, within us! All true righteousness comes from GOD.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Why Must Men Suffer? p. 4

“For the law was given through Moses, but grace *AND TRUTH* came through Jesus Christ.”

John 1:17 (NKJV)

NEW TEACHING:

“Some people, sad to say, are more loyal to *traditional teachings and explanations* than they are to the Word of God.”

“In their deep longing for personal prestige and power, they are willing to prey on those God has been calling to freedom in his Son, *wanting to take them back into the bondage of an impossible salvation by works.*”

“They try to convince those who follow them that their obedience will bring them to God’s salvation...boasting of their supposed spiritual superiority.”

“These are people who...cannot see their own ‘righteousness’ is as filthy rags before God. They believe they can somehow merit God’s favor by their ‘goodness,’ while they discredit us for proclaiming that salvation is by God’s grace...”

“Through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, *God has brought us back to his Word...*”

“Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,”
WN, Jan. 26, 1993

Author’s note: Accompanying the “Personal” quoted above was a photo of *Mr. Armstrong’s grave decorated with flowers*. The caption read: “RESPECTS—The Church marked the seventh year since the death of Herbert W. Armstrong, Jan. 16. *Placed at the grave were flowers* and two cards that read: ‘With all of our respect, Joseph W. Tkach and all of the Worldwide Church of God.’”

Christ said, “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! Because you build the tombs of the prophets and *adorn the monuments of the righteous*, and say, If we had lived in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets, therefore you are witnesses against yourselves that you are the sons of those who murdered the prophets. Fill up, then, the measure of your fathers’ guilt. Serpents, brood of vipers! How can you escape the damnation of hell? Therefore, indeed, I send you prophets, *wise men*, and scribes: some of them you will kill and crucify, and some of them you will scourge in your synagogues and persecute from city to city, that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth...” (Matt. 23:29-35, NKJV).

“Instead of using the expression ‘striving to overcome sin,’ all writers for Worldwide Church of God literature have been instructed to substitute it with the phrase ‘through repentance, *God imputes his own righteousness to those who respond to his calling.*’”

Michael J. Feazell, Speaking the Same Thing: Editorial Content and Philosophy Handbook, Aug. 25-27, 1992

Author’s note: In the words of Mr. Armstrong: “No wonder God found it necessary, through Jude, to warn us to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints by Jesus Christ – for, as you’ll read in Jude 3-4, there are certain men crept in unawares – deceiving people – turning grace into license! They are the ones

who accuse us of teaching ‘salvation by works’” (What Do You Mean...Salvation?, p. 21).

“Yes, the church teaches that we are saved by grace alone and that good works are the fruit of salvation not the cause of salvation.”

David G. Hunsberger, WCG PCD, Mar. 1, 1994

“For Protestants, grace is based on faith alone; for Catholics, grace is based on faith and works.”

K.J. Stavrinides, Reviews You Can Use, Jan.-Feb. 1991

Author’s note: This last quote proved that the WCG position and the Protestant position of grace were identical by their own admission. (To see the WCG’s outright admission that they are a Protestant church, see change 213.) Mr. Armstrong’s position on grace was the same as James’—“faith without works is dead.” Because faith without works is dead, that does not mean we took the Catholic position of doing penance.

44. “NEW TESTAMENT CHRISTIANITY” **Old Testament Needed or New Testament Enough?**

OLD TEACHING:

“Did you ever observe people going to Sunday school or church on a Sunday morning?”

“And did you ever notice what a large portion of them – if they carry any Scriptures with them at all – have merely a New Testament?”

“Many have gained the idea that Christians should never read the Old Testament at all. Many seem to believe THAT part of the Bible was DONE AWAY – that it was only for the Jewish people of long ago – that its message is DEAD today!”

“A very large portion of the New Testament is simply the Old Testament quoted. The New is BASED on the Old.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “Should We Use the Old Testament?”, PT, Sep.-Oct. 1982

NEW TEACHING:

“The Worldwide Church of God has committed itself to faithfully understanding and practicing the Christianity of the New Testament.”

Tithing and the Give Way (1993), p. 23

“The challenge to adhere to New Testament teaching and responsibility to make disciples apply to all whom God calls.”

Greg R. Albrecht, “Why You Need the Church,” PT, May-June 1993

Author's note: Eventually, Old Testament verses were rarely quoted in WCG literature.

45. DEFINITION OF A CHRISTIAN

Based on True Doctrine or Love?

OLD TEACHING:

“I repeat: ‘A Christian (a truly converted person) is one who has received, and in whose mind dwells the Holy Spirit of God.’”

“The Holy Spirit will open one’s mind to UNDERSTAND God’s instruction on how to live...”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Just What Do You Mean...Conversion? (1972), pp. 12-13

“...WHY is it important that we all believe and speak the same DOCTRINES? Continue in I Corinthians 1:10: ‘that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.’”

“This is SO IMPORTANT TO GOD that He had the apostle John, in the 90s A.D., write...‘If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine’ (as received through Christ’s apostles), ‘receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed’ (II John 10).”

“Personal by Herbert W. Armstrong,” GN, Apr. 1979

NEW TEACHING:

“Let’s understand something important. Titles, labels, lineage, or even a set of doctrines, are not what makes us God’s people.”

“What we become as a result of the grace of God working in us is the real issue – not whether we belong to the right organization.”

Joseph W. Tkach, Co-worker Letter, Feb. 25, 1992

“Christians...are those who claim to believe in God and Christ. We may not agree with their interpretation of Scripture...”

Joseph Tkach Jr., “Church Administration,” PGR, Apr. 20, 1993

“After all, Jesus did say, ‘By this we know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another’ ...”

“However, like so many others, we have tended to strive for uniqueness in wrong ways. It is not a special understanding of prophecy that makes Jesus’ disciples unique. (There is after all, hardly a single doctrine we teach that at least one other church organization someplace does not also teach.)”

“Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,” WN, Jan. 20, 1992

“...we like to be right on every single little point, and we don’t like to tolerate people who don’t agree.”

“But the Bible says that the real difference between true Christians and false Christians is whether they believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God...”

“Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,” WN, Nov. 17, 1992

“The important difference between true Christians and nominal Christians does not lie primarily in doctrinal explanations...”

“So, how are we to regard those in ‘other churches’? With love.”

“Those who did not agree with us on all doctrinal points were looked upon [in the past] as simply unconverted, regardless or whether they believed in and had devoted their lives to Jesus Christ.”

“Jesus told his disciples: ‘...By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another’ (John 13:34-35)...Even though we may disagree with *other disciples* about many things, we still need to obey this command.”

Joseph W. Tkach, Letter to Ministry, PGR, Apr. 26, 1994

Author’s note: Christ has always known we are His disciples *if we continue in His Word* (John 8:31-32). *Love* shows *MEN* we are His disciples (John 13:34-35). Christ looks first at doctrine. The world looks first for love. Doctrine leads to love (I John 2:5).

46. OBEDIENCE AND THE HOLY SPIRIT

Which Comes First?

OLD TEACHING:

“Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”

Acts 2:38 (NKJV)

“And we are witnesses to these things, and so also is the Holy Spirit [which] God has given to those who obey Him.”

Acts 5:32 (NKJV)

“The two above-mentioned conditions to becoming a Christian – REPENTANCE and FAITH – we ourselves must perform.”

“Our repentance and faith do not earn the receiving of God’s Spirit. God does not give us His Holy Spirit because we repent and believe. He gives His Spirit because He wants to give it. He wants us to have His Spirit as His gift before we repent. He merely requires repentance and faith as conditions.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Just What Do You Mean...Conversion?, p. 13

“So now you forsake your way – you forsake sin or breaking His Law. You forsake breaking it by keeping it – obeying it. At least you try – you do it the very best you can.”

“Yet you cannot, alone of yourself, keep the Law spiritually! That is not a contradiction. You can keep the literal letter, but not the spirit.”

“Faith in Christ’s atonement for sin is commanded to be expressed by being baptized.”

“This, then, gains contact with God. That is as far as you can go, on your own. You have reached your extremity! So now GOD does something!”

“You SHALL RECEIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT.”

“It is no longer just you, in your own power and strength ‘keeping the commandments’ – it is, spiritually speaking, the living Christ IN you, keeping His Father’s Commandments...”

Herbert W. Armstrong, What Do You Mean...Salvation?, pp. 15, 22, 24, 25

NEW TEACHING:

“They believe they obtained the Holy Spirit by their obedience, when Paul condemned such empty, self-righteous reasoning...”

“Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,” WN, Jan. 26, 1993

“The Holy Spirit produces an attitude of obedience in us. Thus, the conviction that we will obey God flows as a consequence of having the Holy Spirit, not as a requirement before we can receive the Spirit.”

Joseph Tkach Jr., Letter to Member, Apr. 14, 1992

47. BAPTISM

Required or Not?

OLD TEACHING:

“...God commands water baptism; and for one WHO IS ABLE to either defy the command and refuse, or neglect, or even put off obedience to this command until too late, certainly would be an act of disobedience which would impose the PENALTY of sin, and cause loss of salvation.”

“You need not worry about the thief on the cross – or one utterly UNABLE to be baptized. You need to be MUCH concerned, however – you who are able – about obedience to the command. It is essential to salvation inasmuch as God commands it, and noncompliance is disobedience which would mean loss of salvation.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, All About Water Baptism, p. 19

NEW TEACHING:

“In February of 1991, two authorities of the Worldwide Church of God were invited to Trinity Evangelical Divinity School (Deerfield, Illinois) to speak about their doctrinal changes at the Tanner Lecture Series.”

“The Worldwide Church of God representatives were Michael A. Snyder, David Hulme (Director of Communications and Public Affairs), and Michael J. Feazell (Executive Assistant to Joseph Tkach, Pastor General).”

“We asked specifically if baptism is a prerequisite to salvation. They said it was not.”

McDowell and Stewart, The Deceivers: What Cults Believe, pp. 281, 282, 289

“No form of works, whether baptism or any other act of obedience, can produce nor be an essential prerequisite for salvation.”

“Salvation comes before baptism!” [Author’s note: See change 196]

E. Williams, “Are We Saved by Baptism?”, Reviews You Can Use, Nov.-Dec. 1993

48. LAYING ON OF HANDS

Fundamental Doctrine or Not?

OLD TEACHING:

“The Six Great Doctrines of Hebrews 6: ‘Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on to perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.’”

“THE FUNDAMENTAL DOCTRINES: In the first grade a small child does not begin his study of mathematics by solving higher equations. He starts with $1 + 1 = 2$.”

“In like manner one must commence his Christian life by learning the first principles of the oracles of God – the first principles of the doctrine of Christ (Hebrews 5:12; 6:1).”

“But what are the first principles of the doctrine of Christ?...What specific doctrines should you begin to understand even in ‘boot camp,’ that preliminary period just before you become a Christian (and during your early conversion period)? Where are they found in the Bible?”

“The following are listed in Hebrews 6:1-2. 1) Repentance from dead works. 2) Faith toward God. 3) The doctrine of baptisms. 4) Laying on of hands. 5) The resurrection of the dead. 6) Eternal judgment.”

The Six Great Doctrines of Hebrews 6, cover, p. 1

NEW TEACHING:

“[Some] have heard that we have done away with the laying on of hands because it is not listed in the Statement of Beliefs. The rumor is silly and unfounded. The Statement of Beliefs does not discuss marriage, but that does not mean we are doing away with marriage. It does not discuss smoking, but that does not mean that we can smoke now. Laying on of hands is still our belief and practice, but it did not seem necessary to include it in the Statement of Beliefs, which is designed to address funda-

mental teaching rather than every scripturally based practice of the Church.”

Joseph Tkach Jr., Message to the Ministry, Dec. 21, 1992

49. MEMBERS

Produced Through Baptism or Loosely Defined?

OLD TEACHING:

“The first place the word *church* is used following the inception of that Church (Pentecost, 31 A.D.) is Acts 2:47: ‘And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.’ This immediately gives insight into the means by which one enters the Church as a member. God adds each one. It is God who puts each one into the Church as a member.”

“Again, ‘For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body’ (I Cor. 12:13). The word *baptized* means immersed – put into. So, again, it is GOD who puts one into His Church. And HOW? By His Spirit! When God bestows within one His Holy Spirit, that puts the believer into the Church.”

“Joining’ a group that calls itself a church – having one’s name on the membership roll of some group calling itself a church – does not make one in true fact a member of THE Church Jesus founded. Here is positive proof: ‘But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his’ (Romans 8:9).”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Where Is the True Church?, pp. 7, 8

NEW TEACHING:

“In the Church we’ve tended to use ‘in house’ terminology.”

“For example, we used to call husbands and wives of members who were not baptized by the Church as ‘unconverted mates.’ This caused some mates, who were not members, to feel put-down or not respected by the Church. In actuality, we simply meant they were a ‘non-baptized member.’”

Mel Dahlgren, “Honest Answers to Difficult Questions,” Arrows, Mar. 1, 1993

“When we use the term *member* in the Worldwide Church of God, we’re simply differentiating between those who are baptized versus not baptized. In actuality, it’s not the best term to use because only God knows ‘those who are his’ or members of his family...’”

“God continually looks on the heart and only he knows the ones who are truly trying to serve and obey him...If we are, then regardless of whether we have the status of being ‘baptized’ or not, we’re members or a part of God’s true Church and definitely accountable members of the body of Christ.”

*Mel Dahlgren, “Honest Answers to Difficult Questions,”
Arrows, Apr. 1, 1993*

“As *fellow members* of the household of faith, let’s pray for one another every day.” [Author’s note: This was addressing all *Plain Truth* subscribers!]

“Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,” PT, Apr. 1993

50. FOCUS OF LITERATURE

Overcoming Sin or Grace, etc.?

OLD TEACHING:

Author’s note: The next quote is typical of the teaching that used to be the focus of the WCG literature:

“Would a governor pardon a man convicted of murder so he could continue murdering more and more people? God’s merciful pardon – His grace – is bestowed on us because we have repented, with a sincere desire to turn from our wicked ways of lawlessness. If we are willing to live, from here on, righteously, happily as we should have from the beginning, the merciful and loving God has been willing to give His Son Jesus Christ, who, in turn, was willing to give His life, to square up our past law-breaking – to wipe the slate clean, and give us, by His merciful grace, a fresh, clean start.”

“So, from here on, we must obey – unto righteousness! (Romans 6:16).”

“Yet you cannot, of your own strength, keep the spiritual Law spiritually.”
Herbert W. Armstrong, Just What Do You Mean...Salvation?, p. 21

NEW TEACHING:

Author’s note: These next quotes were typical of the direction all WCG literature was heading (with an ever-lessening emphasis on obedience):

“The crucifixion of Christ is God’s saving act in history. It atones. It justifies. It reconciles. It redeems.”

“God reconciles all things to himself ‘by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross’ (Col. 1:20).”

“The apostle Peter said we are redeemed by ‘the precious blood of Christ’ (I Peter 1:19).”

Paul Kroll, “To Know Christ and Him Crucified,” PT, Apr. 1993

“Instead of: ‘Striving to overcome sin’ – Use: ‘Growing in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.’”

Michael J. Feazell, Speaking the Same Thing: Editorial Content and Philosophy, presented at the WCG Regional Conference, Aug. 25-27, 1992, p. 17

51. CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT: Necessity or Not?

OLD TEACHING:

“We must overcome these three: Satan, this world, and our own selves. We have to battle these three, in order to develop and strengthen right character within us. God says plainly it is the overcomers who shall be saved – who shall reign with Christ.”

“It is the way of a constant battle – a striving against sin – a seeking God in earnest prayer for help and spiritual power to overcome...”

*Herbert W. Armstrong, The Incredible Human Potential,
pp. 143-144, 146*

NEW TEACHING:

“All writers for the current Worldwide Church of God literature have been instructed to no longer use phrases such as ‘development of holy, righteous character,’ ‘building holy, righteous character,’ ‘striving to overcome our weaknesses and faults,’ and ‘overcoming self and building character.’ These terms are to be substituted with words such as these: ‘growing in grace,’ ‘God imputes his own righteousness to those who respond to his calling,’ and ‘be complete.’”

*M.J. Feazell, Speaking the Same Thing: Editorial
Content and Philosophy, p. 17*

“While Christians grow spiritually, it is not in the sense of human ‘character development.’”

“By grace, the character of God is imparted to us.”

“...we already have the nature or ‘character’ of God upon conversion.”

Paul Kroll, “The Miracle of Rebirth,” PT, May-June 1994

“...those tough scriptures in Revelation cry out, ‘To him who overcomes...’ They were written, a cynic might argue, to taunt us, to frustrate us, because there is no hope that we will ever attain the goal.”

“We’ve unconsciously concluded that Christ’s sacrifice is not enough to guarantee our salvation, that we must be overcomers and conquer our carnal pulls and desires.”

“John, the apostle who wrote those troublesome verses in Revelation... [also wrote] I John 2:13. ‘I write to you young men,’ John says, ‘because you have overcome the evil one.’”

“They didn’t need to overcome. They already had overcome.”

“Yes, we are overcomers. We have overcome. The victory is ours.”

“Christ’s sacrifice and our faith in Christ, evident in our willingness to testify’ to others about it, makes us overcomers.”

Ralph Orr, “Can You Overcome Enough for God?”, WN, May 17, 1994

52. FALSE CHRISTIANITY: Plain Historic Fact or Self-Righteous Accusation?

OLD TEACHING:

“The entire apostate family – mother, and more than 400 daughter denominations, all divided against each other and in confusion of doctrines, yet all united in the chief pagan doctrines and festivals – has a family name! They call themselves ‘Christian,’ but God calls them something else – ‘Mystery, Babylon the Great’!”

“And here are the identical ancient Babylon Mysteries now wrapped in the false cloak labeled ‘Christianity’ – but in fact it is the same old ‘Babylonian Mystery System.’”

Herbert W. Armstrong, The Plain Truth About Easter, p. 13

“There ensued ‘the lost century’ in the history of the true Church of God. There was a well-organized conspiracy to blot out all record of Church history during that period. A hundred years later, history reveals a ‘Christianity’ utterly unlike the Church Christ founded.”

“It had taken the NAME of Christ and applied it to the Babylonian mystery religion.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Your Awesome Future: How Religion Deceives You, p. 5

NEW TEACHING:

“We can only observe that certain people are bearing fruits of the Spirit, we cannot judge anyone’s heart. Therefore, it is perceived as arrogant (and rightly so) if we endeavor to classify people as ‘real Christians’ or ‘false Christians.’”

David G. Hunsberger, Letter to Member, Apr. 30, 1992

“The term *pagan* will be removed from the booklet *Pagan Holidays or God’s Holy Days – Which?* ‘That word needlessly incites people,’ said Mr. [Greg] Albrecht.”

J. Zhorne, “International Editors Meet, Updated on Church Lit.”
WN, Jan. 28, 1991

Author’s note: Actually, even the reference to the world’s holidays was removed, and the booklet was called *God’s Festivals and Holy Days*.

“All writers for current Worldwide Church of God literature have been instructed to no longer use terms such as ‘professing Christianity,’ ‘so-called Christians,’ ‘Christianity,’ and ‘Jesus’ disciples.’”

Greg Albrecht, The Plain Truth: Archetypes and Paradigms, Regional Conference, Philadelphia, Aug. 25-27, 1992, p. 9

53. THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

Foundation of Obedience or Just One Small Part?

OLD TEACHING:

“The Ten Commandments are a spiritual law. Though concerned with physical actions, their principle is spiritual. Committing adultery may be a physical act, but it violates a spiritual principle. It is defrauding, it is unfaithfulness to a mate, and that’s a spiritual principle. And it’s the same with coveting what is not yours, etc. It’s the attitude of Satan that really gets into you and makes you want to do it.”

*Herbert W. Armstrong, “What the Bible Says About Water Baptism,”
sermon summary*

“In Old Testament times, by the strictness of the letter, one had not committed adultery except in the physical act. But in the NEW Testament, the SPIRIT or obvious intent of the law is violated when a man even lusts after a woman in his mind by looking at her.”

“Under the strict, specific letter, one had not murdered until the victim was dead. But he violated the spirit of the law if he even hated his brother in his mind.”

“The law is summed up in one word, LOVE. It is expanded into the two great laws, love to God and love to neighbor. The same principle expands into the TEN Commandments. It is outflowing love.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “Historic New Laws to Guide Catholics,” GN, Apr. 1983

“Actually, God’s spiritual Law is expressed in just one simple four-letter word – LOVE. We apply that law to given circumstances.”

“Jesus, for example, *magnified* the Law and made it honorable.’ At Mt. Sinai He, as YAHWEH, expanded it into 10 points – the first four defining the PRINCIPLE of love toward God, the last six love toward neighbor. From there it expands in principle to cover any and every question that may arise.”

*Herbert W. Armstrong, “How subtly Satan used MAKEUP to start
the Church off the track,” WN, Nov. 16, 1981*

“God’s law is spiritual and can be summed up in one simple but all-inclusive word – love. His law for the guidance of human conduct is subdivided into the two great commandments, love toward God and love toward neighbor. These, in turn, are subdivided into the 10 Commandments. Jesus *magnified* this law by showing how its principle expands to cover virtually every possible human infraction. The third chapter of II Corinthians shows that God’s law is to be applied in principle. It is summed up in one single word, love. Nevertheless, it is so perfect that, by applying its principle, it is a complete law.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Mystery of the Ages, pp. 49-50

“God’s Law is a law of love – love to God in reverence, worship and obedience – love to neighbor in service, kindness, sharing.”

“True righteousness...is performing God’s spiritual law with the spiritual love which only GOD can supply.”

“GOD’S LAW is that river bed which guides the flow – the expression – the direction in which the divine love flows. God’s Law is the way of perfect spiritual character – the very character of God.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, What Do You Mean...Salvation?, pp. 23-24

“No basic law of life, forming the basis of perfect character, could be a perfect law unless it contains, in perfect balance, both positive and negative.”

“Examine, now, the Ten Commandments, God’s basic code, upon which all his laws, social, economic, civil and religious, hang.”

“Here are the famous negatives, yet each implies the opposite positive: as, you shall have love and have charitable, tolerant patience toward your neighbor, be true to your wife and respect your neighbor’s property.”

“The entire Bible is...a magnification in specific detail of these basic principles.”

“This law is complete. It contains, in brief summation-principle, all the positive and negative obligations of the perfect, rightly balanced life.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “‘Thou Shalt Not!’, PT, Jan. 1984

“There is one root CAUSE for all the troubles this world is suffering – transgression of our Maker’s right WAY OF LIFE – that WAY expressed in principle by the Ten Commandments.”

“Personal from Herbert W. Armstrong,” GN, Oct.-Nov. 1984

“What’s wrong with this earth? Absolutely nothing but SIN – rebellion against God and His eternal SPIRITUAL LAWS that govern peace and happiness and joy.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “What Is the Reward of the Saved...Heaven?”, TW, Nov. 1971

NEW TEACHING:

“[It] is a common mistake to assume, ‘If everybody would just keep the Ten Commandments, what a nice world we would have.’ Christians should consider that the Ten Commandments do not require kindness, mercy, compassion, generosity, sacrifice for others, impartiality, patience or love. Nor do the Ten Commandments specifically forbid conceit, envy, hatred, rage or selfish ambition.”

“The Ten Commandments are important, but they are not enough.”

Joseph W. Tkach, Co-worker Letter, May 27, 1992

“I recently received an anonymous letter that I want to share with you. It stated:”

“How can you say the Ten Commandments do not require love? Please put an answer to this in the world wide newspaper so many of the members of the Worldwide Church of GOD who are very angry at your careless and false statements can understand why you would write such things contrary to the Bible.”

“The whole point of the co-worker letter was to emphasize the spiritual obligation of the Christian not only to keep the Ten Commandments, but to go beyond the mere letter of the law and also to keep the command that we love God and one another, as God has called us to do.”

“Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,” WN, Sep. 22, 1992

“If Only The Nations Would Keep The Law’ This approach theorizes that ‘if only the nations were keeping the law, the world would be a perfect place.”

“But Jesus did not just come so that everyone, including the nations, could keep the law more perfectly. He came to save the world from sin and to impute his righteousness to those he would call. No human, or nation, can keep the law perfectly. Paul even went so far as to say that the law was a curse to him, because he could not keep it.”

Greg Albrecht, *The Plain Truth: Archetypes and Paradigms*,
Regional Conference, Philadelphia, Aug. 25-27, 1992

“We have always understood and taught that we should avoid hurting our neighbor, and that is certainly part of loving our neighbor.”

“But what we have not always focused on is that love involves more than just not hurting – it also involves helping.”

“Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,” WN, Jan. 12, 1993

“Brethren, we need to understand that the Ten Commandments are like one straw, in one brick, in a great huge edifice of obedience before God.”

Michael J. Feazell, “Assurance,” Sermon, June 7, 1992

“In short, where the law may only require restraint, the Golden Rule compels action. The implication for the life of the Christian is clear: by itself, the law is not enough.”

Bill Palmer, “The Golden Rule,” PT, July 1993

Author’s note: We’ll let Mr. Armstrong have the last word:

“Why do you not OBEY the Commandments, as Jesus said, Mr. Belshaw?”

“I would, if I could see any LOVE in them,” he replied.

“Then you must be spiritually blind,” I said. ‘The Ten Commandments are merely the ten points of the great Law of LOVE. The first four tell you how to love God; the last six how to love thy neighbor. The Bible says LOVE is the fulfilling of the Law. The

Commandments came from God, and God is Love. He gave the Commandments. Do you think God ever did anything that was not done in LOVE?"

"Mr. Belshaw had no answer."

Autobiography of Herbert W. Armstrong, Vol. 1 (1986), pp. 510-511

54. LIBERALISM

Wrong or Right?

OLD TEACHING:

"This group of liberals...[wanted] unity in watered-down doctrines that older loyal ministers did not and never would accept! THAT WAS NOT UNITY – IT WAS DIVISION!"

"That is the WAY of the LIBERAL – who wants to water down the truth of God and go as far into this world – which means as far in Satan's way – as possible and still get into God's Kingdom."

Herbert W. Armstrong, "What Is a Liberal?", GN, Mar. 1979

"The Church was...going as far as possible in the...beliefs of this world's 'Christianity'..."

"The HARM that was done...is INCALCULABLE!...It led to luke-warmness, a more careless attitude toward real or strict obedience to the ways of God. It led to wrong and false concepts on points of doctrine."

Herbert W. Armstrong, "Reports About Garner Ted False," WN, Mar. 6, 1981

"Brethren, do we think we are so superior to those of the first, second and third centuries that Satan could not have tried to pervert God's TRUTH today?"

"God has restored original TRUTH! HOW PRECIOUS IS IT TO YOU? – or do you trample it underfoot as swine would trample into the mud the most precious diamonds, rubies and precious stones, and go for the slop?"

"Yes, Satan has tried to WATER DOWN true doctrine – to turn God's Church to false truths. Apparently it is unhappily true that some willingly fall by the wayside and shall not...enter...the KINGDOM OF GOD!"

Herbert W. Armstrong, "How Satan Injects False Doctrines," GN, Aug. 1979

NEW TEACHING:

Author's note: In a personal appearance in Detroit, Michigan, 1990, Joseph W. Tkach stated that there was nothing wrong with being liberal.

"If a doctrine is changed, does that mean the doctrine has been watered down?"

"To set themselves up as ministers of God, the dissidents must seek ways to condemn the Church. Doctrinal changes provide their best ammunition, because the dissidents can then claim to be the preservers of the true faith once delivered."

"Personal from Joseph W. Tkach," WN, June 24, 1991

"I have been accused of 'totally dismantling everything God gave the Church through Mr. Armstrong.'"

"Some people think they are being faithful to what Mr. Armstrong taught by tenaciously clinging to old doctrines the Church has now changed."

"Resistance to necessary change is exactly why the Pharisees, the Sadducees and the Zealots could not see what God had done in Jesus Christ."

"Likewise, it is why some today resist the change in our understanding..."

Joseph W. Tkach, "How Do You React to Change?", WN, July 22, 1991

55. CO-WORKERS

Non-Members or Brothers and Sisters in Christ?

OLD TEACHING:

"Many who are not members may have noticed we often use the term coworker, and may wonder what we mean. Let me explain."

"...one cannot 'join' this Church. One enters only by being baptized by the Holy Spirit into this, God's Church."

"But when one sends in contributions or tithes two or more times in two or three months, we send a letter explaining that we have assumed he or she wishes to become a regular contributor, whom we designate as a 'co-worker,' and co-workers receive a regular monthly letter from me personally, telling them of the progress of the Work..."

"The monthly 'co-worker letters' are sent alike to all members and co-workers."

Herbert W. Armstrong, "Just What Is a Co-Worker?", GN, Aug. 1982

NEW TEACHING:

Author's note: For six-and-a-half years, Mr. Tkach began his co-worker letters with "Dear Brethren and Co-Workers." Beginning in the summer of 1992, he began addressing them "Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ," with the exception of the annual letter requesting donations for the Summer Educational Program for Church youth which began "Dear Brethren of God's Church."

56. POLITICS AND VOTING

Spiritual Harlotry or Personal Preference?

OLD TEACHING:

“Notice, Revelation 17:5, she [the Catholic Church] is a mother church! Her daughters are also churches who have come out of her, in protest, calling themselves Protestant...They, too, make themselves a part of this world, taking active part in its politics – the very act which made a ‘harlot’ out of their mother!”

*Herbert W. Armstrong, The Plain Truth About Easter,
pp. 12-13*

“Christians are called to be separate from the world and all its affiliations, whether social, political, economic or religious (II Corinthians 6:17).”

“What, then, would Jesus do in this time of presidential election? He would WARN true Christians, ‘COME OUT of her [this world’s governments, this Babylonish system], my people, lest you share her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues’ (Revelation 18:4)!”

“The plagues of God are soon to fall upon this world and all who choose to remain part of it. JESUS CALLS YOU OUT!”

*Herbert W. Armstrong, “How Would Jesus Vote for President?”,
GN, Oct.-Nov. 1984*

“[The liberal] wants to be free to vote, at least in local elections.”

“The argument was made to me that our Church people actually outnumbered others living in Big Sandy, Texas, BUT (what a big word ‘BUT’) you see, if they did not vote, the minority would vote to incorporate the Ambassador College campus into the town of Big Sandy, and we’d have to pay big taxes. It never seemed to occur to the liberal mind that CHRIST will solve our problems, and we do not have to go contrary to HIS ATTITUDE!”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “What Is a Liberal?”, GN, Mar. 1979

NEW TEACHING:

“While the Church has never published that voting is a sin, we have usually discouraged participation in the political process. This led to the commonly held idea, which was sometimes preached, that any participation in voting would be sinful.”

“If a Church member chooses to vote, it is his or her private and personal decision. The individual should not, however, introduce division into the congregation by campaigning or announcing a political platform within the congregation.”

*“Questions and Answers from the PGR,”
WN, May 25, 1993*

57. THIRD TITHE

Every Third Year or Computed Annually?

OLD TEACHING:

“When you have finished laying aside all the tithe of your increase in the third year, which is the year of tithing, and have given it to the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, so that they may eat within your gates and be filled, *then you shall say before the Lord your God*: I have removed the holy tithe from my house, and also have given them to the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, according to all Your commandments which you have commanded me; I have not transgressed Your commandments, nor have I forgotten them. I have not eaten any of it when in mourning, nor have I removed any of it for any unclean use, nor given any of it for the dead. I have obeyed the voice of the Lord my God, and have done according to all that You have commanded me. Look down from Your holy habitation, from heaven, and bless Your people Israel and the land which You have given us, just as you swore to our fathers, a land flowing with milk and honey.”

Deuteronomy 26:12-15 (NKJV)

“In both Deuteronomy 14:28-29 and Deuteronomy 26:12-15 a third tithe was commanded. It used to be set aside in every walled city, ‘within thy gates’ (Deut. 26:12), for the ‘widow, the fatherless, and the stranger’ – as a kind of insurance program. This special tithe was commanded to be saved only every three years in a cycle of seven. It is altogether different from the first tithe.”

*Herbert W. Armstrong, Ending
Your Financial Worries, p. 14*

NEW TEACHING:

“[If] circumstances are such that one is unable to budget payment of a full tithe (ten percent of his increase) for support of the poor each third and sixth year in the cycle of seven, we suggest that he try to carry out his responsibility to the poor by paying an appropriate percentage of his increase each year. For example, paying approximately 2.8 percent of one’s income each year would work out, over the course of seven years, to 20 percent, or two full third tithes during that seven-year period.”

WCG PCD Letter L152

Author's note: To pay third tithe in this way abrogated the prayer of Deuteronomy 26:12-15. Of course, later the WCG completely threw out all aspects of tithing as a command.

58. TITHING

Command or Concept?

OLD TEACHING:

“The true Church of God is founded on the Apostles and the Prophets... (Eph. 2:20).”

“Listen to [Malachi’s] NEW TESTAMENT teaching! He quotes God, who is speaking *to us today*:

“I will come near to you in judgment...Even from the days of your fathers ye are gone away from mine ordinances, and have not kept them... YE ARE CURSED WITH A CURSE: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation” (Mal. 3:5-9).”

“But ye say,’ continues the Eternal’s Message *to us*, ‘Wherein have we robbed thee?’ And God replies, ‘IN TITHES AND OFFERINGS’!”

“Tithing is God’s law – His system for financing His great Work today; it’s *commanded, now!*”

“Some large corporations...send around representatives, collectors, to collect for them what you owe the company.”

“Of course you are expected to be sure the collector is the company’s approved representative – not a thieving impostor pretending to be the company collector. And you should be equally sure you are paying your tithe to a called and TRUE minister of Jesus Christ.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Ending Your Financial Worries,
pp. 14-15, 21, 24

“Some ministers are called of God, used of God – many are not.”

“The tithe is HOLY. It is THE LORD’S – for HIS WORK. It should be placed where HE IS WORKING – where the Message is going out with REAL POWER...Ask God for WISDOM!”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “Are You Being Tested on this Point?”, GN, Feb. 1939

NEW TEACHING:

“God verbally blistered *the nation of Judah* for stealing his tithes in *the time of Malachi...*”

“Clearly, tithing is a biblical *concept*.”

“God gave [post-captivity *Judah*] a scathing indictment through the prophet Malachi...”

Tithing and the Give Way, pp. 6, 10

Author’s note: The above quoted booklet is 19 pages long and nowhere states that tithing is *commanded for today*. Neither did the booklet stress the importance of placing tithes only where God is truly working. This was not surprising, since WCG now believed that other churches are preaching the gospel (see changes 1, 181, and

217). At the end of 1994, Joseph Tkach threw out tithing as a commanded obligation for Christians.

59. ABORTION: Murder or Not Equated With Murder?

OLD TEACHING:

“From the instant of conception, a human life is in existence. To deliberately kill or destroy that human life, the GREAT LAWGIVER and SUPREME JUDGE says, is MURDER, punishable by eternal and final DEATH!”

“And those who commit it, and order it, or ‘legally’ by man’s law authorize it, will be held in contempt of this SUPREME COURT OF HEAVEN, and answerable to that great Supreme Judge!”

“God Almighty has called and authorized me to ‘CRY ALOUD, AND SPARE NOT, AND SHOW OUR PEOPLE THEIR SINS!’”

*Herbert W. Armstrong, “A New Truth About Abortion,”
PT, Sep. 1985*

“The human spirit enters the human embryo at conception. It is this spirit that may, upon adult conversion, be united with the Holy Spirit from the great Creator God, impregnating that human with God-life as a child of the living God, in a state of gestation, though as yet unborn. To destroy an embryo or a fetus in a mother’s uterus is to MURDER a potential future God Being.”

“Therefore, abortion is murder.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Mystery of the Ages, p. 110

NEW TEACHING:

“It is our position that, once the zygote is implanted, life is present. From this point, the Church does not sanction abortion unless a situation arises in which the mother’s life is endangered. Such a case would be a decision to be made by the family. In the case of rape or incest, we recommend immediate medical precautions.”

“We do not sanction abortion in the case of a deformed or retarded fetus, however, we consider it the responsibility of the family to make their own decision. *We do not teach that having an abortion equates with murder.*”

“The use of an intrauterine device would also be a personal choice...”

David Hunsberger, WCG PCD Letter to Member, Oct. 2, 1992

“While Mr. Armstrong would generally say, ‘abortion is sin,’ his explanation and definition put him in the ‘pro choice’ camp. The reason is that Mr. Armstrong recommended the abortion procedure for 1) cases of rape,

(and incest in certain cases), and 2) cases where the mother's health was at risk and the doctor recommended termination of pregnancy."

Joseph Tkach Jr., Letter to Minister, 1992

Author's note: An intrauterine device is an instrument of constant abortion. After there has been a conception, it prevents the fertilized ovum from implanting on the uterine wall.

60. EARRINGS FOR MEN: Inappropriate or Acceptable?

OLD TEACHING:

"The Bible does not speak directly about the matter of men wearing earrings. However, we find guidelines in God's Word to follow in such matters."

"Making a male look like a female or vice versa, or going to extremes – being motivated by personal vanity – is condemned."

"In keeping with the culture and customs of this nation – and Western culture in general – men and boys who wear earrings on an everyday basis have been looked upon as unmanly, abnormal, or rebellious."

WCG PCD Letter L182

NEW TEACHING:

"Although earrings are now popular among American teenage boys, we do not want to see this fad accepted within God's Church. Of course, we realize that in time earrings may become a normal part of male dress, but they currently carry a connotation of rebellion or nonconformity to traditional values. Therefore, we do not allow earrings to be worn by men to Church services or Church-sponsored activities. This does not mean the Church has concluded that wearing earrings is itself a sin or presumes to forbid men to wear them at any time."

Joseph Tkach Jr., "Church Administration," PGR, Jan. 22, 1991

Author's note: At the Regional Conference in August 1992, Joseph Tkach Jr. stated that the apostles probably wore earrings. Apparently it was believed that earrings had "become a normal part of male dress" in society, because they were allowed to be worn even at Church services and by Ambassador College students.

"Although we have made mistakes in attempting to become too specific on certain matters of prophetic fulfillment and outward personal appearance, our recent history shows us trying to maintain the big picture."

"Personal from Joseph W. Tkach," WN, May 21, 1990

61. PROPER HAIR LENGTH

Can or Can't Be Determined?

OLD TEACHING:

“Short hair for men has been with us far longer than most realize. It was the dominant, accepted mode for men in the time of Jesus Christ.”

“I Corinthians 11:14 [says]: ‘Does not even nature itself teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a dishonor to him?’”

“Those under a Nazarite vow let their hair grow long as a token of humiliation. It was a shame. Notice, too, that as soon as the time period of the Nazarite vow was over, the one who undertook the vow was to shave his head...”

“No, Jesus did not have long hair.”

Clayton Steep, “*Did Jesus Have Long Hair?*”,
WCG Article Reprint, 1980

“There is a tendency today toward unisex. Frequently you cannot easily tell whether one you happen to see is male or female. Women wear shorter hair and males wear longer hair until they are about equal length.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “*Uniting in Order to Divide*,”
PT, 1981

“(I Cor. 11:5) This scripture is not talking about hats or veils. The subject in question is hair. ‘But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her HAIR is given for a covering’ (vs. 15).”

“In verse 6, Paul discusses various lengths of hair. Four lengths are mentioned: (1) not covered, (2) shorn, (3) shaven, and (4) covered. Shaven designates a totally bald head. Shorn hair is very short-cropped hair as when a sheep is shorn. Hair that is not a ‘covering’ is short hair. Hair that is a covering is long hair...”

“...Paul is saying that if a woman is going to have short-cropped hair she might as well go all the way and shave herself bald.”

“Verse 10 shows...Long hair is a sign that a woman is willing to be in subjection to a man, and that she acknowledges the need for the protection of angels.”

Roderick C. Meredith, *Difficult Scriptures*, WCG

NEW TEACHING:

Author's note: Many illustrations used in *The Plain Truth* depicted male personalities as having long hair. The February 1993 issue (p. 22) showed a longhaired prodigal son. The April 1993 issue showed a praying David with long hair (p. 22) and a Daniel in the lion's den also with long hair (p. 24). The telecast used pic-

tures of "Jesus" and the apostles with long hair. The November-December 1993 Plain Truth had illustrations of the Gospel writers—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John—depicting them as having long hair (p. 11).

The approach to the issue of hair length was that proper hair lengths cannot really be determined, and the old guidelines of above the collar for men and below the ear for women were no longer being enforced.

"...Paul said women should have their heads covered (a cultural matter) when they prayed or prophesied (I Corinthians 11:5)."

Joseph W. Tkach, Letter to Ministry, PGR, July 13, 1993

62. SMOKING

Stay Home and Overcome It or Attend Services and Do the Best You Can?

OLD TEACHING:

"Jesus Christ through me put into God's Church the teaching that smoking is wrong – mild or not, nevertheless, it is SIN!"

*Herbert W. Armstrong, "What Is a Liberal?",
GN, Mar. 1979*

"In [a newspaper] interview with a former minister...he was quoted as saying 'he also does not believe in expelling people from the church if they do not live up to its teachings.' It also stated they believe 'the church is where people belong to help them overcome their problems.' In other words the liberal idea is to disobey God's instruction to disfellowship and avoid those who are contentious and cause division and accept members who believe and live contrary to the teachings of Christ and the Bible."

*Herbert W. Armstrong, "Recent History of the Philadelphia Era,"
WN, June 24, 1985*

NEW TEACHING:

Author's note: Under the old Church teaching on smoking, members with this problem were not allowed to attend services until it had been overcome.

Under the current administration, members with this problem could attend services while they try (in some cases for years) to overcome it.

63. REPEATING THE “LORD’S PRAYER”**Vain Repetition or Not?****OLD TEACHING:**

“And have you ever heard certain denominations repeat prayers over and over again? Christ said, ‘But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking’ (Matt. 6:7). ”

“Memorized prayers – including the ‘Lord’s Prayer’ – soon lose their meaning and sincerity.”

“Jesus gave it only as a pattern or example after which we could fashion our own prayers.”

“This world’s churches are in error when they practice repeating any prayer over and over again each week. Avoid this error.”

“Think about your blessings, your needs, and pray from the heart.”

*Roderick C. Meredith, The Power of Prayer,
WCG, 1970*

NEW TEACHING:

“Is it proper to pray the Lord’s Prayer of Matthew 6:9-13? Is it ‘vain repetition’ as mentioned in verse 7?”

“Instead of condemning the use of a written or prepared prayer, Christ was condemning meaningless prayer. Pagans would often repeat the same word or phrase for hours to work themselves into a trance.”

“Thus, Christ was not prohibiting the formal reciting of the prayer he gave.”

“Questions & Answers,” PT, Jan. 1993

64. PRAYER ATTITUDE:**Godly Fear and Humility or Any Carnal Attitude?****OLD TEACHING:**

“When we approach our Creator in [the] attitude [of] respecting His power and authority over our lives – then He will hear our prayers.

“When Christ was in the human flesh, even He feared God as we should. ‘Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared’ (Heb. 5:7). When we fully realize our own helplessness, then we will cry out to God as we should.”

“The attitude of humility and godly fear is vital in prayers, and at all times.”

*Roderick C. Meredith, The Answer to
Unanswered Prayer*

NEW TEACHING:

“Surprisingly, God does not condemn Job for railing against him and accusing him.”

“Does this mean that even we might dare express our frustration, our anger – even call God to account in our ignorance and confusion – without being condemned by God? Shocking though it may be – yes, we can.”

“In Philip Yancey’s words: ‘One bold message in the Book of Job is that you can say anything to God. Throw at him your grief, your anger, your doubt, your bitterness, your betrayal, your disappointment – he can absorb them all.’”

“God is much bigger than we are.”

Paul Kroll, “The Trial of Job,” PT, Oct. 1992

“I didn’t know how to pray...”

“I now wish to inform you that The Plain Truth changed all that and is constantly teaching me the correct way to respect and love God.”

Letter to the Editor, PT, Sep. 1993

65. PROPER SABBATH ATTIRE

Important or Not?

OLD TEACHING:

“TRUE culture is based on God’s great law: ‘Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself’ (Matt. 22:39). That part of culture and good manners that expresses concern for one’s neighbor...is true culture.”

“Ambassador...students...dress up in whatever is their best – and if they cannot afford better than they have, that’s quite all right.”

“The Bible teaches the principle of proper attire according to the occasion. Bodily apparel is also used in the Bible to symbolize character. There is a kind of pride that is NOT vanity, but rather concern for others and respect toward God.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “Is It Wrong to Be a Cultured Individual?”, GN, Feb. 1981

“When God came down to speak to the children of Israel at Mt. Sinai, He gave Moses specific instructions about how the people should appear before Him.”

“God is still particular about how His people appear before Him – for instance at Sabbath services...It is time to put away ignorance, disrespect and filthiness.”

“The next time you appear before Jesus Christ in His services, show your respect, admiration and love for Him by dressing and preparing properly...”

Leroy Neff, “Does Your Appearance Count?”, GN, Mar. 1982

NEW TEACHING:

“While we do not have a written dress code, most men in our congregation will be wearing a suit or sport coat, and women usually wear a dress.”

Richard L. Leimbach, PCD Letter, PGR, Jan. 20, 1993

“Welcome to the New Age and its hottest movement—study groups...”

“In the basement: The study group gathers in a circle...”

“At one point...the teacher turned the discussion to judgment and criticism. She made a negative comment about a church she once attended. Many agreed with a knowing smile and nod.”

“From their comments, they heard judgments on hair lengths, clothing styles, musical tastes...”

“Such preaching and teaching overshadow the gospel of forgiveness...”

“Undoubtedly, some people will choose to follow the New Age movement...let it not be because we placed an unnecessary stumbling block before them.”

George Hague, “Subtle Seduction,” PT, Sep. 1993

“...it is acceptable for women to wear dressy slacks to services.”

Joseph Tkach Jr., “Church Administration,” PGR, Jan. 25, 1994

66. THE 144,000

True Church of God or Unknown Group?

OLD TEACHING:

“Who are the 144,000?”

“And what is sealed in the foreheads?...If you will turn to Revelation 14:1, you will see that it is the Father’s name that is written there. Jesus’ very last prayer for His Church was that they would be kept in the FATHER’S name...12 times in the New Testament His own Church is the CHURCH OF GOD – yes, GOD’S CHURCH.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, The Book of Revelation Unveiled at Last!, pp. 34-35

NEW TEACHING:

Author’s note: The 1988 Personal Correspondence Department letter L108 took no real position on the identity of the 144,000 of Revelation 7. The 1993 PCD Letter Series did not contain a letter regarding the 144,000.

“[World Tomorrow] Prophecy programs will present a balanced, overall perspective of the purpose and value of prophecy, instead of attempting to interpret specific prophecies.”

“Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,” WN, Nov. 19, 1990

67. PROPHETIC CHARTS

Valuable or to be Avoided?

OLD TEACHING:

Author's note: An excellent chart of prophecies concerning the reign of Gentile kingdoms can be found on pages 22 and 23 of Mr. Armstrong's booklet *Who or What Is the Prophetic Beast?* (Our booklet *Who or What Is the Beast of Revelation?* also contains a similar chart, with further clarification.) The chart proves in specific detail that there is only one more resurrection of the Holy Roman Empire to occur before Christ returns.

NEW TEACHING:

"To think we possess some special, infallible, inside information about the precise timing of prophecies concerning yet future events can be very alluring and exciting. But such thoughts are also misleading and are definitely not what Jesus promised that his Church would know..."

"Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,"
WN, Apr. 23, 1990

Author's note: It was stated that all prophetic charts were to be avoided.

68. THE BEAST

Holy Roman Empire or Racism?

OLD TEACHING:

"And so, if we are willing to be guided solely by the description of this 'beast' and to let the Bible interpret symbols used to describe it, we come to the inevitable conclusion that the beast of Revelation 13 is the Roman Empire, of 31 B.C. to A.D. 476!"

"In Revelation 17 a later stage of this same wild beast is pictured, and there a 'woman' – a great CHURCH – sits astride it, guides it, rules over it... the Roman Catholic Church."

"The 7th head with its 10 horns, in the 17th chapter, will be, as the 17th chapter explains, the revival of the beast, the Roman Empire, 'out of the bottomless pit' by a 'United States of Europe,' or federation of 10 European nations centered within the bounds of the old Roman Empire (Rev. 17:12-18). This is actually beginning today!"

Herbert W. Armstrong, Who or What Is the Prophetic Beast?,
pp. 8, 14, 31

NEW TEACHING:

Author's note: Greg Albrecht (November 1992) and Michael Feazell both stated in taped sermons sent to all WCG ministry that the identity of the beast in Revelation is “*racism in the hearts of men*.” It was also stated at the Regional Conferences that the Church was not sure about the identity of the beast, and that there was never biblical evidence that it was 10 nations in Europe. It should not seem strange the WCG would believe that the beast is racism, since this was seen as the biggest obstacle to “spreading the kingdom” via the old Protestant pattern (see quotes below and change 170).

“Intolerance, that ugly monster, has been around throughout history. Sometimes, to be sure, the beast is content to lie deceptively still in the summer sun. To see it suckle its young and tend its own kind, you’d never guess its real disposition.

“But let strangers beware! This savage fiend sleeps with one eye open and one ear raised. It has a keen nose and a line in the sand that cannot be crossed. Cross that line, and you’ll meet the fury of claw and fang.

“Our world is a world of seemingly insurmountable barriers between people – walls of intolerance – erected by suspicion, prejudice and hatred.”

Joseph W. Tkach, “*No Place for Intolerance*,” PT, Mar. 1993

“The evil of racism stalks our streets...”

“In our modern age, *nationalism* is not resurgent; it never died. Neither did *racism*. *They are the most powerful movements in the world today.*”

Greg Albrecht, “*It's Time to Speak Up*,” PT, Jan. 1994

69. AMOUNT OF PROPHECY

Over 33% OR Less Than 22%?

OLD TEACHING:

“About one third of the Bible is prophecy, and most prophetic passages apply NOW – to our time – the world in which we live.”

How to Understand Prophecy (1972), p. 2

NEW TEACHING:

Author's note: A taped sermon by Dean Blackwell was sent to be played in all churches in January, 1993. The subject was “*prediction addiction*,” and Mr. Blackwell stated that he had always taken it for granted that Mr. Armstrong was correct in saying that the Bible was

one third prophecy, but that he had recently discovered it was, at the most, 22%.

70. “MANY WILL COME IN MY NAME”

False Christian Ministers or Political Leaders?

OLD TEACHING:

“And Jesus answered and said to them: Take heed that no one deceive you. For many will come in My name, saying, I am the Christ, and will deceive many.”

Matthew 24:4-5 (KJV)

“False prophets did arise in the first century, saying Jesus was the Christ, but omitting altogether Jesus’ gospel which was the message of the coming world ruling kingdom of God to rule all nations after Christ’s Second Coming.”

“He was warning his own disciples about false prophets coming in his name saying he, Jesus, was the Christ, and deceiving the MANY – not the few, but the MANY. That started in the very first century soon after the church was founded and has continued to this very day. It is true almost universally in a professed Christianity to this minute.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Are We in the Last Days?, pp. 8, 11

NEW TEACHING:

“He continues, ‘For many will come in My name, saying, “I am the Christ,” and will deceive many’ (verse 5). Impostors would come claiming to be messiahs or saviors of mankind and would deceive many by their counterfeit activities.”

“Messianic examples in our own century might be Adolf Hitler, Benito Mussolini, Joseph Stalin, Mao Zedong or Pol Pot.”

“Christ warned his followers that such leaders would inevitably come. Their desire for power would be so consuming that they would unwittingly put themselves in Christ’s ultimate role.”

David Hulme, Will Christ Return?, pp. 15, 16

71. WOMAN ASTRIDE BEAST

Catholic Church or Unknown System?

OLD TEACHING:

“In the 17th chapter of Revelation we find a beast, a woman – a great, wealthy woman called ‘a whore’ – who was riding the beast.”

“This woman is a fallen woman – an apostate church – and a great one, called ‘the great whore,’ pictured as ruling over many nations...”

“...this great false church is pictured sitting on a beast...A woman riding a horse guides, controls, the horse. It does her bidding. It is well known by ALL who understand Bible prophecy that this 17th chapter of Revelation pictures the Roman Catholic Church ruling over the so-called Holy Roman Empire.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Who Is the Beast?, pp. 15, 21

NEW TEACHING:

“John describes the woman riding on the beast...Who is she to wield such extraordinary power?”

“And on her forehead a name was written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH...”

“Babylon again! Not this time limited to a city. Babylon is personified as a harlot, a prostitute, who seduces and influences the destiny of the world.”

John Halford, Babylon: Past, Present...and Future, p. 15

Author's note: This same non-committal description is given in *Inside the Book of Revelation* (1989), pp. 28-29.

72. BABYLON

Present or Future?

OLD TEACHING:

“Nimrod, grandson of Ham, son of Noah, was the real founder of the Babylonish system that has gripped the world ever since – the system of organized competition – of man-ruled governments and empires, based upon the competitive and profit-making economic system.”

“We have professed to be Christian nations, but we're in Babylon, as Bible prophecy foretold, and we don't know it! 'Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues' – now soon to fall – is the warning of Revelation 18:4.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, The Plain Truth About Christmas, pp. 12, 23

NEW TEACHING:

“Babylon the great, as described in the Apocalypse, *will be* alluring.”

“So, as the great harlot sits confidently astride her beast, edging the world ever closer to disaster, God pleads with his people, 'Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of their plagues' (Revelation 18:4).”

“This may not be easy for a people used to prosperity and comfort.”

“Spiritual muscles, like physical ones, cannot be built instantly. When Babylon the great is unleashed on this earth, it may be too late to begin building enduring faith.”

John Halford, Babylon: Past, Present...and Future, pp. 20, 21

Author's note: The literature began to stress that Babylon is not a present society/system we must come out of now, it is merely something in the future. Being in this world was made much more comfortable.

73. GOD'S HOLY DAYS

Picture God's Plan or Celebrate and Honor Jesus Christ?

OLD TEACHING:

“...God gave His Church seven annual Sabbaths...[which] picture the different epochs in the plan of spiritual creation – mark the dispensations, and picture their meaning.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Pagan Holidays—or God's Holy Days—Which? (1974), p. 10

NEW TEACHING:

“As we observe the Feast, I again remind you that we are not keeping an Old Testament feast, but a New Testament feast in Jesus Christ.”

“These fall Holy Days should in every way focus our attention on our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, and the glorious salvation of God made possible through him!”

“Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,” WN, Oct. 6, 1992

“We need to see the Sabbath and Holy Days in the light of Christ, rather than seeing Christ in the light of the Sabbath and Holy Days.”

Greg Albrecht, The Plain Truth: Archetypes and Paradigms, Regional Conference, Philadelphia, Aug. 25-27, 1992, p. 7

“The Day of Atonement, like the other festivals, ultimately points to the work of Jesus Christ for salvation.”

“Do you, too, keep these New Testament Holy Days?”

God's Festivals and Holy Days, pp. 28, 44

“A modest ‘paradigm shift’ in perspective – from emphasizing Old Testament symbolism to expanding new covenant promises – reinforces the relationship of the Holy Days to redemption in Christ.”

“We continue to grow in grace and knowledge as we seek more fitting contemporary expressions...that [relate] the festivals to God's purpose of bringing the body of Christ to the fullness of Jesus Christ...”

Joseph Tkach Jr., “Church Administration,” PGR, July 13, 1993

Author's note: Joseph Tkach Jr. called the Holy Days “nice window-dressing” at a Philippine ministerial conference. All literature pertain-

ing to individual Holy Days developed increased emphasis on Jesus Christ and a lessened focus on the literal events they picture. The Holy Days were first done away, in effect, by changing their meanings to fraudulent new Protestant meanings. Later, they were thrown out entirely.

74. COLOSSIANS 2:16-17

Shadows of Things to Come or Shadows of No Value?

OLD TEACHING:

“Let no man, therefore, judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath [days]: Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body [is] of Christ.”

Colossians 2:16-17 (KJV)

“The word is in italics in Verse 17 and is not in the original. Therefore, this should read, ‘Let no man therefore judge you, – but the body of Christ.’

“The body of Christ is the Church of God (Col. 1:18) and it is the Church that is our pillar and grounding in the truth (I Tim. 3:15) and our standard, not the ideas of men.”

“The word judge in Vs. 16 is better rendered ‘call you in question.’ The Gentile Colossians previously knew nothing of God or of His Holy Days. God’s ministers taught them to observe the Sabbath and Holy Days, and outsiders called them in question for doing so. The ascetics in Colossae saw those in the Church eating and drinking, feasting on the Holy Days and despised them for it.”

“These Holy Days are shadows of things to come – they picture the major events in God’s master plan to bring all mankind to salvation.”

“Therefore, Paul is telling the Colossian converts to let no man call them in question for their observance of God’s Holy Days.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Pagan Holidays—or God’s Holy Days—Which?, pp. 32-33

“The Bible commands only one assembly for the Church on a new moon. That is on the Festival of Trumpets, the first day of the seventh month.”

“The Worldwide Church of God takes note of the new moon just as God intends (Col. 2:16) – as the beginning of the month in His solar-lunar calendar, so we can know when to keep His Holy Days.”

“Questions & Answers,” GN, Feb. 1982

NEW TEACHING:

“Paul’s list cannot have been given specifically as a reminder of what Christians should be observing, as is obvious from the mention of ‘new

moons,' for new moons are not among the days Christians are commanded to observe."

"Therefore, the Christians at Colossae were not to let themselves be taken to task by heretical teachers concerning matters such as eating, drinking, Holy Days, new moons and Sabbaths."

"After all, how could such matters transcend Christ? He is the body, the substance, the very center of God's plan of salvation."

"All else is a mere shadow that holds no value as a replacement for him (vs. 17)."

"Q & A from the PGR," WN, Jan. 22, 1990

"The matters listed, despite the claims of the Colossian heretics, could not transcend Christ who is now the body, the substance, the very center of God's plan of salvation. All else is a mere shadow that holds no value as a replacement for Christ."

"The heretics, then, were ignorantly trying to push the church at Colossae out of the light and into shadows!"

*K.J. Stavriniides, "The Colossian Heresy,"
GN, July-Aug. 1989*

"The need for animal sacrifices ceased at the death of Jesus. In addition, Jesus' life, death and resurrection changed the meaning and significance of the Old Testament Holy Days. He fulfilled these, and all of the Old Testament sacrifices."

Clayton D. Steep, "In Honor of Christ," PT, Oct. 1993

"Why don't we find the Sabbath commanded in the new covenant? The Sabbath foreshadowed the entering into the promise of God...the rest God gives from our sins through faith in Christ (Hebrews 4:8-16)."

"Colossians 2:16-17 tells us that the reality, or substance, is Christ, and now that he has come, now that we have the reality and have entered into it, there is no more requirement for the physical figure, just as there is no more need for the physical sacrifices."

"Even if the Sabbath were a command from creation, which it isn't, Colossians 2:16-17 tells us that the Sabbath is the shadow, and that Christ is the reality to which it pointed. Now that the reality, Christ, has come, the shadow, as a binding law, is no longer in force, regardless of when it began."

"The new covenant, Jesus said, is in his blood. He is the reality, and the Sabbath and the Holy Days are the shadows."

Joseph W. Tkach, Letter to Ministry, PGR, Dec. 5, 1995

"...the Colossian Christians were not observing festivals, and the heretics were claiming that they ought to, and Paul was telling the Christians to ignore the criticisms."

Worldwide Church of God, "Festivals" Study Paper, Feb. 14, 1995

75. THE AZAZEL GOAT

Satan or Christ?

OLD TEACHING:

“The key to the whole explanation lies in a correct understanding of the meaning of Azazel. This word does not occur elsewhere in the Old Testament. The Comprehensive Commentary has: ‘Spencer, after the oldest opinions of the Hebrews and Christians, thinks Azazel is the name of the Devil...’”

“Notice, now, this act of putting these already expiated and forgiven sins on the head of this live goat does not take place until after the high priest returns from the Holy of Holies within the veil – so this typified an act to take place after the second coming of Christ to this earth!”

“The devil is sent away – the symbol here used is the ‘bottomless pit’ symbol of an uninhabited desolate wilderness (Rev. 18:2) – and he is sent there by a FIT MAN – an ANGEL from heaven. Now the devil is not killed. He does not die. He is still alive a thousand years later – after the millennium (Rev. 20:7).”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Pagan Holidays—or God’s Holy Days—Which?, pp. 42, 47-48

NEW TEACHING:

“Some have seen this goat as a symbol of Christ...”

“Another explanation focuses on the scapegoat as a symbol of Satan...”

“These Day of Atonement rituals are explained in the book of Hebrews. But there’s not much there about Satan’s removal. Hebrews focuses on the priesthood of Christ.”

God’s Festivals and Holy Days, pp. 29-30

“In contrast to the concept of Azazel as a name for Satan, some scholars feel the azazel goat instead represents another aspect of Christ’s ministry: the removal of sin. Equating Azazel with a demon is thought to be based on Jewish mythology like that found in Enoch and other apocalyptic works.”

“Since the root-word meaning of azazel is the ‘goat of departure,’ any consideration that the goat might represent Satan is considered speculation and is not considered provable from the Bible.”

“The azazel controversy has continued for millennia. Strong arguments have been made that the goat represents Satan. The Church today leans toward this view but does not take a dogmatic stand on the issue. And strong arguments have been made that the goat represents Christ. It is a discussion that will likely continue.”

D. Jackson, “The Azazel Controversy,” Reviews You Can Use, Sep.-Oct. 1992

76. FOCUS OF THE BIBLE

God the Father or Jesus Christ?

OLD TEACHING:

“A cardinal point of the one true Church from the many professing sects and denominations is this: The deceived churches of this world put the focus on Christ, sometimes to the exclusion of God the Father. God becomes unreal – a mystic unreality. They do not teach that Jesus came to reveal the Father – that Jesus came to reconcile us to the Father – that it is the Father from whom our sins have cut us off...”

“The true Church has Christ in the right perspective – as mediator between us and God the Father – as personal Savior – as our present High Priest at the right hand of God the Father in heaven – as head of the Church – as coming King and ruler UNDER God the Father.”

*Herbert W. Armstrong, Where Is the True Church?,
pp. 17-18*

NEW TEACHING:

“Next Mr. Feazell asked the international editors and Pasadena publication staff members what they believed was the most important biblical truth. After listing several possible answers, he said that if we think the law, the Sabbath, the holy days, prophecy, or *any other teaching* of the Bible is more important than Jesus Christ, we miss *the main point* of the Bible. Furthermore, all these things point to Christ...The goal of the publication staff, he continued, is to pass on this gospel truth faithfully.”

“This is why the Church is preaching about Jesus Christ so much.”

*Bernard Schnippert, “Media Operations,”
PGR, Apr. 20, 1993*

77. THE CHRISTMAS TREE

Condemned by God or Not?

OLD TEACHING:

“Thus saith the Lord, Learn not the way of the heathen...For the customs of the peoples are vain; for one cutteth a tree out of the forest, the work of the hands of the workman, with the axe. They deck it with silver and with gold; they fasten it with nails and with hammers, that it move not.”

Jeremiah 10:2-4 (KJV)

“[Semiramis] claimed a full-grown evergreen tree sprang overnight from a dead tree stump, which symbolized the springing forth unto new life of the dead Nimrod. On each anniversary of his birth, she claimed, Nimrod would visit the evergreen tree and leave gifts upon it. December 25th was the birthday of Nimrod. This is the real origin of the Christmas tree.”

“[Jeremiah 10:2-6] is a perfect description of the Christmas tree, termed by the Eternal as ‘the way of the heathen – the customs of the people.’ We are commanded not to learn the way or follow it!”

Herbert W. Armstrong, The Plain Truth About Christmas (1974), pp. 12,18

NEW TEACHING:

“Jeremiah 10:2-5 reads as follows: ‘Do not learn the way of the Gentiles; do not be dismayed at the signs of heaven, for the Gentiles are dismayed at them. For the customs of the people are futile; for one cuts a tree from the forest, the work of the hands of the workman, with the ax [‘craftsman shapes it with his chisel’ – N.I.V.]. They decorate it with silver and gold; they fasten it with nails and hammers so that it will not topple. They are upright, like a palm tree [‘like a scarecrow in a melon patch’ – N.I.V.]...’”

“Reading those verses, especially without the alternate translations in brackets, it is easy to conclude that they describe the modern Christmas tree. This conclusion is even more believable if it is thought to have historical support. In reality, however, *there is no historical basis for such a conclusion.*”

“*We cannot say Jeremiah was referring to a Christmas tree.*”

“Though the modern Christmas tree can easily be traced back to seventeenth century Germany, it ‘may well be a descendant of some sacred tree carried about or set up at the beginning-of-winter festival...’ (*Guinness Book of the Christmas*, page 17.)”

“*There is nothing wrong* with beautiful music, with happy family gatherings, with feasting, rejoicing and even appropriate *festive decorations* and treats for children.”

Clayton Steep, Christmas: The Untold Story, pp. 4, 7, 19

78. CHURCH STEEPLES

Pagan Fertility Symbol or Acceptable Christian Architecture?

OLD TEACHING:

“Notice II Kings 23:6 speaks of the grove in the singular tense. It was something Josiah could pick up. And he hated it so vehemently that he burned it and ground it into bits.”

“The groves were posts, pillars, images or denuded and stripped trees dedicated to the worship of [the pagan goddess Astarte (Easter)].”

“That is why Josiah smashed the groves he brought out of the Temple. He knew it was an abomination to Almighty God in heaven.”

“It may surprise you to know that millions of people carry on this Satanic worship today!”

“[Groves] are simply obelisks, or upright towers, representing the male sex organ.”

“Today they are still used at places of worship in churches of the world, in the form of steeples perched on top of the church buildings themselves.”

“Q & A,” GN, Jan. 1987

NEW TEACHING:

Author's note: The February 1992 *Plain Truth* magazine had a cover illustration of church buildings having a total of 21 steeples. The rest of the magazine was also illustrated with steeple-topped church buildings, making the total for the entire magazine 73 steeples. The following quote was a caption from one of these illustrations:

“Church architecture, a symbol of the civilizing power and influence of Christianity in a materialistic world.”

*G. Albrecht, “Whatever Happened to New Testament Christianity?”,
PT, Feb. 1992*

Author's note: The following quotes were taken from a *Plain Truth* article illustrated by a steeple-topped church building filled with people:

“A look inside reveals that the Church is not so much a building or institution as a community of believers linked together through Jesus Christ.”

“The Church was born in a dynamic display of power that was a dramatic witness to its divine origin.”

“Nearly 2,000 years later, Christians still band together as a community of believers.”

*Greg R. Albrecht, “Why You Need the Church,”
PT, May-June 1993*

79. PASSOVER BREAD

Christ's Body Only or Church Also?

OLD TEACHING:

“There is a very clear teaching in regard to Christ having paid the physical penalty, as well as the spiritual penalty of death, in connection with Passover service instructions.”

“It is the apostle Paul's instruction to the Corinthians: 'For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you. That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat; this is [represents] my body, which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of me [a memorial].'”

“‘Wherfore,’ the instruction continues, ‘whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily [that is, in an unworthy

manner], shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep [that is, are dead]' (I Corinthians 11:23-30)."

"The Revised Standard Version translates that last sentence: 'That is why many of you are weak and ill, and some have died' – not realizing Jesus Himself had paid the penalty for physical transgression of the laws of the human body, by allowing His body to be broken open by many stripes, and not relying on the living Christ for their HEALING!"

*Herbert W. Armstrong, The Plain Truth About Healing,
pp. 27-28*

NEW TEACHING:

"The small piece of unleavened bread we eat symbolizes Jesus' body broken for our sins, and our part or calling to let Him live in us through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, making us part of the ONE BODY OF CHRIST – *HIS CHURCH*... Brethren, indeed, the profound meaning of the unleavened bread we partake of at the Passover service is far greater than mere physical healing."

*Joseph W. Tkach, "New...Meaning of Christ's Broken Body,"
WN, Mar. 23, 1987*

"[Paul] goes on to show that Christ's Passover includes our taking of the symbol of the bread, which Paul and others elsewhere shows pictures Christ's body. But Paul later – in the very next chapter! – shows that Christ's body is a symbol of the Church (I Corinthians 12:12-14)."

"Thus the 'body' of Christ they really did not discern was the Church."

"The point is this: Why should God heal their bodies if they neglected – did not discern their duty towards – His Body (the Church)?"

"The Plain Truth About Healing," WN, Feb. 29, 1988, p. 5

"The Passover Bread pictures the Body of Christ, the Church."

Earl H. Williams, "But Why the Passover Bread?", GN, Mar.-Apr. 1990

"The Passover Bread does not symbolize the Church."

"Personal by Joseph W. Tkach," WN, Apr. 23, 1990

"When we eat and drink the Passover we are in effect saying Christ is not divided and that there is no division in the body of Christ... We need to recognize the 'body of the Lord.' Both literal and symbolic. Christ's literal body was beaten, whipped, crucified, killed with the thrust of the sword. The symbolic body – the church should be ONE."

*WCG Passover Service Script, sent to all ministers
in the spring of 1993*

80. BODY OF CHRIST

Literal Spiritual Organism of Church or Mere Metaphor?

OLD TEACHING:

“The twelve disciples became the twelve original apostles. But HOW did they, with the other disciples, become ‘the BODY of Christ’?”

“While Jesus was starting the Work of God, He said, ‘I can of mine own self do nothing,’ ...and again, ‘...but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.’”

“On the day of Pentecost, 31 A.D., this [same] POWER of God did come and enter into the COLLECTIVE BODY – the Church – that now was to carry on the Work of God.”

“It is NOT a human organization. This spiritual organism is the ‘Body of Christ’ existing for the PURPOSE of carrying on THE WORK OF GOD.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Where Is the True Church?

NEW TEACHING:

“Paul provides a significant metaphor that explains the Church and its functions. He tells us that the Church is the Body of Christ.”

“This is a metaphor rich with meaning for Christians.”

“Paul emphasizes the worth of every Christian with the metaphor of the Body of Christ.”

*Greg R. Albrecht, “Why You Need the Church,”
PT, May-June 1993*

81. SIGN OF JONAH

Three Days and Three Nights or The Resurrection?

OLD TEACHING:

“An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.”

Matthew 12:39-40 (NKJV)

“These Christ-rejecting Pharisees demanded proof. Jesus offered but one evidence. That evidence was *not* the fact of *the resurrection* itself. It was the length of time He would repose in His grave, before *being resurrected*.”

“Think what this means! Jesus staked His claim to being your Saviour and mine upon remaining exactly three days and three nights in the tomb. If he remained just three days and three nights inside the earth, He would prove Himself the Saviour – if He failed in this sign, He must be rejected as an impostor!”

Herbert W. Armstrong, The Resurrection Was Not on Sunday, p. 4

NEW TEACHING:

“Jesus Christ’s reference to the sign of Jonah...was a reference to Jonah’s ministry, including his being swallowed by the great fish, his preaching to the Ninevites and their repenting.”

“Jonah was a sign to Ninevites because he came to them after being delivered from death. Applied to Jesus, the sign of Jonah was the resurrection, proof Jesus was the Christ.”

“Questions,” PT, Feb. 1993

82. THREE DAYS AND THREE NIGHTS**Exactly or About?****OLD TEACHING:**

“Jesus staked His claim to being your Saviour and mine upon remaining exactly three days and three nights in the tomb.”

“This one and only supernatural PROOF ever given by Jesus for His Messiahship has greatly bothered the commentators and the higher critics. Their attempts to explain away this sole proof for Christ’s divinity (deity) are ludicrous in the extreme. For explain this away they must, or their ‘Good-Friday-Easter’ tradition collapses.”

“Now which day of the week was the resurrection day?”

“When the women arrived, the tomb was already open! At that time Sunday morning while it was yet dark, Jesus was not there! Notice how the angel says, ‘He is not here, but is risen’ (see Mark 16:6; Luke 24:6; Matt. 28:5-6).”

“Jesus was already risen at sunrise Sunday morning! Of course, He was. He rose from the grave in the late afternoon, near sunset!”

Herbert W. Armstrong, The Resurrection Was Not on Sunday, p. 4

NEW TEACHING:

“But while the Roman contingent was on guard, an angel materialized in its midst (Matthew 28:2-4). The angel caused an earthquake and rolled back the stone from the entrance. It was now *about* three days after Jesus’ burial.”

“The Case of the Missing Body,”
PT, May-June 1993

83. CHRIST’S RESURRECTED BODY
Spiritual or Physical?**OLD TEACHING:**

“Jesus was, in the human flesh – His first birth – a descendant of David. But, by the resurrection from the dead (born again), Jesus became the born Son of God, now no longer human, but composed of Spirit – a Spirit Being.

He thus became the first so born of many brethren who shall be born again at the time of the resurrection of those who are Christ's."

Herbert W. Armstrong, The Incredible Human Potential, p. 185

NEW TEACHING:

"In February of 1991, two authorities of the Worldwide Church of God were invited to Trinity Evangelical Divinity School (Deerfield, Illinois) to speak about their doctrinal changes at the Tanner Lecture series."

"The Worldwide Church of God representatives were Michael A. Snyder, David Hulme (Director of Communications and Public Affairs), and J. Michael Feazell (Executive Assistant to Joseph Tkach, Pastor General)."

"In our discussion with the Worldwide Church of God authorities, they consistently said that Jesus was raised bodily from the grave, glorified and immortal. Their proof that His raised body was real is Luke 24:39, where He calls His body 'flesh and bones.'"

McDowell and Stewart, The Deceivers: What Cults Believe, p. 290

"...the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ is of prime importance to Christians..."

"Questions," PT, Apr. 1993

"Jesus Christ clearly showed to his disciples that after his resurrection, he still had the body he had before his death."

"Jesus graphically proved to Thomas that his same body that died on the cross was raised from the dead."

"Thus, Jesus' resurrected body was still the body he had before his death, but it was no longer subject to physical limitations. The Bible calls the resurrected body a glorified body."

"Questions," PT, Apr. 1994

84. EATING UNLEAVENED BREAD

Symbol of Obedience or Symbol of Grace?

OLD TEACHING:

"The Israelites were not merely to expunge all leavening and leavened foods from their property. That would have only symbolized putting away sin. They were commanded to eat unleavened bread during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. This act of eating unleavened bread symbolizes the opposite of sin – obedience to God."

*Richard H. Sedliacik, "The Feast of Unleavened Bread,"
GN, Mar. 1983*

"To observe the Passover alone, and then fail to observe the seven Days of Unleavened Bread, means, in the symbolism, to accept Christ's blood,

and then to continue in sin – to erroneously say the Law is done away, that we are under grace alone, meaning license, to continue sin!”

Herbert W. Armstrong, *Pagan Holidays—or God's Holy Days—Which?*,
pp. 20-21

NEW TEACHING:

“As we assemble together on these deeply significant occasions to worship and glorify the God of our salvation, let's remember that Jesus Christ is the substance, the essence, the real meaning behind them.”

“Along these lines, I hope we can see that it is of no consequence whether one eats unleavened bread every day during the Festival of Unleavened Bread, for example.”

“Eating unleavened bread is a symbol of our new ‘unleavened’ spiritual condition resulting from faith in Jesus Christ (I Corinthians 5:7).”

Joseph W. Tkach, *Letter to the Ministry*,
PGR, Apr. 21, 1992

Author's note: See also change 88.

85. EASTER

Utterly Abominable Paganism or Venerated Christian Holiday?

OLD TEACHING:

“Easter is one of the *pagan* days Paul warned Gentile converts they must not return to observing (Galatians 4:9-10).”

“All Western nations have been deceived into dropping the festival God ordained forever to commemorate the death of the true Saviour for our sins, and substituting in its place the pagan festival in commemoration of the counterfeit ‘savior’ and mediator Baal, the sun god, named after the mythical Ishtar, his wife – actually none other than the ancient Semiramis, who palmed herself off as the wife of the sun god, the idolatrous ‘queen of heaven.’”

“This is not Christian! It is pagan to the core!”

“Yet scores of millions are deceived into observing this form of *heathen idolatry*, under the delusion they are honoring Jesus Christ the Son of the Creator God!”

“Why follow *heathenism* and try to convince yourself you are a Christian? God calls such things *abomination*!”

“Yes, deceived into believing this is Christian, millions practice every Easter the identical form of the ancient sun worship of the sun god Baal! Throughout the Bible this is revealed as the *most abominable of all idolatry* in the sight of the Eternal Creator!”

Herbert W. Armstrong, *The Plain Truth About Easter*,
pp. 6, 8-11

NEW TEACHING:

“Traditionally, during this time of year *Christians* throughout the world celebrate Easter in remembrance of Jesus’ resurrection. The *Christian* Easter season continues to Pentecost, which commemorates the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles and Jesus’ other followers.”

“These two religious days, *venerated* by the *Christian* world, picture miracles *important* to Christianity. More than that, the Bible shows that the resurrection and Pentecost are central to our salvation.”

Paul Kroll, “He Is Risen...,” PT, May-June 1993

Author’s note: An advertisement in the May-June *Plain Truth* invited readers to request a booklet that explained the “fascinating story of Easter.” Webster’s gives the definition of *fascinating* as “extremely interesting or charming.” Others define it as “interesting due to its beauty.”

“The term pagan will be removed from the booklet *Pagan Holidays or God’s Holy Days – Which?* ‘That word needlessly incites people,’ said Mr. [Greg] Albrecht.”

J. Zhorne, “International Editors Meet, Updated on Church Lit.”
WN, Jan. 28, 1991

86. CRUCIFIXION DATE

31 A.D. (Wednesday Passover) or 30/33 A.D. (Friday Passover)?

OLD TEACHING:

“The crucifixion occurred upon a Wednesday, April 25, A.D. 31.”

“And the annual Sabbath was Thursday. This was the Sabbath that drew on as Joseph of Arimathea hastened to bury the body of Jesus late that Wednesday afternoon. There were two separate Sabbaths that week!”

“And since we know Christ was buried late Wednesday afternoon, and that the resurrection took place at the same time of day three days later, we now know the resurrection of Christ occurred late Saturday afternoon.”

“It is significant that in Daniel’s prophecy of the ‘seventy weeks’ (Dan. 9:24-27), Jesus was to be cut off ‘in the midst of the week.’”

Herbert W. Armstrong, The Resurrection Was Not on Sunday,
pp. 10, 12, 18

“For 1600 years the Western world has been taught that Christ rose from the dead on Sunday morning. But that is merely one of the fables the Apostle Paul warned readers of the New Testament to expect. The resurrection did not occur on Sunday!”

Herbert W. Armstrong, The Plain Truth About Easter, p. 11

NEW TEACHING:

“Key Dates and Events from the Book of Acts”

“30/33 AD – Jesus crucified; Church begins on Pentecost (Dates vary according to perspectives of scholars.)”

*Ronald Kelly, “Chronology Handout for Bible Study on Acts,”
Reviews You Can Use, Nov.-Dec. 1992*

Author's note: Both A.D. 30 and A.D. 33 had Friday Passovers.

87. DAY OF PASSOVER

14th OR 15th of Nisan?

OLD TEACHING:

“On the tenth day of this first month the Israelites were instructed to take a lamb without blemish. They kept it until – not after – the 14th day of the same first month. At even, at dusk as the Jewish translation has it – between the two evenings, or between sunset and dark – the Passover lamb was killed.”

“This was in, not after, the 14th day.”

“There are some very important details it is vital that we notice at this point; perhaps we have not seen them before. It proves that the Passover should be observed the 14th, not the 15th.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Pagan Holidays—or God's Holy Days—Which? (1974), p. 12

NEW TEACHING:

“The lambs that first Passover were to be killed near the end of the 14th and on into the night – beginning the 15th.”

“Then as the 15th was beginning the lamb was prepared and roasted and then a little before midnight on the 15th eaten with your family.”

*Ted Johnston, “Israel and the Passover Story,”
WN, Feb. 17, 1992*

88. LEAVEN

Type of Sin or Not?

OLD TEACHING:

“And, as leaven is also a type of sin (I Cor. 5:8) – leaven puffs up, and so does sin – and, as seven is God's number symbolizing completeness, we are to follow the Passover with seven days of unleavened bread.”

“The seven days of the Feast of Unleavened Bread picture the keeping of the Commandments, which is another way of saying the putting away of sin.”

*Herbert W. Armstrong, Pagan Holidays—or God's Holy Days—Which?,
pp. 20, 21*

NEW TEACHING:

Author's note: According to three taped sermons sent to all ministers (with one by Bernard Schnippert and another by Victor Kubik), leaven was no longer a type of sin.

89. CHRIST'S BODY AND BLOOD

Dual or Singular Sacrifice?

OLD TEACHING:

“HOW does Christ’s broken body make our healing possible? I answer with another question: How does Christ’s shed blood – His DEATH – make possible the forgiveness of spiritual sin – transgression of the spiritual law – the Ten Commandments? Simply by having PAID THE PENALTY IN OUR STEAD – THAT’S HOW! His beaten body paid in our stead the PENALTY we are suffering when the physical laws in the human body have been transgressed and have brought on the PENALTY of the sickness, disease or whatever – sometimes the first death!”

Herbert W. Armstrong, The Plain Truth About Healing, p. 47

NEW TEACHING:

“We need to understand that Jesus’ broken body is a part of His complete sacrifice for us, ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY SPIRITUALLY for us to receive the gift of eternal life – it is NOT merely a physical sacrifice to forgive ‘physical’ sin for the purpose of physical healing!”

“...Paul nowhere separates Christ’s sacrifice into one spiritual part and one physical part. He combines the body and blood of Jesus into one supreme SPIRITUAL sacrifice.”

*Joseph W. Tkach, “New...Meaning of Christ’s Broken Body,”
WN, Mar. 23, 1987*

“This breaking of sin into ‘physical sin’ and ‘spiritual sin’ (and the consequent dividing of Christ’s sacrifice into physical and spiritual components) is an explanation that plays upon a Christian’s natural tendency to find parallels and analogies between the physical planes. Further, certain verses are thought to support this concept, especially if read with an unconscious mind-set toward seeing sin and Christ’s sacrifice in such a dual and divided manner.”

Joseph W. Tkach and Bernard W. Schnippert, The Plain Truth About Healing, p. 6

90. MEDICAL SCIENCE**Rely on God More or Rely on Both?****OLD TEACHING:**

“Why do YOU go on PAYING THE PENALTY or else paying the DOCTOR BILLS or probably BOTH, when Jesus Christ paid it all FOR YOU?...”

“I have been frankly aroused to indignation to hear of this false, faith-shattering teaching in this supposedly scholarly theological manual, wherein ministers were literally instructed to encourage God’s people to TRUST IN MAN – in the ‘advanced expertise’ of the medical profession – and to discourage them from having faith in God.”

“Jesus Christ, through His apostle, teaches ministers to ENCOURAGE RELIANCE ON THE LIVING CHRIST, rather than on man.”

“Do we ever need doctors? Yes we do – but the true people of God do not need them to compete with God as our GOD-HEALER...”

“It seems so much easier today to just go to a doctor and TRUST IN MAN – MAN CUT OFF FROM GOD – than to RELY ON CHRIST and His PROMISES!”

Herbert W. Armstrong, The Plain Truth About Healing, pp. 48, 57, 58, 64

NEW TEACHING:

“The Bible simply does not label doctors, medicines and operations as sin.”

“Since seeking medical aid is not a sin and may help a person, under many circumstances a person indeed should seek professional help. Not doing so could be spiritually negligent.”

“The answer for an ill child is different. The adult responsible in such a case has no biblical grounds, and therefore no Church support, for withholding proper treatment from the child...”

Joseph W. Tkach and B.W. Schnippert, The Plain Truth About Healing, pp. 45, 51

91. PHYSICAL SIN**Fact or Fiction?****OLD TEACHING:**

“When a person is sick or has contracted a disease, he is simply paying the PENALTY of transgressed physical law in his body.”

“Eating improper food, neglecting elimination or polluting the lungs with tobacco smoke prevents those laws from perfect functioning – definitely transgresses laws that God set in motion and that operate in the human body. This definitely is TRANSGRESSED PHYSICAL LAW! It is a law GOD designed and set in motion. This TRANSGRESSION OF LAW, according to God’s definition (I John 3:4), is physical SIN! Its penalty is sickness, disease or debility.”

"To say there is no such thing as physical sin, as has been said by self-professing intellectuals, is NOT intellectual – it is rank STUPIDITY, IGNORANCE OR WILLFUL PERVERSION OF PLAIN SIMPLE TRUTH!"

Herbert W. Armstrong, The Plain Truth About Healing, pp. 25, 47

NEW TEACHING:

"The 'physical sin' concept leads to worry, depression, self-righteousness, judging, confusion, guilt and inordinate fear of doctors. Its fruit is not good because it is not true."

Joseph W. Tkach and Bernard W. Schnippert, The Plain Truth About Healing, p. 14

92. EMOTIONAL TURMOIL

Control It or Get Anointed for It?

OLD TEACHING:

"And one of the things every human needs, so vitally, to learn, is the right use of human emotions. So you see, the human MIND has something vital to do with human emotions. Yet most people never give thought to controlling emotions with the mind..."

"But our emotions need to be understood, taught, trained and controlled by the mind!..."

"OUR MINDS WERE GIVEN US FOR A PURPOSE!"

"If we do learn to live by 'every word of God' – by GOD'S INSTRUCTION BOOK – we will learn to guide emotions intelligently – but we shall not suppress them, neither let them run rampant and uncontrolled where they ought not."

Herbert W. Armstrong, "What Is Emotional Maturity?", Youth 85, May 1985

NEW TEACHING:

"It most certainly is appropriate for a minister to anoint a person who requests it for reasons of emotional pain and inner turmoil."

"A person should have a real problem, and emotional problems are real problems. Anointings should be for a specific difficulty. Usually, the specific ailment may be shared with the minister. However, if it is a problem of an intensely private and personal nature, the minister should not demand to know what it is but should anoint so long as he is sure the individual in question is asking for a specific reason."

"Questions & Answers," PGR, Jan. 20, 1993

93. PERSECUTION

Fact of Life or Embarrassment to be Avoided?

OLD TEACHING:

"Jesus Christ founded the one true Church of God on the day of Pentecost, in June, A.D. 31. It began that day with 120 members. It was not

a ‘cult.’ Jesus, during His lifetime, called those original members the ‘little flock’ ...”

“The true Church of God, holding to the true Gospel of Jesus Christ, and the teaching of Christ and the apostles, soon had to go underground, meeting for services in secret. Millions were tortured and put to death for their faith.”

“The Worldwide Church of God today holds to the SAME FAITH, same doctrines, same customs and practices, as the original Church of A.D. 31...”

*Herbert W. Armstrong, “Just What Do You Mean—a Cult?”,
PT, Aug. 1980*

“...the minute you begin to do what Jesus did, they’re going to call you a fanatic. Now they called Him one. They hated Him. They sought to kill Him and they finally did. And Jesus said, ‘If they’ve hated Me, they’ll hate you also. If they’ve persecuted Me, they’ll persecute you also.’”

*Herbert W. Armstrong, “True Church,”
WT Radio Broadcast, #9797*

“...and ‘all who live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.’”

“Are you persecuted, opposed, for your belief and Christian life? If not, you’d better fall to your knees quickly, and repent, and ask God to show you why you are not living godly in Christ Jesus!”

*Herbert W. Armstrong, “Why You Are Alive,”
Youth 83, May 1983*

“Wouldn’t it be all right to compromise, ‘just a little,’ on some ‘unimportant minor point’? Especially on some ostensibly unimportant point where we appear ‘crazy’ to the world?”

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

“Personal from Herbert W. Armstrong,” GN, Dec. 1976

NEW TEACHING:

Author’s note: Two taped sermons were sent to be played in all churches in the spring of 1993 – one by Mr. Ronald Kelly and one by Mr. Joseph W. Tkach. Mr. Kelly stated that the Church was now using “divinity school language,” because “we don’t want the world to think we are bizarre or weird.” He also said that he didn’t like being called a cult. Mr. Tkach said in his sermon that he was embarrassed that the Church was labeled as a cult.

94. ANOINTING OIL

Symbolic of Holy Spirit Alone or Symbolic of Medicine Also?

OLD TEACHING:

“Various symbols designate God’s Holy Spirit in the Bible. Among them are breath...oil...fire...dove...wind...water...seal...sword...and lamps.”

The God Family and the Holy Spirit, p. 8

“If I could, I would come personally to your home and anoint you with oil. Since that is impossible, we must follow the example of the Apostle Paul – a small plain handkerchief has been anointed and hands have been laid on it.”

“So just accept and believe in God’s PROMISES, which He has promised for YOU, and in *faith* apply this handkerchief to the body, and GOD WILL PERFORM the HEALING HE HAS PROMISED! *He will not fail you!*”

Herbert W. Armstrong, anointing letter

NEW TEACHING:

“By seeing olive oil as a first-century person would have seen it – that is, by looking at it in its broad scope and not *only* as a symbol of God’s Spirit – we can begin to understand the full reason why the elders of the Church were to anoint the sick party.”

“In a physical sense, applying the oil shows that the Church – represented by the minister – outpours its love and concern as would a nurse who would bind and dress the wound of a patient, pouring medicine on it, perhaps oil and wine.”

“When this is understood, the anointing process is seen to encourage the proper use of self-help and medicinal techniques, for it finds the minister applying a traditional medicine of the day to the sick person...(This in no way implies the minister was or should be a medicine man, nor practice medicine without a license nor given medicinal advice. The act is symbolic.)”

Joseph W. Tkach and B.W. Schnippert, The Plain Truth About Healing, pp. 49-50

95. TREATING DISEASE

Harmless Remedies Acceptable or Methods Make No Difference?

OLD TEACHING:

“The physical human body is, God says, the very TEMPLE of His Holy Spirit. If we defile this TEMPLE – this physical body – God says He will destroy us! God intended, if we are to be COMPLETE, to live happy, healthy

and abundant lives, and to gain eternal life, to take in HIS SPIRIT – not poisonous foreign substances like tobacco.”

“Many on whom I called were, by fasting followed by right diet, relieved of rheumatism, constipation, colds, and many other chronic ailments or diseases.”

“One doctor confided to his elderly mother that if all drugs were dumped into the ocean, it would be so much better for humanity, and so much worse for the fish. But such was the ‘science’ of man that all too often it is, as the Word of God says plainly, ‘science falsely so called.’”

*Autobiography of Herbert W. Armstrong, Vol. 1,
pp. 325-326, 408, 409*

“The theory is: The sufferer has in his body one poison, so we add another poison in the form of medicine. And one poison plus one more poison equals NO poison!”

“God has gone to great lengths a) to bestow upon us His love and mercy, and b) to be consistent with His law. God’s arithmetic is: One poison minus that one poison equals NO poison!”

“Let’s UNDERSTAND and fix firmly in mind this TRUTH: The medical profession is one of THIS WORLD’S humanly devised phases of a man-made civilization – CUT OFF from God, but swayed and deceived by Satan!”

“We must rely on GOD for guidance even in what we are made able to do for ourselves.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, The Plain Truth About Healing pp. 26, 63, 66

“It never seemed to occur to the liberal mind that CHRIST will solve our problems, and we do not have to go contrary to HIS ATTITUDE.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “What Is a Liberal?”, GN, Mar. 1979

NEW TEACHING:

“Special diets or supplements are just as physical as surgery, radiation or chemotherapy...”

“Is it more ‘natural’ to fill the body with 1,000 times the normal recommended requirement of vitamin C than to take a dose of antibiotic? Hardly!”

Joseph W. Tkach and B.W. Schnippert, The Plain Truth About Healing, p. 53

96. SIGNS TO ACCOMPANY GOSPEL

For Us Today or For First Century Church Only?

OLD TEACHING:

“More than 1,900 years ago...Jesus Christ appeared on earth as a messenger bearing history’s most important message from God to mankind.”

“But Jesus’ ministry was a dual ministry. And a miraculous ministry...”

“Jesus came also healing the sick by divine POWER of God...Few realize the extent to which healing and casting out demons were an integral part of Jesus’ ministry. Later, the apostles proclaimed His same message and healed the sick.”

“The original one and only true Church of God still lives! And...it is restoring the true gospel of Jesus Christ today!”

“And Christ’s doctrine of healing the sick is also being restored. There have been multiple thousands of miraculous healings.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, The Plain Truth About Healing, pp. 8-9, 12

“The day of miracles is not past! It’s only past for scoffers, skeptics, and unbelievers!”

*Herbert W. Armstrong, “Punishment of Modern Babylon,”
WT Radio Broadcast, #9888*

NEW TEACHING:

“It was during Jesus’ ministry and the original apostles’ early ministry that God poured out the gift of healing more than at any other time in history. The powerful and awe-inspiring miracles that were performed by the apostles served to demonstrate dramatically that they were indeed true servants and followers of Jesus. At that time, there was no New Testament for people to read of the miraculous power of God. It was literally and powerfully demonstrated. But God did not plan for His Church to grow very large. After several years, that initial surge of miraculous power as a public sign of where God was working was no longer in God’s purpose.”

Joseph W. Tkach, “New...Meaning of Christ’s Broken Body,” WN, Mar. 23, 1987

97. TRANSGRESSING LAWS

Breaking or Contravening?

OLD TEACHING:

“So now you forsake your way – you forsake sin or breaking His Law. You forsake breaking it by keeping it – obeying it.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, What Do You Mean...Salvation?, p.15

“One may not himself have broken a physical law...Nevertheless, sickness and disease are the penalty being paid for broken physical law.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, The Plain Truth About Healing, p. 20

NEW TEACHING:

“Many illnesses (not all illnesses) result after one or more of the seven great laws of health we should have learned about in school have been ‘broken’ (or rather, contravened)”

Joseph W. Tkach and Bernard W. Schnippert, The Plain Truth About Healing, p. 5

“We often say people ‘break’ God’s laws. Actually, people disobey God’s law and the law ‘breaks’ them...Laws of physics and dynamics, laws of chemistry and nutrition are not something we can ‘break.’”

Joseph W. Tkach, “New...Meaning of Christ’s Broken Body,” WN, Mar. 23, 1987

98. MASTURBATION

Perversion or Release of Tension?

OLD TEACHING:

“Nearly all books on sex – produced by the medical doctors, psychiatrists, and others from the purely physical approach – assert that masturbation is not harmful. **THEY ARE WRONG!**”

“Masturbation is a form of **PERVERSION**. It is a **SIN!**”

“It is harmful psychologically! Invariably it produces a guilty conscience, and destroys normal confidence. Sex experience belongs in marriage!”

“Most boys and some girls get into the habit of masturbation at an age so young they simply cannot remember its beginning after growing up. It is a nasty habit, often almost impossible to break. There is no greater plague!”

Herbert W. Armstrong, The Missing Dimension in Sex, pp. 214-215

NEW TEACHING:

“You asked what the Bible has to say about the practice of self-stimulation or masturbation.”

“Masturbation is not directly mentioned in the Bible.”

“The problem with masturbation is not the physical release of sexual tension. Sin occurs in the act of masturbation as a result of the sinful fantasies that usually accompany it.”

“If one has lustful fantasies, he should not let this situation continue. We must overcome sin and not let it rule us (Romans 6:13-14).”

“Thank you for your question. It has been a pleasure to assist you.”

WCG PCD Letter L312

Author’s note: This same answer was used in the “Question & Answer” section of a *Youth 93* magazine.

99. DISEASE AS PUNISHMENT

Biblical Fact or Unmerciful Condemnation?

OLD TEACHING:

“If a man lies with a male as he lies with a woman, both of them have committed abomination. They shall surely be put to death.”

Leviticus 20:13 (NKJV)

“If you do not carefully observe all the words of this law that are written in this book, that you may fear this glorious and awesome name, THE LORD YOUR GOD, then the Lord will bring upon you and your descendants extraordinary plagues – great and prolonged plagues – and serious and prolonged sicknesses. Moreover He will bring back on you all the diseases of Egypt, of which you were afraid, and they shall cling to you. Also every sickness and every plague, which is not written in the book of the law, will the Lord bring upon you until you are destroyed.”

Deuteronomy 28:58-61 (NKJV)

“God condemns homosexuality. He destroyed the whole populations of Sodom and Gomorrah for this sin. It is condemned in the first chapter of Romans, saying no such person can enter the kingdom of God. Then we try to change the ugly, reproachful name homosexual, and call those who practice it ‘gays.’ The public media and the public in general are coming to make this perversion acceptable by calling it ‘sexual preference.’”

“We inflict on ourselves through sin such diseases as alcoholism, AIDS, herpes and other venereal diseases, and then try to prevent the penalty of those sins...that will allow the sins to continue.”

*Herbert W. Armstrong, “Giving Sin Public Acceptance,”
PT, Mar. 1986*

NEW TEACHING:

“Is AIDS God’s express judgment and condemnation of the promiscuous? Before we pass our verdict, let’s examine God’s thoughts on judgment.”

“Do I have any pleasure at all that the wicked should die?” says the Lord God, ‘and not that he should turn from his ways and live?’”

“Regardless of when the penalties of sin manifest themselves, God does not give humans the prerogative to condemn. ‘Let us not judge one another anymore,’ Paul wrote...”

*George Hague, “AIDS: The Judgment of God?”,
PT, July 1992*

“God is love, and he desires mercy over judgment (James 2:13). He doesn’t take pleasure in suffering of any kind. God is not looking for excuses to punish humans.”

*Greg R. Albrecht, “Letters to the Editor,”
PT, Nov.-Dec. 1992*

Author’s note: This was in response to someone disagreeing with the above quoted *PT* article.

100. PURPOSE OF DISEASE**Teaches Lawkeeping or Teaches Faithfulness While Suffering?****OLD TEACHING:**

“But isn’t it natural to be sick? Are we not made in such a way that we simply have to become sick and contract disease?”

“The answer is an EMPHATIC NO!”

“The Almighty God made the human body so that – even though composed of material substance from the ground – its normal condition is one of robust, invigorating, radiant GOOD HEALTH!...”

“Sickness and disease are ABNORMAL – they are the PENALTY of VIOLATION OF NATURAL LAWS.”

“God intended us to obey His laws – His physical laws that operate in our bodies for good health as well as His spiritual Law.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “The Key to Radiant Health,”
PT, Jan. 1982

“It is not natural to be sick, it is UNnatural! God so designed the mechanism of the human body that, given proper food...pure water...pure air...sufficient exercise...sufficient rest, recreation and sleep...normal regularity of elimination...and keeping the mind in a positive, cheerful, active and peaceful state, the body would never be sick!”

“The point is this: Obeying THESE seven laws is the responsibility of each individual.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “The Plain Truth About Fasting,”
PT, June-July 1982

NEW TEACHING:

“Nonetheless, the body is obviously subject to physical, mental and emotional malfunction by its very design!”

“[God] knows they can and has allowed for the *probability* that they will break down! He has subjected us to this reality in the hope that character will result...”

“God has made us potentially subject to illnesses so that through sickness, should it occur, we might build character (which, whether we like it or not, comes through suffering).”

“The truth is that God made our bodies vulnerable to illness. He did so in the hope that we may learn character through suffering, including sickness.”

Joseph W. Tkach, The Plain Truth About Healing,
pp. 5, 14

101. 7 KEYS TO UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLE

Keep Them or Throw Them Out?

OLD TEACHING:

“Seven vital keys thrown away – Christ gave His apostles the keys of true UNDERSTANDING, which unlock the door to the KINGDOM OF GOD.”

“Church leaders only used the keys to lock up the door of the Kingdom, and then threw the keys away, even as the Pharisees and rulers did before...”

“[1] The Gospel of Christ is the Gospel Christ preached...not a story about His person.”

“[2] As Christ our example learned by suffering...GOD’S PURPOSE is to create in us...holy, righteous, spiritual, immortal CHARACTER...”

“[3] And positively none can understand Bible prophecies unless this DUALITY of fulfillment is understood.”

“[4] Every sect...that does not observe God’s Holy Days...has never understood the knowledge of GOD’S PLAN!”

“[5] Britain is Ephraim, and the United States is Manasseh...prophecies cannot be understood without this vital key.”

“[6] [Bible] symbols are interpreted in plain language in the Bible itself...and we must...never apply our own.”

“[7] [God’s Sabbath] is the test Commandment...that...stands as the final completing basic key – for ‘A GOOD UNDERSTANDING have all they that do his commandments’!”

“The churches have lost these KEYS! No wonder they are all mixed up, in confusion, each claiming the Bible says something different, none understanding ITS TRUE MESSAGE!”

*Herbert W. Armstrong, “Seven Keys to Understanding the Bible,”
WCG Article Reprint*

NEW TEACHING:

Author’s note: These seven keys were once again thrown away:

- [1] The true gospel – see changes 1 and 2
- [2] Salvation is creation – see changes 20, 21, and 51.
- [3] God’s dual method in prophecy – see change 205.
- [4] Meaning of God’s Holy Days – see change 73. Check 236-280.
- [5] The truth about Israel’s identity – see changes 6 and 7.
- [6] Bible interpretation of symbols – see changes 7 and 151.
- [7] Necessity of keeping God’s Sabbath – see changes 115 and 116.

102. AMOUNT OF HOLY SPIRIT

Can or Can't Be Increased

OLD TEACHING:

“You cannot get a supply of God’s Spirit and then bottle it up within you. This power comes to you from God daily! It circulates from God into YOU and then out from you in love, faith, in joy, in patience – even in performing miracles...”

“You might have been imbued with this power yesterday and depleted of it today!”

“[The original Christians] urgently, intensively, cried to God to FILL THEM with His power – to give them boldness, faith, power of speech. They asked God fervently and believably to heal and perform miracles.”

“Do you yield yourself as fully – surrender your will as unconditionally to God – pray as often, as earnestly and intensively, as they? If you do you will be filled with as much of the divine POWER as they – for God is not a respecter of persons!”

*Herbert W. Armstrong, “Christians Have Lost Their Power!”,
GN, Feb. 1983*

“Matthew 25 shows the time just before Christ shall return. It pictures the Laodicean church as 10 virgins who took their lamps (their Bibles) and went forth to meet Christ at His coming. But five of them – half of the Church – took their lamps (Bibles) but without oil to light the lamps (having the Holy Spirit to UNDERSTAND the Bible).”

*Herbert W. Armstrong, “What Lies Ahead Now?”,
GN, Jan. 1984*

NEW TEACHING:

“We do know that we cannot earn the Holy Spirit; thus, we cannot earn varying amounts of it.”

“Thus, having more or less of the Holy Spirit is not an issue...The Bible indicates people either have the Holy Spirit or they don’t.”

“Questions,” PT, May-June 1993

“The Holy Spirit is God (Matthew 28:19), and is, therefore, not divisible into quantities. Thus, the different amounts of oil in [the parable of the 10 virgins] do not represent different amounts of the Holy Spirit.”

“Having oil represents a Christian being spiritually prepared, not having different amounts of the Holy Spirit.”

“This parable shows that we cannot...at any time...buy or borrow a personal...relationship with Jesus Christ.”

“Questions,” PT, Feb. 1994

103. CHURCH GROWTH

Proof God Is Pleased or Unreliable Superstitious Thermometer?

OLD TEACHING:

“The Church was organized in October, 1933. *Nineteen* members!”

“The Church’s Work grew at the unmatched incredible rate of *30 percent per year on the average for 35 YEARS!*”

“Then, 1968, Christ began opening doors for me to proclaim Christ’s Gospel in many nations on all continents, by personal invitations to private meetings with kings, emperors, presidents, prime ministers of many nations (Revelation 10:11). This kept me away from Pasadena more and more of the time – up to 300 out of the 365 days in a year! I delegated the day-to-day administration to executive vice-presidents of evangelist rank in Christ’s ministry. They were commissioned to carry out executive administration *ONLY* of policies and procedures Christ had instituted through me, and which had been building the Work on a *30 percent per year increase for 35 years.*”

“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 in 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 living Christ stood still.”

“Those who were perverting Christ’s Gospel and God’s teachings in His Word are gone from us now – no longer members of God’s Family. When our performance pleases God the Father and Christ His Son, they **BLESS THE WORK AND IT GROWS!**”

“**“ALREADY GOD IS ADDING TO HIS CHURCH AND CAUSING THE WORK TO GROW AS DURING THE 35 YEARS PRIOR TO 1968!”**

*Herbert W. Armstrong, Brethren and Co-worker Letter,
Dec. 19, 1980*

“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...They were...watering down the sacred and precious truths of Christ!’”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “And Now Christ Sets Church Back on Track Doctrinally,” GN, Apr. 1979

“The Church was being blessed and growing – up to about 1968. *For 35 years God had caused it to grow at the phenomenal and unmatched rate of 30 percent average increase per year.* Then, beginning 1968, Christ the living Head of the Church, began to send me to capitals of nations all over the world. I was unable to give day-to-day management at headquarters. Sin entered Pasadena leadership. The Church stopped its phenomenal growth.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “How subtly Satan used MAKEUP to start the Church off the track,” WN, Nov. 16, 1981

“As long as this Church believed and spoke the SAME THING Christ put in it through His apostle, HE BLESSED IT, and *it GREW 30 percent a year for 35 years.* But when my son Garner Ted came to take over more authority than had been delegated him, surrounding himself with a group of liberals, who LED him, and MISled him into *watering down God’s doctrines* – under their false influence a Laodicean lukewarmness and indifference, losing the LOVE of God’s truth, found root in the Church – AND GOD WITHDREW HIS BLESSING!”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “And Now Christ Sets Church Back on Track Doctrinally,” GN, Apr. 1979

“God had blessed His Church with an unprecedented approximate increase of *30 percent per year for 35 years.* As these liberals began gaining more and more control God removed His blessing. I have often said that God blesses us as we please Him.”

“God says we are to judge by the fruits.”

“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 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!"

Herbert W. Armstrong, "Recent History of the Philadelphian Era..."
WN, June 24, 1985

"Now, after some 12 years of tearing down what Christ had built, once again new members are coming in – Church GROWTH is once again, during 1980, up to a 30-percent increase – as it was for 35 long years!"

Herbert W. Armstrong, "Shall We All Leave the Church of God?",
GN, Sep. 1980

Author's note: Mr. Armstrong repeatedly used the figures "30 percent growth for 35 years" in his writings, including many times in his autobiography. The years he was referring to were from 1934 through 1968.

NEW TEACHING:

"Yes, God will bless us, but some have taken this to mean, understand this, some have taken this to mean that the members' or the Church's income – now here is where the superstitious side of this concept or understanding comes in – because some have taken this to mean that the members' or the Church's income or its prosperity is some sort of scientific thermometer of his, hers or the Church's spiritual state."

"Haven't we all been guilty of that in one way or another? I'm not going to ask you for the show of hands, because if you don't put your hands up you're a liar!"

"Someone is condemning us and accusing us that evidently our ways are not pleasing to God because you see our income has dropped."

"Because unconsciously, in times past we wrote, and it was just a statement in one sense in passing so you see, that in prior years the Work grew by 30 percent for 35 consecutive years. Let me see a show of hands. Anyone think that? There's some honest people here – they think it, you see..."

"That's not the case at all. Because you see, when that statement was made in 1985, and you go back 30 years which takes you to 1950, and just use the hypothetical figure – let's say a thousand people – members at that particular time. Do we have any mathematicians here with a calculator? If we had one thousand people in 1950 going back 30 years from 1985, and we grew by 30% for 35 consecutive years, how many people would we have here?"

"You know, by those standards, we should have somewhere between 5 to 7 million people – members. But we used that statement, much to our chagrin."

"And so because of that the Church is under a serious curse all because we have 'departed from the faith that was once delivered unto the saints' and all kinds of accusations. Hogwash and garbage!"

Joseph W. Tkach, "Suffering and Trials," sermon taped Feb. 8, 1992,
Played in all churches

"You sent in some information regarding my father's statement that the Church had not grown 30 percent for 35 years. Your observations are correct. '...my dad was addressing a specific misstatement someone had made in 1985 that the Church had grown 30 percent for the last 35 years (1950-1985). That, of course did not happen.'"

"The Church did grow, as you pointed out, at an average of a little under 30 percent for its first 35 years. My dad was trying to make the...point...that never-ending growth at such a rate is impossible, and is not a measure of righteousness. Although his explanation was a little confusing, I'm glad to see that the overall point was plain enough."

Joseph Tkach Jr., Personal Letter to Member, Jan. 1993

"The statement made in 1985 that the Church had grown 30 percent for the last 35 years (1950-1985) was indeed an error. The truth was that the Church experienced an approximate 30 percent growth average for the first 35 years under Mr. Armstrong. My dad's comments merely reflected that it would have been mathematically impossible to extend such a trend and still have only our present number of members. The more important concept my father was pointing out was that it is not numbers that determine righteousness. Perhaps this explanation was a little confusing. For someone who is not a mathematician it can be difficult to juggle numbers in a public setting."

Joseph Tkach Jr., Personal Letter to Member, Mar. 1993

"The following comments are reported from the taped sermon of David Register, pastor of one of the larger Boston area churches of the Worldwide Church of God..."

"Register explained 'Let us take a brief look at some of the past improper paradigms. And I am repeating what Mr. Tkach gave the ministry at the recent Ministerial Refresher Program.'"

"An interesting set of statistics was brought out concerning the growth of the WCG through the years. Register explains, 'I know the Church of God said wrongfully, as Mr. Tkach admitted, that for many, many years the Church of God grew at 30% a year rate. Mr. Armstrong got that in his head, because for the first six years, of the forty-one years, that he reported figures for God's church, we did grow, when we were very small, at 30% a year.'"

*Phillip Arnn, "WCG: Past Paradigms – God Changes His Mind,"
Watchman Expositor, Vol. 9, No. 10, 1, p. 11*

"With increasing frequency, there are false rumors circulating by certain ones who have left us to form their own church organizations. Recently, I was given a booklet on church government written by one who has recently left us."

"A rumor that has been circulating is that we now believe that all churches are God's churches."

"God can and does work wherever, however and with whomever he chooses."

"If God decides to use people from other organizations to bring a person to himself, that is his business...Are we so arrogant as to decide whom God can save and how he should draw them to himself?"

"We don't need to be on the high horse of self-righteousness, condemning everyone who is attempting to do good works but fails to observe the Sabbath and the Holy Days."

"Over the years, our approach has tended...to consider all people not in our fellowship as witling or unwitting instruments of the devil."

"The Pharisees were also prideful and thought they were superior to everyone who was not as knowledgeable about the law as they were."

"Who was it that Jesus called the children of the devil? It was the ones who thought they had a corner on the market on spiritual values and truth."

"It was that attitude of spiritual superiority that made them partakers of the attitude of the devil."

"Some individuals actually come to view themselves as 'God's chosen servant' to save you. Such individuals, often unwittingly, organize a group of zealots to conform to their own dysfunction."

"There are those who would try to confuse you with the idea that growth in numbers and income is proof that God approves of you."

"We do not believe such individuals are part of the Body of Christ (those who are called together as a community of believers.) We do not believe all churches are God's churches."

Joseph Tkach Jr., "Does God Identify and Underpin His Church by Doctrines, Growth?", WN, Apr. 27, 1993

Author's note: While the context of the above quoted article was about the Global Church of God, which at the time the WCG leaders perceived to be teaching the most of what they called "Armstrongism" (see first line), it is an indirect slam in many ways against Mr. Armstrong. Although Mr. Armstrong did not self-righteously "condemn" others for lack of Sabbath and Holy Day keeping, that was the motive being imputed to his bold, truthful, purely biblical teaching on the subject (see changes 229 and 231). Again, although the statement that there are "those who...try to confuse you...that growth in numbers and income is proof that God approves of you" was presumably referring to the Global Church of God, the "old teaching" quotes above show that the definition fits Mr. Armstrong, also. "Individuals who...view themselves as 'God's chosen servant,'" is a direct reference to Mr. Armstrong (see change 140). If Mr. Meredith was seen as organizing a group of zealots to conform to his own dysfunction, then this criticism pertains to Mr. Armstrong also, as Mr. Meredith was teaching *SOME* (certainly not all) of the same things that Mr. Armstrong did. For proof that Mr. Armstrong is now viewed by the current administration as having had the "attitude of spiritual superiority" that made him "a partaker of the attitude of

the devil" read change 34. *The sly gist of the above article is that the WCG now believes that all churches are God's churches, with the exception of a few WCG "splinter" groups—especially The Restored Church of God, which adheres to all of the teachings of Mr. Armstrong. This startling fact can be proven concretely and without a doubt by comparing changes 32 and 25.*

Volume of literature produced and sent out, membership, income, television stations used, bible study attendance, etc., all went down steadily year by year as doctrinal changes increased in intensity. *Plain Truth* circulation, which was nearly 8.2 million in early 1986, dropped under 50,000. Of course, it is now an entirely different magazine with a subscription price. *The Good News* magazine was canceled. *The World Tomorrow* telecast used to bring in 17,000 responses per program. The response dropped to around 1,500 on a good day and then was eventually phased out. The open door set before Philadelphia was visibly, actively, and voluntarily closed on themselves by these false leaders.

What would Mr. Armstrong say about these decreases? Here's what he said when he left the Sardis era:

"We ought to be ASHAMED of the pitiful, puny, weak, feeble work that has split up and divided brethren, reached but so very FEW with the message, with almost no real conversions! All this, while leaders desiring power to RULE send out misleading, exaggerated, deceiving statements designed to convince tithe-payers that 'the work is progressing.' What a mockery! What a tragedy! What a pity! We praise God that many of the more spiritual HAVE COME OUT!"

"Did Christ Reorganize the Church?", GN, Feb. 1939

104. BLESSINGS FOR OBEDIENCE

Bible Promise or Deceitful Hype?

OLD TEACHING:

"There are thousands who, like Ed Smith, reason in their own minds that they can't afford to tithe..."

"I pointed out that God's law was put in motion for man's good – it is THE WAY of life that brings peace, happiness, prosperity..."

"Ed began to obey the Bible."

"Soon he had three or four jobs coming in at once, and was forced to begin employing men to work for him."

"He [also] came to me, according to the command of James 5:14-15, and both his wife and son were completely healed..."

*Herbert W. Armstrong, "The Man Who Couldn't Afford to Tithe,"
GN, Oct.-Nov. 1982*

“Brethren, CAN I open your eyes to see that God is a God of LOVE – that God in all His supreme power wills above all things for you to PROSPER and BE IN HEALTH and to find the way to the HAPPY, FULL, ABUNDANT LIFE? That Jesus Christ is a LIVING SAVIOR, to whom you can go AT ALL TIMES – a Savior to save you from your present everyday fears and worries...?”

“It may be a family problem, a personal problem, a financial problem, a problem of sickness or disease.”

“God says, ‘Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all (Psalm 34:19).’”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “Let God Fight Your Battles!”, GN, May 1980

NEW TEACHING:

“Learning what the gospel is not can be an important part of learning what the gospel is...”

“I am talking about the commonly held belief that if you accept the Christian way of life you will always prosper physically. This misunderstanding about the gospel has been labeled the ‘health-wealth gospel’ or the ‘prosperity gospel.’”

“It is merely the use of religious-sounding language to describe the so-called ‘American Dream.’ It is a way of attracting people to religion by promising them a successful and prosperous life if they will join a church.”

“Regrettably, even some in the Church have accepted this fallacious gospel.”

“Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,” WN, Jan. 2, 1992

“III John is a personal letter from the apostle John to a man named Gaius...”

“Verse 2 reads, ‘Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers.’ The NIV translates this verse, ‘Dear friend, I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well.’”

“According to the *Tyndale New Testament Commentary*, this opening was part of the everyday language of letter writing during the first century A.D. In short, the apostle was writing a common courtesy to his friend.”

“Questions & Answers,” PT, July 1992

105. TONGUES GIBBERISH

Dangerous Demonism or Profitable to Speak Privately at Home?

OLD TEACHING:

“One time a ‘Pentecostal’ preacher was urging someone to attend a series of...‘tarry meetings’...This person replied he could find no Bible teaching or example for such a...kind of meeting...”

“...he replied, ‘whatever you people are getting in an unscriptural way contrary to the Bible is not the true Holy Spirit PROMISED in the Bible, but a counterfeit spirit I don’t want.’”

“Hear the warning through Isaiah: ‘When they shall say unto you, SEEK unto them that have familiar spirits [counterfeit spirits of demons], and unto wizards that peep, and that MUTTER...TO THE LAW AND TO THE TESTIMONY...if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them!’ (Isa. 8:19-20.) Yes, be sure you have a BIBLE reason for all you do!”

“All admit ‘tongues’ can be counterfeited by Satan. If one has been careless...then that one is caught off guard and becomes an open channel through which an evil spirit may enter and possibly take full possession of the mind.”

“The ‘tongues’ gibberish as practiced today does not even resemble the gift of languages given on that day of Pentecost in 31 A.D...which is the ability to speak in real languages.”

“Jesus did not say, ‘Ye shall fall helpless UNDER the power’...He said, YE SHALL RECEIVE POWER!”

Herbert W. Armstrong, The “Tongues” Question (1970), pp. 23-24, 33, 34

NEW TEACHING:

“The environment of a tarry meeting encourages ecstatic speech...”

“What are these tongues [spoken of in I Cor. 14]?...The fact that a supernatural gift was needed for interpreting the sounds...indicates that the speaking may *not* have been a human language. But we *cannot* know whether modern tonguespeaking is anything like the Corinthian practice.”

“Non-Christians, both ancient and modern, have spoken in tongues. Several ancient religions included tongue-speaking, usually (as far as we can tell) not a real language, but simply strings of syllables, also called ecstatic speech...”

“How did these ancient pagans speak in tongues? *Perhaps* some were given supernatural abilities by demons, but perhaps they did it simply from human ability.”

“...psychologists consider [tongues] to be explainable in terms not necessarily supernatural or spiritual...”

“Glossolalia [tongue-speaking] is a learned skill, however *unconscious* in its mechanism...the *interpretation* given to glossolalia depends upon the belief system of that group.”

“...if a person wanted to speak in an unknown tongue at home, in private, the Church should allow it...The unusual speech might encourage people to continue building their relationship with God. At least it would be a reminder that we are not always able to clearly describe our needs...”

“Ecstatic speech...[is] produced when the brain sends signals to the organs of speech...but...the brain does not organize the signals. The person can be...in a *trance-like state*.”

What the Bible Says About Speaking in Tongues, pp. 6, 11, 21, 24, 28, 32

Author's note: Several points of the old teaching on tongues were changed in the new booklet quoted above. Tongues gibberish came to be viewed as an unknown spiritual language or a natural human phenomenon ("ecstatic speech"). In the only reference to demonic origin of tongues in the entire booklet (p. 21), only pagans or heathens or other non-Christian groups are seen as "perhaps" speaking in tongues through demonic power (the inference being that only pagans have contact with demons). "Christians" of any denomination (even in tarry meetings) were viewed as having derived this as a gift from God or as exhibiting ecstatic speech. Tongues were played down as either no big deal or not a source of any danger for Christians. Anyone could speak in tongues at home for "encouragement." This new approach became an open door to disaster. As Mr. Armstrong taught, the demon world awaits all who would enter.

"[The Ukrainian Sabbath-keepers] believe in speaking in tongues and told us that 90 percent of them believe in this practice. The Seventh-Day Adventists have already cautioned them that they shouldn't speak in tongues. They understand the argument and reasons. [They do not speak in legitimate languages.]"

"They want to know about the Holy Days and said it is an open question with them...They said that since they observe no days other than the Sabbath and Passover, the Holy Days would enhance their glorifying God."

V. Kubik, *"Two Ministers Learn from...Sabbath-keepers in Ukraine,"*
WN, Oct. 6, 1992

"[The Ukrainian Sabbath-keepers] agree with our interpretation of the Bible on most issues. In spite of doctrinal differences, such as their understanding of speaking in tongues, they consider us to be fellow believers because we look to the Bible as the authority of all doctrinal and theological issues."

"Once, when the group couldn't agree, they prayed and appealed for divine guidance about the situation. As is their custom, they all got down on their knees and prayed out loud."

Oleh Zajac, *"Church Representatives Attend Sabbatarian Leaders Conference,"* WN, Dec. 29, 1992

"Mr. Armstrong did teach, on more than one occasion, that he believed there were true Christians in other religious organizations."

"We find some now and then – recently, a group of Ukrainians who keep the Sabbath and Holy Days, but hadn't heard of us until this year." **[Author's note: See change 121.]**

David Hunsberger, *Letter to Member, Mar. 26, 1992*

“There are Sabbath-keeping people in the Carpatho-Rusyn area of Eastern Europe who have, over the years, survived persecution the likes of which we have not had to suffer, and it would be inappropriate ignorance on our part to say they are not believers.”

Joseph W. Tkach, “*Church Administration*,”
PGR, Apr. 20, 1993

106. WOMEN TEACHING

Not to Have Positions of Authority Over Men or May They?

OLD TEACHING:

“I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence.”

I Timothy 2:12 (NKJV)

“Let your women keep silent in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak; but they are to be submissive, as the law also says. And if they want to learn something, let them ask their own husbands at home; for it is shameful for women to speak in church.”

I Corinthians 14:34-35 (NKJV)

“Paul is explaining that it is not proper for women to exercise ecclesiastical authority over men within the Church. In other words, women are not to become Church elders and should not give sermons.”

“Based upon Paul’s teachings, the Worldwide Church of God does not ordain women speakers.”

“Questions & Answers,” GN, Jan. 1983

NEW TEACHING:

“Paul did not make this a command, but rather a judgment, as he said, ‘I do not permit.’”

“Thus, the Worldwide Church of God does not believe that I Corinthians 14:34 and I Timothy 2:12 serve as a scriptural basis to prevent women from teaching and quoting Scriptures as a part of their teaching or writing.”

WCG PCD Letter L030

“As an aside, I hope that no member will be offended by our use of women presenters in some of our segments [of *The World Tomorrow*]. While we do not ordain women, except as deaconesses, we should all recognize that God has given women the capability of teaching and sharing truth in a format such as the classroom, our television program and our magazines.”

“Our use of women to write articles and as reporters to present segments on the new telecast is in keeping with the biblical record. So again, if anyone

is offended, I'm sorry, but God leads me to recognize that he does not want us to keep women from such teaching roles."

"Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,"
WN, July 20, 1993

107. OUTSIDE JOBS FOR WIVES

Should be Avoided or Should be Pursued?

OLD TEACHING:

"In His Word, God instructs older women: 'That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, KEEPERS AT HOME, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed' (Titus 2:4-5)."

"Here the Great God who CREATED woman tells her to be a KEEPER AT HOME – not a gad-about, 'do-gooder' or business woman."

"Married women, then, should be VERY cautious and sparing about ever taking outside jobs – even in supposed 'emergencies' – and practically NEVER let this develop into a lifetime situation. The ultimate 'price' of such a job is entirely too high!"

"She maketh fine linen, and selleth it; and delivereth girdles unto the merchant" (Proverbs 31:24)...She is actually in the clothing industry – yet at home!"

R.C. Meredith, True Womanhood: Is It a "Lost Cause"? (1968),
pp. 8, 15, 21

NEW TEACHING:

"Perhaps some think that the old expression 'keepers at home' means that a truly godly wife should 'keep inside the house.'"

"If working outside the home is the cause of a woman neglecting her duties at home (it usually is not – it is usually a matter of poor character that is the same whether she is home all day or not), then she should meet her primary responsibility first."

"Let's look at the woman described as 'virtuous' in Proverbs 31...She is involved in both saving and making money for her family (verse 24). She is not idle (verse 27)."

"It is said that the 'average' Western housewife spends time watching daytime television, especially soap operas, depicting every kind of abominable and ungodly conduct and relationship."

"Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,"
WN, Feb. 1, 1988

Author's note: Minister's wives were given permission to work outside the home and could do it full-time.

108. MARRIAGE CEREMONY

Women Should Vow to Submit or Not?

OLD TEACHING:

“Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife.”

“...Now as the Church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything” (Ephesians 5:22-24).”

“And do you, (her first name), faithfully promise and covenant with God in the presence of these witnesses, to take (his FULL name) to be your lawful wedded husband – for as long as you both shall live – to love him, cherish him, honor him, and as God has ordained to submit yourself unto him?”

Herbert W. Armstrong, WCG Marriage Ceremony Vows

NEW TEACHING:

“A loving relationship within marriage is a type of the spiritual relationship between Jesus Christ and the Church. And it is in your submission to God’s love that this marriage will be strengthened and protected.”

“And do you, (her first name), faithfully promise and covenant with God in the presence of these witnesses, to take (his FULL name) to be your lawful, wedded husband for as long as you both shall live, to love him, cherish him, honor him, comfort him and respect him?” [Author’s note: **The man’s vow is identical to the woman’s.**] ”

WCG Marriage Ceremony Vows, PGR, Feb. 17, 1993

“...Paul said women should have their heads covered (a cultural matter) when they prayed or prophesied (I Corinthians 11:5).”

Joseph W. Tkach, Letter to the Ministry, PGR, July 13, 1993

“Paul warns parents – especially fathers, who *during Paul’s time* had absolute authority and control over their families – not to cause their children to be angry, but to teach them in Christian love.”

Sheila Graham, “Your Child’s #1 Teacher,” PT, Sep. 1993

“*Mutual Submission.* Along with mature, unselfish love, the Bible shows another vital element for long-lasting relationships.”

“Here’s the guiding principle: ‘Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ’ (Ephesians 5:21).”

“Does submission mean that a husband or wife should always give in to the other, no matter the circumstances? No, it isn’t that easy.”

“Godly submission is a personal choice by both husband and wife to bring their individual wills under control so that they can come to a *mutual agreement* about a matter.”

Sheila Graham, “Marriage: The Possible Dream,” PT, Sep. 1994

109. WORLDLY THEOLOGY DEGREES

Trap to Avoid or Goal to Pursue?

OLD TEACHING:

“GOD COULD NOT USE, as the human spiritual LEADER over His people in His CHURCH, one whose mind was first stuffed with this false materialistic and worldly KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDE AND PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACH TO WHAT IS BELIEVED AND UNDERSTOOD!”

“I never did want the accreditation of Satan’s system of ‘higher education.’ But, on continued pressure assuring me we could have ‘accreditation’ and still be GOD’S college, I acquiesced in allowing those under me to go ahead. But never again shall we seek this world’s ‘accreditation.’ Not as long as Christ keeps me in charge!”

“What kind of men did Jesus choose as His first apostles and leaders in founding God’s CHURCH? Men Christ-EDUCATED, yet considered by the public as ‘unlearned and ignorant men’ (Acts 4:13).”

*Herbert W. Armstrong, “How Christ Chose and Educated His Apostle,”
GN, Oct.-Nov. 1980*

“Ted and others had lobbied aggressively to get the college accredited. I refused for some time, saying it would be impossible to achieve accreditation and keep it GOD’S college. Their persistence, assuring me we could achieve accreditation and still keep it God’s college, finally caused me to say, ‘Go ahead, then.’”

“Result? A number of Ph.D.s from various universities were brought into the college, and the Big Sandy student body was moved to Pasadena. Bible truth was being rapidly watered down and permissiveness escalated.”

*Herbert W. Armstrong, “Christ Now Moves to Put God’s
Government Back on the Track,”
GN, Sep. 1979*

NEW TEACHING:

“One of the problems that parents and youngsters of the Church have had to wrestle with is an anti-educational bias. When people are not convinced that they should pursue higher education, it is difficult for them to set long-term educational and career goals.”

“Mr. Tkach is effectively eliminating the anti-educational bias in the Church and college. Ambassador students are being taught to think big.”

*“Ambassador Helps Students Achieve Long-term Objectives,”
WN, Apr. 3, 1989*

“To achieve accreditation, however, we cannot offer theology as a major, since we do not have faculty with doctorates in theology.”

"Three faculty members are pursuing doctorates in theology: Russel Duke, Mark Kaplan and Ralph Levy. When at least two of them complete their degrees, we can resume the theology major."

"College Improves Curriculum," WN, Dec. 23, 1991

"Theology is practical: especially now. In the old days, when there was less education and discussion, perhaps it was possible to get on with a very few simple ideas about God. But it is not so now. Everyone reads, everyone hears things discussed. Consequently, if you do not listen to Theology, that will not mean that you have no ideas about God. It will mean that you have a lot of wrong ones – bad, muddled, out-of-date ideas."

C.S. Lewis' *Mere Christianity*, in "God Is...," article from PT, July 1994

"But why theology? Shaw argues that *theology is important* for self-understanding and for a relationship with others, especially God. He also sees it as important for society, for worship, for the church's integrity and for *interpreting the Bible*."

Neil Earle, "Theology with Huck and Jim," PT, Jan. 1995

110. EXISTENCE OF GOD

Proven or Accepted on Faith?

OLD TEACHING:

"There are two possibilities of origins – special creation by a Creator, God, and the theory of evolution."

"I found PROOF of the existence of the Creator, God."

"[1] The existence of law...demands the existence of a great lawgiver."

"[2] The very existence of life demands a life giver."

"[3] ...the very existence of things, absolutely demands and requires a Creator."

"[4] The fact that God said let the earth bring forth 'after his kind,' and has been enforcing and sustaining that law ever since, is the fourth major proof of the existence of God."

"[5] Design in the universe proves the existence of a designer."

"[6] The very fact that God is able to foretell the future, and bring it to pass, is a great proof of His existence!"

"[7] The last proof is perhaps the greatest proof of all to true Christians. It is the proof of answered prayer."

"These seven, irrefutable, unchallengeable PROOFS of the existence of Almighty God represents only the minutest beginning of the subject. They are, nevertheless, proofs. It's about time people quit assuming – it's about time they began to really PROVE all things."

Herbert W. Armstrong, *Does God Exist?*,
pp. 3, 5, 20-28

"A question published in [a] syndicated newspaper column asked whether the Bible gives any PROOF of the existence of God. The [world famous Protestant leader's] answer may be summed up in one word: NO. He answered that we must *assume* God's existence – and then have FAITH. That is, have faith in this human assumption!"

"But the Bible commands, 'PROVE ALL THINGS.' That includes the existence of God! In the Bible, God says, 'PROVE me now, herewith.' The Bible says the scoffers 'are without excuse,' because the PROOF of God's reality is clearly seen, even in nature. God Himself, in the Bible, offers the PROOF of fulfilled prophecies. He offers, though few experience this proof, the PROOF of answered prayer."

*Herbert W. Armstrong, "How and Why We Know We Have the Truth,"
GN, Jan. 1985*

NEW TEACHING:

"The existence of God can be logically argued. But logic alone can't find the God of the Bible."

"Yes, accepting the existence of God requires faith."

"The central issue in the debate over the validity of the teleological [argument from design] is whether the universe shows evidence of design. If there is design, then the argument is valid. However, design would only prove the existence, at some time in the past, of a designer; it would not prove that this designer still exists or that the designer is the God of the Bible."

Greg Albrecht, "About this Issue," PT, July 1993

"Once more, let's stress that you cannot scientifically prove nor disprove the existence of God."

John Halford, "Religion and Science," PT, July 1993

111. PROOF OF THE BIBLE Needed or Not?

OLD TEACHING:

"A world famous evangelist has confessed publicly that he accepted the authority of the Bible without having seen it proved."

"This evangelist apparently accepted the authority of the Bible because he had 'accepted Christ' and at the same time blindly accepted what those humans who led him into acceptance of Christ themselves accepted."

"Prophecy is a proof of divine revelation! If One, in the Bible, speaking and claiming to be God, can make prophecies and tell what is going to happen in the future to nations, to cities, to empires, then if it actually happens in every case, and without a miss, you'll know that was a real God speaking."

"Yes, prophecy is a proof of God, a proof of the divine revelation of the Bible."

Herbert W. Armstrong, The Bible – Superstition or Authority?, pp. 1-2, 8, 9

NEW TEACHING:

“Do we believe that God’s Word is not true unless we have some tangible ‘proof’ of fulfilled prophecy on the world scene?”

“Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,” WN, Aug. 19, 1991

“How can we mortals possibly know whether the Bible is the word of a God to the human race?”

“As Bible readers it is we who are forced to decide whether these extraordinary events happened or were simply manufactured...We have two choices about their accuracy: to believe or not to believe.”

“Millions of intelligent people have read the Bible and have sincerely believed it to be the word of God. Many have said so publicly.”

Paul Kroll, The Book Almost Nobody Knows, pp. 3, 4

“Did Jesus actually reply with the words we are told he did? This is a question posed by some contemporary theologians.”

“In the final analysis, believing that Jesus said what we are told he said must be a matter of faith – but not blind faith. We believe the words of other historical figures based on eyewitness accounts. Why not Christ’s?”

David Hulme, Will Christ Return?, p. 14

112. COMMENTARIES

Often Misleading or Authoritative Source of Truth?

OLD TEACHING:

“I learned God’s truth directly from God – through His Word – the holy Bible. I say unto you, as the apostle Paul said [in Galatians 1]:”

“But I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ...But when it please God, who...called me through His grace, to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him’ to the world, ‘I did not immediately confer with flesh and blood’ – neither went I to any group but I went directly to the Word of God, and on my knees asked God through his Spirit to open my understanding...”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “Men Did Not Teach Me What I Preach,” PT, May 1985

“In this in-depth study of the Bible, I had the use of all the biblical helps – concordances, Greek-English and Hebrew-English lexicons, commentaries, Bible dictionaries and religious encyclopedias. The latter three of these, I found, were the works of scholarly but carnal minds. In historical facts and matters of a material and physical nature, they give help in research, but in God’s revelation of spiritual knowledge I found them of little help.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Mystery of the Ages, p. 23

NEW TEACHING:

Author's note: Anyone familiar with Mr. Armstrong's teachings can quickly check the commentaries and easily verify that he did not get them from "scholars" (i.e. "born again" at the resurrection, character development, who and what God is, etc.).

"And as I talk to people on the phone or answer their letters, one of the things that they say to me is, 'Well, Mr. Armstrong never went to scholars to check these things out.' And I have to chuckle to myself. And I think to myself, 'What planet have you been living on?'"

"Mr. Armstrong relied upon scholars. His favorite Bible was the Scofield Bible. Why? Because Dr. C.I. Scofield was one of the scholars he respected. He relied upon that scholar's work more than other scholars' works."

"So it's utter nonsense to say Mr. Armstrong didn't rely on scholars."

"I'm not disrespecting him when I say that. Anyone who says I am is lying to you."

Joseph Tkach Jr., "Born from Above," sermon played in all churches, Sep. 1992

Author's note: All literature became loaded with quotes from commentaries and Protestant experts. Mr. Armstrong was NEVER again quoted.

113. "TRAIN UP A CHILD"

Refers to Moral Training or to Developing Natural Talents?

OLD TEACHING:

"Here is a proverb in the Bible most people do not understand. It says, 'Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it' (Proverbs 22:6)."

"HOW, THEN, should you train up a child in the way he should go?"

"Train him to think and decide according to the spirit and attitude of GOD'S LAW – love towards others, consideration for the good and welfare of others – and teach him that Satan's way of selfishness and jealousy, envy, antagonism toward others, is wrong."

Herbert W. Armstrong, "What Psychologists Don't Know About Child Rearing," GN, Oct.-Nov. 1981

NEW TEACHING:

"The Jewish community has emphasized in explaining Proverbs 22:6 the importance for parents to prepare a child for a successful adult life."

"Therefore, rather than being a moral imperative, we find that Proverbs 22:6 shows us that a child should be encouraged to develop his natural tal-

ents and that training should be commensurate with the developmental stages of the child's life."

"Many scriptures stress the importance of moral training for children. Proverbs 22:6, however, is not a guarantee of conversion."

"Q & A from the PGR," WN, Dec. 23, 1991

114. PICTURES OF CHRIST

Idolatry or Helpful Artwork?

OLD TEACHING:

"Go to an Anglican or a Roman Catholic church today and ask the priest or official whether or not they are worshipping IDOLS. They will indignantly say, 'No! We don't worship idols. We don't worship images. We don't claim the images actually are Christ or Mary – only that they represent, or picture to us, what Christ or Mary look like!'"

"Well, that is precisely the way ALL PAGANS ALWAYS WORSHIPED IDOLS! But God's wrath waxed hot at this (Ex. 32:7-10)."

Herbert W. Armstrong, The United States and Britain in Prophecy, pp. 146-147

"However, lest some misunderstand, let us pause at this point to note that God does not condemn art or sculpture..."

"First of all, the second commandment itself obviously prohibits the use of anything which represents God or could easily become an object of worship. Certainly since Jesus Christ is God (Heb. 1:8), this would directly prohibit any pictures or likeness of His person!"

Roderick C. Meredith, The Ten Commandments, pp. 19, 20

"If you can't imagine why some denominations avoid or gloss over the real second commandment, just visit one of their cathedrals or churches, or read some of their literature."

"Two 'don'ts', then, are contained in the commandment: 1) don't make images to represent Deity; 2) don't use images of anything, whether God, man, or beast for the purpose of worship and veneration."

"An idol could be an image representing the true God that was used for edification and instruction – but not for veneration."

D. Graunke, "Is the Second Commandment Obsolete?", GN Article Reprint, 1976

NEW TEACHING:

"In the context of a picture Bible that we use to teach our children about God, there is nothing wrong with having drawings of Christ in it."

"This commandment does not prohibit the creation of art. Some of the earliest instruction God gave to the children of Israel was to build the tabernacle in the wilderness. This tabernacle contained woven and sculpted images of cherubim and various flora." **[Author's note: The tabernacle**

contained no images of God – they were FORBIDDEN to make images of GOD!]

George Hague, "Religious Art and Questions of...Conscience,"
WN, May 25, 1993

Author's note: Pictures of "Jesus" began to proliferate in WCG literature. Pictures of "Mary" became more commonplace. Numerous pictures of "Mary" were used to illustrate an article about her in the November-December 1994 Plain Truth.

115. SABBATH KEEPING

Required for Salvation or Not?

OLD TEACHING:

"CERTAINLY MOST professing Christians accept SUNDAY as the New Testament Lord's Day."

"But there are those who insist the seventh-day Sabbath is still binding. Failure to keep it, they claim, is SIN – and the punishment is DEATH for eternity!"

"Few realize, today, but the Sabbath vs. Sunday controversy raged during the first three centuries of the Christian era. Violence and bloodshed mounted. Millions were tortured and put to death over this question."

"THE SABBATH COMMAND IS THE ONLY one of the ten which is a SIGN identifying WHO are the real and true Christians today! It is the real TEST Command! The people of the world are willing to acknowledge the other nine Commandments – but the Sabbath Command is the one they positively REBEL against! It is THE ONE that is the crucial test of obedience!"

"It IDENTIFIES those who have surrendered their wills to God – who OBEY God, regardless of persecution or cost!"

"Now IF Jesus Christ IN YOU (and you are not a truly converted Christian unless He is!), will He, in you, profane His Holy Day, and observe a pagan day?

"IMPOSSIBLE!"

"You must make your own choice. Rebellion means eternal PUNISHMENT of everlasting DEATH. God will save no person He does not RULE."

"You shall be saved by GRACE, but God does lay down conditions. You can comply, and receive glorious GRACE – or you can rebel, and pay the DEATH PENALTY – for eternity!"

Herbert W. Armstrong, Which Day Is the Christian Sabbath? (1976),
pp. 7, 57, 103, 107

NEW TEACHING:

"Question: Is Sabbath-keeping a prerequisite to salvation?"

“Snyder: Well, no, because salvation is by grace.”

*Michael Snyder, interview with WMUZ radio,
Detroit, Michigan, Dec. 13, 1991*

“You also wrote about the ‘beliefs of the Church today that Sabbath keeping is not a prerequisite for salvation.’”

“You apparently have reference to an answer given by Mr. Michael Snyder to a question asked during an interview.”

“But, you may not realize that Mr. Armstrong did not teach Sabbath keeping was necessary for salvation, in the way implied by the question Mr. Snyder was answering. Remember Peter Waldo, whom Mr. Armstrong identified as an apostle of faith? There is no record of him being a Sabbath keeper. He apparently did not know about the Sabbath, but God was able to use him anyway to reveal other truths in an age of spiritual ignorance and darkness.”

Joseph Tkach Jr., Letter to Member, Apr. 14, 1992

Author's note: A sermon was given by Greg Albrecht in South Bend, Indiana, April 18th, 1992. In the sermon, he used the example of a Protestant (Sunday keeping) couple who had maintained positive “faith” in God when their son was killed in an accident. He concluded, “you can't have an attitude like that without Jesus Christ living in you.”

“Mr. Armstrong cited the Waldenses of the Middle Ages as representatives of the true Church, yet the records indicate that they observed Sunday rather than the Sabbath. Apparently, God simply had not brought the Sabbath to their attention at that time.”

David G. Hunsberger, Letter to Member, Mar. 26, 1992

“Maybe I should have said ‘Peter Waldo,’ instead of ‘the Waldenses,’ to be clearer. Mr. Armstrong identified Peter Waldo as the leader of the Thyatira Church, yet there is no record we have found that he knew about or kept the true Sabbath. Perhaps it will be helpful to emphasize that the point being made is that salvation is personal. God works out salvation in each individual.”

“We think that God would, in most cases, help a person who has the Holy Spirit to come to see and observe the Sabbath. We can only observe that certain people are bearing fruits of the Spirit, we cannot judge anyone's heart.”

“The point Mr. Joseph Tkach is making is that salvation comes through faith in Christ as God's gift.”

“*None of this represents any change in belief...*”

*David G. Hunsberger, Letter to Member,
Apr. 20, 1992*

“The June 15 *PGR* listed the only Church publications that should be in local church libraries. The Sabbath booklet, although not on that list, may be in Church libraries.”

Joseph Tkach Jr., “Church Administration,” PGR, July 13, 1993

116. QUARTODECIMAN SABBATH KEEPING

Seventh Day or Sunday?

OLD TEACHING:

“The first apostles would be astonished to see the size and scope of the work now. The means of communications, the technology and the modern resources that God has given to his end-time work would indeed be strange to those men who first received the commission to take the gospel to the world nearly 2,000 years ago.”

“But some things would not be strange – the Sabbath and Holy Days, the name, the Church of God, and the gospel of the kingdom – these they would recognize – handed down through the ages from the time of Christ to the time of the end.”

*Herbert W. Armstrong, Mystery of the Ages (1985),
pp. 291-292*

“We pick up the story of the true Church in the lives of such men as Polycarp and Polycrates. They were called ‘Quartodecimani’ because they kept the true passover celebration instead of Easter.”

“...Polycarp...was...instructed by the apostles, and conversed with many who had seen Christ...”

“Polycrates came from that area in which Paul spent most of his time – in Asia Minor, near Ephesus. This is also where John spent his last days. Here we have Christians still remaining true to the faith!”

*Herman L. Hoeh, A True History of the True Church (1959),
pp. 15-16*

“The original Church of God, under the apostles, kept the Sabbath. The apostle Paul preached to gentiles on the Sabbath days for a year and six months, after he had turned from the Jews to the gentiles (Acts 18:4-11).”

“[The Sabbath] is one of the keys that unlock the door to the identity of the one true original Church of God, established by Jesus Christ, as it has continued to withstand the onslaughts of Satan through the years and centuries.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Where Is The True Church?, pp. 23-24

“We have a history of the true Church of God through every century from Christ until now. It has always been a SABBATH-KEEPING Church.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Has Time Been Lost? (1972), p. 20

NEW TEACHING:

“Some biblical scholars feel that ‘the very Jewish-looking practice of the Quartodecimans, in celebrating Easter not on Sunday (though they did observe Sundays) but on Nisan 14, was a continuation of the customs of the early Jewish-Christian community in Palestine’ (*Studia Liturgica*, Vol. 13, No. 1:1-20, 1979).”

The Truth About Easter (1992), p. 13

117. MARK OF THE BEAST**Sunday Keeping or Unknown?****OLD TEACHING:**

“It was for obeying God’s FOURTH Commandment – keeping the Sabbath – that millions were put to death.”

“The church caused them to be killed.”

“The Sabbath is God’s SIGN, standing, more than any commandment, for OBEDIENCE. It was symbolically in the HAND and in the FOREHEAD, just as the MARK of the BEAST – the pagan SUNDAY – was in the right HAND and in the FOREHEAD! [Revelation 13:15-17].”

“Sunday observance – Christmas, New Year’s, Easter, etc. – this is the MARK of the BEAST!”

“IF you are branded by this MARK, rejecting the SIGN of God in your forehead and hand, you shall be tortured by God’s plagues without mercy! Yes, YOU! [Revelation 14:9-10].”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Who or What Is the Prophetic Beast? (1960/1952), pp. 40, 44, 45

NEW TEACHING:

Question: “Well, let me ask then about Sunday observance. I know earlier on in your organization’s history your founder Herbert W. Armstrong, mentioned that Sunday observance was the ‘mark of the Beast.’ Is Sunday observance the mark of the Beast?”

Snyder: “*I don’t think that is the way we would characterize it, today.* As Dr. Tucker mentioned, shortly after the death of Herbert W. Armstrong, the present Pastor General of the Church, Joseph Tkach, put everything that we had, from literature, doctrinal, and a publication standpoint, under review. And we are looking at all of these things right now, and we are preparing new documents on prophecy, and there are *many* specific points that were previously made that the Church would not make in the same way today.”

Michael Snyder, interview with WMUZ radio, Detroit, Michigan, Dec. 13, 1991

“What is this ‘mark?’ It is a parody of the sealing, in chapter seven, of the servants of God. The mark serves to identify those who worship the beast. The metaphor could have come from several practices.”

“This beast is also identified by the number 666. To what does this numerical cryptogram refer? The mark or name is the same as the number of its name (Rev.13:17).”

Paul Kroll, Inside the Book of Revelation (1989), p. 24

“The ‘mark of the beast’ has to be more than Sunday observance. This mark is given to all who are rebellious to God in the last days...”

Joseph Tkach Jr., Letter to Member, Mar. 16, 1992

“We do not believe that Sunday observance is the mark of the beast, though this was preached occasionally many years ago.”

David G. Hunsberger, WCG PCD, Mar. 1, 1994

118. SABBATH HOURS

Begin at Sunset or Begin at Dark?

OLD TEACHING:

“The Sabbath is to be observed ‘from even unto even’ (Lev. 23:32). A day ENDS, and another begins, when the sun sets. (See Mark 1:32; Luke 4:40.) See any encyclopedia. History shows that it was always custom to end and begin days at sunset until a few hundred years after Christ.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Has Time Been Lost?, p. 12

“Notice, too, in Leviticus 23:32, the expression ‘from even unto even shall ye celebrate your sabbath.’ Every Sabbath keeper quotes from this passage to show that the Sabbath begins at sunset.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Pagan Holidays—or God’s Holy Days—Which? (1976), p. 25

NEW TEACHING:

“The Hebrew phrase Moses uses for ‘twilight’ means ‘between the two evenings,’ a period extending, in its original sense, from sunset until night-fall at day’s end.”

“‘Twilight’ is used to refer to a period of time at the end of the day.”

Ted Johnston, “Israel and the Passover Story,” WN, Feb. 17, 1992

Author’s note: A taped sermon by Ron Kelly was played in all churches in the spring of 1992, in which he stated that days begin and end at dark, not sunset.

“The term *evening* is vague; it covers a period that extends from early afternoon till well after sunset.”

“...the day comes to an end when the last trace of sunlight has completely disappeared from the horizon. The light of the sun determines the end of the calendrical day.”

K.J. Stavrinides, “*The Passover of the Exodus,*”
Reviews You Can Use, May-June 1990

119. SABBATH ACTIVITIES

Guidelines Needed or No Do's and Don'ts?

OLD TEACHING:

“SIN is defined by GOD as the transgression of His LAW (I John 3:4). His LAW says: ‘Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy...the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD thy GOD.’ To work on the Sabbath, to defile it by your own pleasure-seeking, doing business, etc., is A MAJOR SIN, punishable by ETERNAL DEATH! (Romans 6:23).”

Herbert W. Armstrong, *Which Day Is the Christian Sabbath?* (1976), p. 76

“And when you besmirch and trample all over God’s holy Sabbath – HIS day – HOLY to Him, YOU MAY EXPECT TO BE THROWN OUT OF HIS KINGDOM – or rather, never allowed to ENTER!”

“And you are desecrating something HOLY TO GOD when you use that time for your own work, pleasure or personal purpose, which ignores GOD.”

“In the last few years even apostate ministers have begun to COMPROMISE with God’s Sabbath, and teach their local congregations so. It happened in Britain. It happened in the United States. THOSE MINISTERS ARE NO LONGER IN GOD’S CHURCH.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “*How You Are Being Tested,*” GN, Apr. 1980

NEW TEACHING:

“There hasn’t been any changes directly affecting the Sabbath...”

“But, you know, there are differences in our understanding of what keeping the Sabbath means.”

“Perfect love casts out fear. We don’t have to be fearful or hung up over, ‘Oh, we can’t do that, I’ll be breaking the Sabbath.’ That’s fear, that’s not love.”

“The neighbors are working in their yard on the Sabbath...It’s a good time to go out and be with them.”

“Cook hamburgers in your backyard with your neighbors – on the Sabbath.”

“[The Sabbath] is for building relationships with neighbors, friends, and with God.”

“Take the kids somewhere...Go to the Christmas parade with the kids... There’s nothing wrong with that. That’s building a relationship...There’s no little list that says, ‘Thou shalt not go to a Christmas parade on the Sabbath.’ You know, there’s no list like that.” **[Author’s note: See change 180 for the elaboration of this point.]**

“Let [your kids] play with the neighbor kids for awhile.”

“Let them shoot baskets for an hour or so under the basketball goal. You know, shoot with them. That’s not breaking the Sabbath. It’s keeping the Sabbath...That’s the way it should be kept. It’s not a list of ‘we can do this’ and ‘we can’t do that.’

“Go to a graduation or wedding on a Friday night. Go to your non-member mate’s office Christmas party.”

“Go see your relatives that smokes and cusses a little bit.”

“God intended for the Church to bring people together.”

Pete Kendell, Sermon by WCG Field Pastor, Arkansas, 1993

“I was comparing the relationship with not being hung up over little picky things. And if the relationship can be helped and built by going to a parade or even a Christmas parade, then fine. Do that. The relationship is what’s important.”

“I broke the Sabbath because I refused to put a Christmas tree...it was time for my wife to bring in the Christmas tree. And she went by herself in the car and got the Christmas tree...”

“She told me later, she said, ‘That day I hated you and I hated that Church.’ You know, now that’s not God’s purpose in keeping the Sabbath. I broke the Sabbath by not putting up that Christmas tree. I should have gotten down there on the floor with her and helped her put up that Christmas tree and even helped her with the decorations.”

“I should have done it, but I was just thick-headed – the same stiff-necked stuff Jesus Christ was angry with in Mark 2. The same stuff. He hates that. Let’s build love among one another, especially in families.”

Pete Kendell, follow-up sermon to the above quoted sermon, Arkansas, 1993

“Yes, Jesus canceled ritualistic legalism with regard to Sabbath keeping.”

“The ‘rest typified by the Sabbath,’ writes Wilfrid Scott, ‘is seen as the rest of the heart...’”

“The Messianic Sabbath transcended the sabbath of legalism.”

“[The Jews] exalted the institution of the Sabbath above the purpose of the day.”

“Concern for others was central to the Sabbath, Jesus showed. The legalists overlooked this focus.”

“Christians continue to celebrate the Sabbath, not as the Jews did, but in the spiritual freedom brought by Jesus Christ.”

“Certainly we can draw up no extensive list of dos and don’ts concerning Sabbath keeping, lest we fall into the same trap that ensnared the first-century Jews.”

“The Sabbath is...a day to show compassion for those who suffer illnesses and other trials. It is a day to be prepared and energized for evangelism, to share the gospel with the rest of the world through our example and by open displays of outgoing concern.”

Day of Renewal, pp. 7, 10, 11, 13, 14, 19-20

"Often members own or manage homes or apartments that they would like to rent to other members. Sometimes members just live in a complex and would like to let others know when a 'good deal' comes along. Is it appropriate to post such rental advertisements on the local church bulletin board?"

"In general, it is acceptable for members to advertise rooms, apartments or homes they wish to rent to other members. However, advertisements should be limited to such rentals. We do not want the bulletin board to become a hubbub of business activity. People should not advertise professional services or products..."

"Questions & Answers," PGR, Jan. 20, 1993

Author's note: At the Ambassador campus in Big Sandy, Texas, church members worked on the Sabbath to complete certain building projects. Other compromises that were being allowed included operating nursing homes, running to the store, mowing the lawn, etc. Since the Sabbath was seen as a day for spreading the gospel and social activism, it was not surprising that the Church began to see such things as "hammer and nail" evangelism (Habitat for Humanity) as described in change 181.

120. ASSEMBLING ON THE SABBATH

Commanded or Numerous Exceptions?

OLD TEACHING:

"Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful. And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, *not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together*, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching."

Hebrews 10:23-26 (NKJV)

"The BIBLE authorizes only the Sabbath as God's weekly Holy Day for joint assembly and worship. The Bible is the AUTHORITY OF GOD!"

"And the day on which we cease from our business or labors, HE set apart as 'an holy CONVOCATION' (Lev. 23:2-3), which means a **COMMANDED ASSEMBLY**, at which our presence is commanded."

Herbert W. Armstrong, Which Day Is the Christian Sabbath? (1976), p. 99

NEW TEACHING:

Author's note: In a sermon taped in the summer of 1992, Joseph W. Tkach stated that Sabbath services may be skipped if one is "too

tired to come." In a sermon given in Akron, Ohio, on April 17, 1993, Dean Blackwell stated that Christians do not need to attend services every Sabbath. They may prefer to take advantage of nice weather and go on a picnic instead. Since they no longer have a sense of urgency about seeing "the Day approaching" of Christ's Return (see change 9), they apparently do not see the need to "assembl[e] together" either. On January 1, 1994, Sabbath services at headquarters' churches were actually cancelled so that the parking structure could be rented out for use for the Rose Parade. This was done to obtain revenue from the world!

121. INVISIBLE CHURCH

Rare Occurrence or Widespread Phenomenon?

OLD TEACHING:

"Can one who does not know of the true organized Body doing God's Work and therefore is outside of it, be a member of the true Church which Christ built? The answer is yes – for it is possible for one to have truly repented, believed, and received God's Spirit – and be following that Spirit as far as he sees and understands – who does not know of the organized Work Christ is using today. But surely God's Spirit in him would lead one, in due time, into his part in the organized Body the living Christ is directing."

"The answer is YES – I have known of a few. But in every case, either they came INTO the organized spiritual organism Christ is using in the real Work of God – or, when their eyes were opened to further light and truth, they rejected it and LOST the Spirit of God. And this was amply demonstrated by the fruits."

Herbert W. Armstrong, "Just What Is THE CHURCH?" p. 4

NEW TEACHING:

"Like Elijah, we all need to avoid the trap of assuming we are the only ones who worship God. We will never know all those to whom God reveals himself."

"In a witty and inspirational book titled *Wishful Thinking – A Theological ABC*, Frederick Buechner...uses the well-known dichotomy attributed to Augustine [who] spoke of the 'visible Church,' the Church that was physical and easily identified. He also spoke of another – just as real – the 'invisible Church.'"

"The visible church is all the people who get together from time to time in God's name...The invisible church is all the people God uses...in this world. Nobody can find out who they are except God. Think of them as two circles. The optimist says they are concentric. The cynic says they don't even touch. The realist says they occasionally overlap' (page 15)."

What Is the True Church? (proposed new booklet circulating among WCG ministers that has not been sent out, but it shows the thinking), pp. 27, 28

"Mr. [Michael] Snyder's letter to us, dated April 29, 1991, stated... [that] they are not in the business of judging those outside of their organization. He said, 'We want to look beyond groups and see that the Body of Christ transcends denominational barriers.'"

McDowell and Stewart, The Deceivers: What Cults Believe, p. 286

122. MAKEUP

Guidelines Should be Enforced or Not?

OLD TEACHING:

"How cleverly, without our suspecting it, did Satan influence leading ministers to derail the Church in many ways..."

"Some of us have weakened. Some of us have been caught off guard. I am human like all of you, and I was caught off guard and without at the time realizing it, ALLOWED this liberalism to creep stealthily into God's flock! I now repent of that and the living Christ leads me to do what He inspires me to do to correct it and get this holy Body of Christ BACK COMPLETELY ON THE TRACK. For we have not been fully back on the track even!..."

"But the Church in the 1950's, still GROWING in knowledge as well as in numbers, ruled on makeup based on specific scriptural 'do's and don'ts' – as we then interpreted them. Actually we came to the same right ruling. A very few women argued a bit, but I remember specifically of none who rebelled and left the Church. As near as I could observe our women were happy to leave their faces as the Master Designer made them..."

"In early fall of 1974, my son caught me on the run as I was leaving for Tokyo and Manila, where I held a big campaign. It was a time when certain 'scholars' among our leaders were engaged in 'doctrinal research.' I had not realized until later that most of them were actually researching to try to prove Church teachings were in error, rather than to discover truth. I admit now and repent of the fact that, not realizing the real motive, I approved this doctrinal research team. 'My son said this team had found we had the wrong meaning on four such detailed specific scriptures, and the use of makeup was OK.'"

"Those who know me best know I have a single track mind. That is, I can concentrate deeply on one subject at a time, but when my mind is on one subject, I often do not really 'get' something said to me. I was handed a short statement regarding those four specific scriptures."

Author's note: The four scriptures to which Mr. Armstrong referred are Isaiah 3:16; Ezekiel 23:40; Jeremiah 4:30; and II Kings 9:30. He discusses them in detail in this long *Worldwide News* article. If Mr. Armstrong had to acknowledge in this article that he was wrong when he allowed makeup back into the Church in 1974, then years later I had to be willing to admit I was wrong in tolerating "makeup

in moderation!” It takes the full scope of his article to see *why* Mr. Armstrong considered THIS DOCTRINE to be the one that let Satan into the Church in the 1970s. Read it! Almost every group is compromising this doctrine. This has led to accepting other doctrinal errors, which flow directly from the initial spirit of compromise that started with “okaying makeup.” When the “splinters” do this, they stand in full agreement with the false WCG leaders who discarded this understanding. Like any other of the heresies tolerated among the “splinters,” one must really *want* to see the importance of holding fast on this doctrine to *do* it.

“Now JESUS CHRIST, through His chosen apostle, is going to RULE on this question once and for all!”

“Now apply GOD’S LAW to makeup. WHY do women use makeup? To please and glorify GOD? No. God is Master DESIGNER as well as Creator. The world seems to think God did not design women’s faces properly, and they try to do a better job of making up their faces than GOD did. Does makeup PLEASE GOD? His Spirit says to me, IT IS DISpleasing to Him! (And, like the apostle Paul, I think I have the ‘mind of Christ.’) To EXALT God? No, rather to exalt SELF, which debases God...”

“My mother and grandmother did not wear makeup – nor did your great grandmothers of the same era. How did it get into our mid-and-latter-20th century society? FROM PROSTITUTES!”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “How subtly Satan used MAKEUP to start the Church off the track,” WN, Nov. 16, 1981

“GOD COMMANDS US NOT TO FOLLOW THESE ABOMINABLE PRACTICES AND CUSTOMS USED IN PAGAN IDOLATRY AND HARLOTRY! Facial makeup is one of them! A woman may think she looks nice in the sight of the world with makeup. But how does she look in God’s sight?”

“Women do NOT have to be like the world in ways that transgress the spirit of God’s Law! They do NOT have to wear lipstick or other makeup.”

“Worldliness is conforming to the world in ways that transgress the letter or the spirit of God’s Law. Wearing makeup is worldliness – and THE BIBLE brands worldliness as SIN!”

“Yes, it is either VANITY, or it is conforming to the world! It is SIN!”

“And God’s people must put away their sins.”

“Truth About Makeup” (1964, 1968), p. 1

“...behavior does accompany use of makeup, and eye makeup does draw attention to the eyes. And all translations [of Isaiah 3:16] show this passage to be using the eyes wantonly, oglingly or flirting with the eyes.”

“The passage in Isaiah definitely shows a modern use of the eyes in such a manner, not in the ‘meek and quiet spirit’ of New Testament teaching. It

shows the spirit, or attitude, which transgresses the principle of God's spiritual law."

"The Bible speaks of...virtuous women with beautiful faces, but no makeup. It speaks of harlots and evil women using makeup for evil and seductive motives."

Herbert W. Armstrong, "Satan Hasn't Given Up on Makeup," WN, July 11, 1983

NEW TEACHING:

"When a woman is focusing on her sexuality in an effort to attract a lover, she is likely to use makeup in an effort to enhance her appearance." **[Author's note: In our society, this may also be true of men, though makeup for men is not yet commonplace. Also see change 60.]**

"The point is that we strive to see that any use of cosmetics fits within the biblical principles we have outlined."

"But I do not believe God would have us continue to place this unnecessary stumbling block (and that is what it is to many new converts) before his people."

"Personal from Joseph W. Tkach," WN, Nov. 14, 1988

Author's note: Virtually all of the splinter groups allow makeup in full agreement with false leaders who threw out this understanding.

123. BIRTHDAYS

Acknowledgements or Celebrations?

OLD TEACHING:

"...let us examine the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, 1911 edition...under the heading 'Natal Day,' we find that the early Catholic father, Origen, acknowledged this truth: '...In the scriptures, no one is recorded to have kept a feast or held a great banquet on his birthday. It is only sinners [like Pharaoh and Herod] who make great rejoicings over the day in which they were born into this world.'"

"The *Encyclopedia Americana*, 1944 edition, says: 'Christmas...It was, according to many authorities, not celebrated in the first centuries of the Christian church, as the Christian usage in general was to celebrate the death of remarkable persons rather than their birth...'"

"The apostles and early true Church never celebrated Christ's birthday at any time. There is no command or instruction to celebrate it in the Bible – *rather, the celebrating of birthdays is pagan, not a Christian custom, believe it or not!*"

Herbert W. Armstrong, The Plain Truth About Christmas (1974), pp. 8-9, 15

"My mother reached her eightieth birthday April 21, 1946. Although the biblical instruction of God shows that only pagans celebrated birthdays,

and Mrs. Armstrong and I have not done so since learning this truth, my sister, who lived in Portland, was of a religious denomination that does follow this custom. She had planned a celebration for Mother at her home, and it was up to me to get Mother there."

"It seemed that eighty was a very ripe old age – one that deserved honoring."

Autobiography of Herbert W. Armstrong Vol. 2 (1987), p. 129

"The Jews in Christ's day knew God's attitude toward birthday celebrations, 'Nay, indeed, the law does not permit us to make festivals at the births of our children' (Flavius Josephus, *Against Apion*, Book II, section 26)."

"The calendar given by God...was not at all adapted to birthday celebrations...[Leap year] affects only about one individual in every 1,461. But the irregularities of the calendar God gave would affect the birthday observances of one person in every eight."

Kenneth C. Herrman, "Should Christians Celebrate Birthdays?", GN, May 1980

NEW TEACHING:

Author's note: Employees of the WCG came to receive their birthdays off with pay.

"In the past, the Church made an administrative decision to forbid birthday celebrations in an effort to protect members from the wrong attitudes and conduct that can occur during worldly birthday celebrations."

"The Church, however, has come to appreciate the other side of the question too – that members need to make judgments on their own (in cases where the Bible does not speak or the Church chooses not to speak), especially in cases where they know for certain that their participation in a birthday celebration (of a family member, a friend or a distant relative) will produce God's type of closeness and unity."

"Any celebration that expresses God's standards is wholesome, and the Church does not denounce it. This includes birthday celebrations, anniversaries, *national holidays* and many personal occasions, such as celebrating one's graduation or holding a bachelor party."

"Q & A from the PGR," WN, July 17, 1989

"In recent years, [the Worldwide Church of God's] new leader has entered into dialogue with evangelical scholars, hoping to create understanding. Among other refinements, the group has modified its stance on dress codes, observing certain holidays, and seeing doctors, and it has rethought its view of the Trinity."

"Tkach has retracted absolute prohibitions on the use of cosmetics and on celebrating birthdays and holidays."

Randy Frame, "WCG Edges Toward Orthodoxy," Christianity Today, Nov. 9, 1992

Author's note: I do not disagree with the *acknowledgment* of birthdays, particularly those that are "milestones," as Mr. Armstrong taught. Almost all the splinters now actually *observe* birthdays to one degree or another.

124. DENOMINATION

God's Church Isn't One or Is One?

OLD TEACHING:

"Incidentally, the TRUE Church that Christ established is not denominational!"

*Herbert W. Armstrong, "If You Had Lived in the Time of Christ,"
GN, Oct.-Nov. 1983*

"Brethren, do we not find ourselves taking for granted that the churches in what is called 'Christianity' are also God's churches – that WE are just another of the many denominations, the only difference being that we hold to some different doctrines?"

"That is simply not true! We in GOD'S Church are not just one of all these churches."

"I have mentioned how the early Church GREW and MULTIPLIED in those God added to the Church. But soon the persecution came. *Soon the false preachers came, with the different gospel – a different spirit. They came fomenting a spirit of criticism – of DOUBT! They came saying Jesus' true apostles were preaching WRONG DOCTRINES.*"

*Herbert W. Armstrong, "Why Did God Put You in His Church?",
GN, May 1974*

NEW TEACHING:

"Question: Michael, would you briefly outline for our listeners what you understand as the salient, key points of the Worldwide Church of God?"

"Snyder: Well, the Worldwide Church of God is a Christian *denomination* that holds to the beliefs of Christ being the only means by which anyone can be saved..."

"Question: You are no doubt aware that many, many Christian denominations have regarded the Worldwide Church of God through the years as cultic, heretical, somehow definitely out of the mainstream of historic Christian theology. To what do you attribute that, and why were people so concerned?"

"Snyder: Well, I think that was partially due to the fact that the Church may have not appropriately communicated its beliefs in a form that others would comprehend..."

Michael Snyder, interview with WMUZ radio, Detroit, Michigan, Dec. 13, 1991

125. NIMROD

Found in Historical Records or Not?

OLD TEACHING:

“Semiramis [Nimrod’s wife/mother] was actually the founder of much of the world’s pagan religions, worshiping false gods. Even such so-called Christian observances as Christmas, New Year’s and Easter emerged from the false religious system she developed. For details of this the reader is referred to *The Two Babylons*, by Alexander Hislop.”

“Nimrod built a number of cities – Babylon, Erech, Accad, Calneh, Ninevah, etc. There developed city-states, each with its own local government. As time passed, nations arose with national governments. Among these were Babylon (which became known as Chaldea), Egypt, Assyria. The religion started by Semiramis and Nimrod was carried into the different nations in the language of each.” [See Gen. 10:8-14; I Chron. 1:10; Micah 5:6.]

“As the generations of humanity continued, this world’s civilization developed. It started with a government system started by Nimrod, through a religious system that stemmed from Nimrod and Semiramis.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Mystery of the Ages (1985), pp. 154, 155

NEW TEACHING:

“What reliance should be placed on the views of Alexander Hislop, as expressed in *The Two Babylons or Papal Worship Proved to Be the Worship of Nimrod and His Wife?*”

“...Alexander Hislop’s work...has absolutely no chronological framework to support the author’s conclusions.”

“When referring to Nimrod, we should make reference to Genesis, not cite anti-Catholic polemics.”

“Q & A from the PGR,” WN, 20 Mar. 1989

126. LESSON OF JOB

Repentance of Self-Righteousness or Steadfast Faithfulness?

OLD TEACHING:

“The *self* in Job had never died.”

“[Job 42:1-6] was Job’s SURRENDER to Almighty God, a surrender every human must make before he can be converted – before God’s PURPOSE in him can be fulfilled! A man may be naturally GOOD – but even the *self*-righteousness of a Job, God says, is like a filthy rag to Him!”

“Job at last had learned his lesson! Just human goodness is not enough. GOD is all in all. And the only goodness that is good is God’s own goodness, imparted, through God’s Holy Spirit, within us! All true righteousness comes from God.”

"ALL humans have this great lesson to learn. It's the one supreme lesson of life!"

"There is divine WISDOM in God's permitting Satan to afflict Job. Out of all this experience of suffering, Job was humbled, his ego deflated, his self-pride removed."

Herbert W. Armstrong, Why Must Men Suffer?, p. 4

NEW TEACHING:

"Trials may come because God needs to know something about a faithful servant (Genesis 22:1-12). Job's suffering had such an intent – to prove whether he would love God in spite of everything."

"Job affirmed that God was still God – no matter what – and always worthy of our love, reverence and worship."

"That was the test on Job and he passed it...Job proved it is possible for humans to love God unconditionally."

Paul Kroll, "The Trial of Job," PT, Oct. 1992

Author's note: See also change 64.

127. FISH SYMBOL

Idolatry or Christian Custom?

OLD TEACHING:

"Take careful heed to yourselves, for you saw no form when the Lord spoke to you at Horeb out of the midst of the fire, lest you act corruptly and make for yourselves a carved image in the form of any figure: the likeness of male or female, the likeness of any winged bird that flies in the air, the likeness of anything that creeps on the ground or the likeness of any *fish* that is in the water beneath the earth."

Deuteronomy 4:15-18 (NKJV)

"Two 'don'ts' then, are contained in the commandment [Deut. 5:8-10]: 1) don't make images to represent Deity; 2) don't use images of anything, whether God, man or beast for purposes of worship and veneration."

"Christians...at first represented Christ by symbol alone, the *fish* being one of the most important. The Greek letters of the word "fish" are the initial letters of the words "Jesus Christ, God's Son, Savior"..." (Katherine Morrison McClinton, Christian Church Art through the Ages, p. 13)."

D. Graunke, "Is the Second Commandment Obsolete?", GN Article Reprint, 1976

NEW TEACHING:

"Legend has it when Christians suffered persecution for their beliefs, they used the fish symbol as a secret sign to identify each other."

“...the Greek word for fish – Ichthus...is an acronym for ‘Jesus Christ, Son of God, Savior.’”

“In Christian art, when the Greek word is spelled it takes this meaning. This is also the most common use of the symbol today.”

“One should take care when using symbols as an expression of belief, as they can easily *become* objects of superstition or even idolatry.”

“Questions & Answers,” PT, Oct. 1992

128. POLYGAMY

Sin or Just a Custom?

OLD TEACHING:

“The very privacy of this marriage relationship makes it sacred, makes husband and wife dear to each other in a special way never shared with another...This entire loving, sacred, precious relationship is greatly impaired, or destroyed, when shared with any other.”

“Did you ever notice that the intense love-talk in Solomon’s Song of Songs, expresses this outgoing admiration, not lust? It was written before his polygamous relapse.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, The Missing Dimension in Sex (1981), pp. 32, 171

“Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning “made them male and female [not male and females],” and said, “For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife [not wives], and the two [not the three, not the ten, not the five hundred] shall become one flesh”?”

“Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, permitted you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so.”

Matthew 19:4-5,8 (NKJV)

“A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife...”

I Timothy 1:5-6 (NKJV)

“...appoint elders in every city as I commanded you – if a man is blameless, the husband of one wife...”

Titus 1:5-6 (NKJV)

Author’s note: It was originally taught in the WCG that God allowed polygamy in the Old Testament because of the hardness of the Israelites’ hearts, in the same way He had permitted divorce and war, but that God’s intention from the beginning was that one man would be married to one woman. God told Old Testament kings not to multiply wives to themselves, but they did it anyway.

NEW TEACHING:

Author's note: An evangelist professor at Ambassador College in Big Sandy, Texas, openly stated a new policy regarding polygamy. This same policy was expounded at a bible study in Michigan by a local church elder. The new teaching stated that God did not accuse the men who had multiple wives in the Old Testament of sin. He stated that, while polygamy was not good or right, it was not sin and was a custom of society at that time (see also changes 61 and 108.). When queried publicly whether this meant that if our society would adopt this custom that Church members would be permitted to practice it, he said, "Yes."

129. HUMAN LIFE

None Before Adam and Eve or Was There?

OLD TEACHING:

“Can you give me information on prehistoric man? Did God make other men before Adam?”

“...so far as humans are concerned, the Bible plainly states that Adam was the first man (I Cor. 15:45), and he named his wife ‘Eve because she was the mother of all living’ (Gen. 3:20). Adam and Eve were therefore the first humans.”

John R. Schroeder, Answers from Genesis (1973), p. 3

“Six thousand years ago, God set his MASTER PLAN of 7,000 years, for the accomplishment of the most glorious PURPOSE OF ALL TIME AND ETERNITY.”

“False scholarly hypotheses notwithstanding, this world had its origin in the creation of one man, named Adam. He and his wife God created for him, named Eve, were humanity’s first parents. This world is the human family that sprang from them.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, A World Held Captive, p. 13

NEW TEACHING:

“Nowhere in the Bible do we find a specific reference to the age of the earth. Scientists estimate that the earth is approximately four billion years old. Nor do we find a clear date as to the beginning of human life. Through the use of carbon-14 dating, evidence suggests that modern forms of human life may have existed long before 4,000 B.C.”

WCG PCD Letter L57

“Even more disturbing for those who believe in a divine creation of man ex nihilo (out of nothing) is the growing evidence that human-like creatures

(hominids and proto-hominids are the scientific terms) have inhabited the earth for many hundreds of years."

"Archaeologists have found signs of human habitation in Jericho since 9000 B.C. At left is a Natufian carved bone (dated 10000 to 7500 B.C.), found at Mt. Carmel."

John Halford, "Religion and Science," PT, July 1993

130. STRATA

Laid Down by Floods or Epochs of Time?

OLD TEACHING:

"First notice what the *Encyclopedia Britannica* states: 'The remains of animals...can only be preserved if they are deposited at a place where mud or sand is being laid down' ('Paleontology,' p. 102, 1946 edition)."

L.E. Torrance, "Proof of the Flood," PT, Jan. 1964

"Geologists can never understand the facts of geology. They refuse to acknowledge that during the rebellion of Satan and his demons against God, the pre-Adamic earth was destroyed! This knowledge makes clear why the strange world of dinosaurs, flying reptiles, and all the other strange plants and animals of that age were first suddenly buried in sedimentary rocks and in the older coal seams."

"Neither can geologists understand the facts of geology until they realize that Noah's Flood buried the remains of man, warm-blooded mammals and many other creatures as fossils in overlaying sedimentary rocks."

L.E. Torrance, "Two Creations—Two World-Wide Floods," PT, Feb. 1964

NEW TEACHING:

"We will examine seven lines of evidence that clearly show that many strata were not deposited rapidly (such as under presumed flood conditions)."

"It is clearly a mistake to consider the strata of the earth's geologic record to be the result of one, two or a number of cataclysmic, destructive floods."

"The Bible nowhere states, or even implies, that the earth's strata are the result of floods...We may even lay a stumbling block before some if we insist that the Bible teaches something that is in direct contradiction to the physical evidence."

Richard Burky, "Are Geological Strata the Result of the Biblical Flood?", Reviews You Can Use, July-Aug. 1990

"Nor can all the facts be fitted to a 'two-flood model,' as we attempted to do in the past."

Richard Burky, "Creative Development: A Better Explanation Than Evolution," Reviews You Can Use, July-Aug. 1993

“Strata are layers of time eras laid down.”

*Ministerial notes from lecture by H. Hoeh,
WCG Ministerial Refresher Prog., Jan. 1990*

131. CREATION

**Literal Genesis Account or
Theistic Evolution (“Creative Development”)?**

OLD TEACHING:

“It became apparent early that the real and thorough-going evolutionists universally agreed that evolution excluded the possibility of the existence of GOD! While some of the lesser lights professed a sort of *fence-straddling theistic evolution*, I soon learned that the real dyed-in-the-wool evolutionists all were atheists. Evolution could not honestly be reconciled with *the first chapter of Genesis!*”

Autobiography of Herbert W. Armstrong, Vol. I, p. 295

“Evolution is...the point of view that we are always advancing...”

“Science is fighting...to destroy, in youth, all belief in a Creating God and in the Word of God...”

“Out of it already has sprung the new religion of Antichrist, popularity known as Modernism – A religion which accepts *the moral teachings of Jesus*, but denies *everything fundamental in God’s Word*. A religion which answers to the true Bible definition of Antichrist – that which ‘denies that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh.’”

*Herbert W. Armstrong, “Putting the Evolution...into Your Child’s Mind,”
PT, July 1964*

NEW TEACHING:

“Genesis 1 and 2 further describe God forming the earth and the life-forms on it in six days of creative activity. Most scientists believe the planet’s features were molded by natural forces while life developed gradually, from simple to complex organisms, including human beings. Could these apparently contradictory concepts be two ways of looking at the same thing? Perhaps they can.”

“It may be true that human beings are genetically nearly identical with the great apes.”

John Halford, “Religion and Science,” PT, July 1993

“Even the physical body of man seems to have been developed through a time span of several million years, based on the fossil record of hominids.”

“The fossil record reveals that the general design of modern animals was carried out over a long time span.”

“The fossil record of a creative-development process, including both gradual developments and creative jumps, *would probably look much the same as the one left if evolution had occurred.*”

"How can we correlate a creative-development process, clearly seen in geology, with the Genesis 1-2 creation accounts?"

"Genesis 1 and 2 may be poetic or parabolic in nature and God may not have intended it to be taken as a literal historical narrative."

"The Genesis creation story may be a *coded account* that can encompass *millions of years* when properly interpreted and decoded."

*Richard Burky, "Creative Development: A Better Explanation Than Evolution,"
Reviews You Can Use, July-Aug. 1993*

Author's note: See changes 132 and 133.

132. DAYS OF CREATION

Literal 24-Hour Days or Metaphors for Epochs?

OLD TEACHING:

"Theistic evolutionists and even theologians often say that the 'days' described in the first chapter of Genesis are really 'epochs' of time each perhaps representing a thousand or more years in length."

"Notice that plants were created on the third day. But the sun did not shine in full strength on the earth's surface until the fourth day. If these 'days' were thousands of years long, then how could the plants have survived all that time without sunshine? Furthermore, the insects which pollinate many of these plants were not created until the sixth day!"

"Each day of creation week is not some long epoch, but exactly what the scripture says, a day and night of 24 hours."

Donald R. Schroeder, Answers from Genesis (1973), p. 5

NEW TEACHING:

"People didn't debate the assumed scientific inadequacies of Genesis until comparatively recently."

"In the fifth century A.D., Augustine had suggested that the days of creation week should perhaps be understood as epochs, rather than literal days."

John Halford, "Religion and Science," PT, July 1993

"The Genesis creation story may be a coded account that can encompass millions of years when properly interpreted and decoded."

*Richard Burky, "Creative Development...,"
Reviews You Can Use, July-Aug. 1993*

"Of special interest is whether the days of creation were 24-hour days. If some parts of the account are not meant literally, what about the days?"

"We do not want to equate faith with faith in a 144-hour interpretation."

*Michael Morrison, "Should Genesis 1 Be Interpreted Literally? ",
Reviews You Can Use, July-Aug. 1993*

133. GENESIS 1-11

Literal People and Places or Metaphors?

OLD TEACHING:

“Thy word is true from the beginning...”

Psalm 119:160 (KJV)

“Jesus Christ accepted the testimony of the Old Testament record as authoritative.”

“The apostles referred to early human beings more than fifteen times in the New Testament. Genesis has always been accepted by Christians as a valid and accurate record of early history. It simply does not make sense to profess a belief in the teachings of Christ and the apostles, and then at the same time refuse to accept their verification of Genesis.”

John R. Schroeder, Answers from Genesis (1973), pp. 3, 4

Author's note: Mr. Armstrong believed and taught that the people, places, and events found in Genesis 1-11 were literally true—not metaphors.

NEW TEACHING:

“[The Bible] does claim to be the Word of God. But does this mean every word should be interpreted and understood literally?”

“Think about it. Do you really believe that God is a rock?...Could the Pharisees have literally swallowed camels?”

“Obviously, these are not literal statements – the biblical authors used poetic license, metaphors, similes...”

“The Biblical creation narratives must not be used as a scientific account.”

*John Halford, “Religion and Science,”
PT, July 1993*

“Though many scholars have rejected the inspiration of Scripture and viewed Genesis 1 as myth with no basis in reality, many other scholars and thinkers in and outside the evangelical camp take a much less extreme position.”

“...to categorize Genesis 1 as sacred poetry is not to be apologetic, not at all!”

“It is poetic in places – but it is more than poetry – it expresses in beautifully modulated, high-toned speech the essentially healthy biblical view of reality...”

“Thus Genesis 1 is beyond literature, beyond history and ultimately beyond science. It is a theological masterpiece, a divine overture to the majestic themes of the Bible.”

“We move from creation to the planetary surface with the eighth word. There is a warning here! How futile to construct elaborate and ingenious hydraulic and technocratic theories about the origins of the universe when God has hidden his blueprints from us, as it were.”

*N. Earle, “Genesis 1: Portrait or Photograph?”,
Reviews You Can Use, July-Aug. 1993*

“If Genesis 1 isn’t intended to be strictly literal or chronological, what is it saying? Primarily, that God is Creator.”

“...I am convinced that the Church should not require a strictly literal reading...It is right to allow some exploration and allow readers to suggest some possible non-literal explanations.”

“A flexible view of Genesis 1, one that makes fewer specific claims, may be better in the long run because it is able to accommodate more facts without any challenge to faith.”

*Michael Morrison, “Should Genesis 1 Be Interpreted Literally?”,
Reviews You Can Use, July-Aug. 1993*

“Thus, God’s purpose in Genesis 1 was not to provide a scientific manual.”

“In this context, then, Genesis 1 soars as a Hebrew song of joy, the majestic overture to the grand themes and messages of the Bible.”

“The Hebrew language is lilting and forceful. It is studded with lively phrases...Verse 2 contains the musical phrase *tohu wabohu...*”

“Genesis 1 is a superb theological masterpiece. It is truly in a class by itself.”

*Neil Earle, “The Battle Over Genesis 1,”
PT, Mar. 1994*

Author’s note: This line of reasoning (and that used in changes 129 and 132) abolished all of Genesis chapters 1 through 11, turning all people, places, and events found there into “metaphors.”

134. HUMAN RACES

All Descended From Eve or Not?

OLD TEACHING:

“The Bible teaches that God ‘made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth’ (Acts 17:26). God’s Word also tells us that Eve was the mother of all living (Gen. 3:20).”

“Therefore, God must have created Eve with the capability to produce children with the varied characteristics that are now manifested in the different races.”

“*Questions & Answers*” GN, Jan. 1983

NEW TEACHING:

“Since the Bible does not explain how God developed each ethnic group, the Worldwide Church of God does not speculate on the matter.”

WCG PCD Letter L017

Author's note: A *Pastor General's Report* in 1990 stated that Eve did not carry the seed of all races within her.

135. NOAH'S FLOOD

Worldwide or Local?

OLD TEACHING:

“Some day – and soon – enlightened scientists will be forced to confess a world-wide, universal Flood. They will be forced to admit the Biblical account describes the only possible way fossils in the earth's sedimentary surface layers could have been formed.”

L.E. Torrance, “Proof of the Flood,”
PT, Jan. 1964

NEW TEACHING:

“Although Genesis gives us fascinating glimpses of the beginning of human history, it is not primarily a historical or scientific statement.”

“It cannot be emphasized too strongly that the primary value of Genesis, as indeed of all Scripture, is theological.”

“For example, the story of the Flood speaks of sin, judgment, redemption, new life. To be occupied with details about the [date and extent of the Flood, or about the] size of the ark..., is to be concerned with side – issues.”

Exploring the Word of God (1994), p. 4

Author's note: Joseph Tkach, Jr. stated in a personal letter to a field minister that Noah's Flood was a local phenomenon, not a worldwide flood.

136. ESSENTIAL BASIC TRUTHS

Original 18 of 1986 or Protestant 8 of 1992?

OLD TEACHING:

“The Editorial Services staff has compiled here, for the first time in any of the Church's publications, 18 essential, basic truths that God restored to His Church through our late Pastor General Herbert W. Armstrong.

“...please spend time with this important article, reviewing each of the 18 truths and thanking God for restoring them to His Church.”

Pastor General, Joseph W. Tkach

- “(1) The government of God.”
- “(2) The Gospel of the Kingdom of God...”
- “(3) The purpose of God, that we are to be born of God and become God.”
- “(4) Who and what is God?”
- “(5) What is man?”
- “(6) The human spirit in man.”
- “(7) The Church is only the firstfruits...”
- “(8) The Church is not yet the Kingdom of God...”
- “(9) Only those whom God the Father calls...can be converted now.”
- “(10) The resurrection to...the Great White Throne Judgment.”
- “(11) The Millennium.”
- “(12) The Holy Spirit coming into us only begets us.”
- “(13) We are only begotten now, not born again.”
- “(14) The identity of modern Israel.”
- “(15) Prophecy can be understood only if you know that we are Israelites...”

- “(16) The annual festivals, the feast days.”
- “(17) The authority of the sacred calendar...”
- “(18) Second and third tithe.”

“Where would we be without these truths? Without them – without Herbert W. Armstrong’s legacy of these 18 restored truths – there isn’t much left.”

Joseph W. Tkach and the Editorial Services Staff, “God Restored these 18 Truths: How Thankful Are You for Them?”, WN, Aug. 25, 1986

Author’s note: A photo of Mr. and Mrs. Armstrong accompanied the above article. The caption read: “In the early 1930s God began to use the Armstrongs to restore these 18 essential truths to His Church. Could we, today, lose sight of them?” Another photo pictured five of Mr. Armstrong’s books: *Mystery of the Ages*, *The United States and Britain in Prophecy*, *The Incredible Human Potential*, *The Wonderful World Tomorrow*, and *Why Were You Born?* The caption read: “Though Mr. Armstrong didn’t know it at the time God began to call him, God had a lifelong job for him; to restore to His Church truth that the centuries had dimmed.” These books have ALL been removed from circulation and from Church libraries, along with everything else Mr. Armstrong wrote.

Some have raised the concern that Mr. Armstrong never actually delineated the “18 Truths” into the particular list compiled above. While he did say in sermons and, perhaps, also referred in writing

to a group of "18 Truths" that he had restored, technically *this* list WAS compiled by the editorial team 7 months after his death. This is true. This does not negate, however, the fact that these great truths listed above were all later completely discarded. Therefore, it seemed to me that this was enough to warrant its own separate point in this book.

NEW TEACHING:

"The greatest truths Mr. Armstrong taught are the truths revealed in the Bible and taught by all New Testament writers:

"[1] That 'God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son...'"

"[2] That Jesus Christ is the Son of God, who died for the sins of humanity..."

"[3] That Jesus has been exalted to the right hand of God..."

"[4] That God has given the promised Holy Spirit..."

"[5] That Christ must remain in heaven until the time comes...to restore all things..."

"[6] That Jesus Christ is the final Judge..."

"[7] [That] human beings are to 'repent and be baptized...'"

"[8] As God's children...we...are to 'put on the new self...'"

"These are the basic truths...the essentials...that are vital to salvation."

"Mr. Armstrong also taught some things that were not strictly the Bible message, but were his own interpretations of certain scriptures."

"Some, though, have made it their work to take every imperfection and weakness in Mr. Armstrong's teaching, along with every speculation and inference, and make these the fundamental core of a new church designed to glorify the memory of a man."

"God has led the true body of believers...to cling to the beautiful, shining and glorious biblical truth he used Mr. Armstrong to teach and proclaim."

"Let us thank God for the wonderful truth he raised up Mr. Armstrong to give us."

"Personal from Joseph W. Tkach," WN, Mar. 31, 1992

137. DIVINELY GUIDED BIBLE STUDY

Possibility or Ridiculous Idea?

OLD TEACHING:

"I had actually found JOY in the study of the Bible – in the discovery of new TRUTHS, heretofore hidden from my consciousness."

"When I read and studied the Bible, God was talking to me, and now I loved to listen!"

Autobiography of Herbert W. Armstrong Vol. 1, pp. 312, 313

"Now you can go to [God] just as any child can go to his father, for counsel and advice, for wisdom, for direction, for HELP in any time of need. Would a good human father deny his own child any good thing the child might really need? Neither will your heavenly Father deny you anything that is really for your good."

"You must not only read, but eagerly, earnestly STUDY the Word of God to learn how to live – you must live according to God's teachings in His Bible – you must make it your guide for everything you do. In this way, God talks to you!"

*Herbert W. Armstrong, "An Open Letter to Our Newly Begotten Brethren,"
GN, Mar. 1981*

"I had a lot of confidence in this man. Now here he was, admitting I had brought him a new TRUTH, proved by the Bible, yet rejecting this LIGHT – and, more, advising a newly converted man who had confidence in him to reject THE WORD OF GOD!"

"Arriving home, I happened to turn to Hosea 4:6, where God says that because we have rejected His knowledge, He will reject us."

Autobiography of Herbert W. Armstrong, Vol. 1, p. 342

"I anointed and prayed for my father... Yet at 9:40 the next morning, he died!"

"I prayed, asking God to give me HIS UNDERSTANDING!"

"He led me to the faith chapter in the Bible – Hebrews 11 – and I prayerfully studied. There I found the answer."

*Herbert W. Armstrong, The Plain Truth About Healing,
pp. 69, 70*

"Study to find truth and to show yourself approved unto God (II Tim. 2:15). Ask God for guidance and to reveal the true meaning."

"Try studying the Bible on your knees. Pray as you study. Pray for guidance and for understanding. You'll be surprised at the results."

*Herbert W. Armstrong, "How to Understand the Bible,"
PT, Nov.-Dec. 1983*

"The God of the Bible therein PROMISES many things and benefits we humans ought to be receiving. Among them is guidance, bestowal of POWER – many things the living God will do for us."

"I began to learn, that if I submitted my life to God's guidance, I was tapping a source of POWER millions of times greater than any resources within."

*Herbert W. Armstrong, "He Can Who Thinks He Can,"
GN, May 1983*

"You see, as I read the Bible, God was talking to me. But as I prayed, I was talking to HIM! And by studying His Word on my knees, I was able to

carry on a two way conversation with Him – mixing prayer with listening to Him through reading His words.”

“It was invigorating, rejuvenating beyond words to describe. He was TEACHING ME.”

“As He told me about Himself – as He talked to me, instructed me – and as I talked to Him – I got to know Him! He BECAME REAL!”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “Why God Is Not Real to Most People,” GN, Jan. 1985

“However, when it, the Spirit of truth, has come, it will guide you into all truth...”

John 16:13 (NKJV)

“And ALL THINGS, whatever you ask in prayer, believing, YOU WILL RECEIVE.”

Matthew 21:22 (NKJV)

“Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh. IS THERE ANYTHING TOO HARD FOR ME?”

Jeremiah 32:27 (NKJV)

NEW TEACHING:

“Lucky-dipping.’ This means praying for divine guidance and then letting the Bible drop open to reveal what you think is a direct message to you. Example: A certain person, on his first lucky dip, read that Judas ‘went and hanged himself’ (Matt. 27:5). On the second lucky dip he read, ‘Go and do likewise’ (Luke 10:37). Exasperated, he tried again and found the command, ‘What you do, do quickly’ (John 13:27).”

Greg R. Albrecht, Plain Truth Archetypes and Paradigms, WCG Philadelphia Regional Conference, Aug. 25-27, 1992

Author's note: As of 1995, the above quote is all that is to be found in current WCG literature on the subject of divinely-guided Bible study.

138. THE NUMBER 666

Number of Roman Empire or Unspecific Identity?

OLD TEACHING:

“When John wrote this Revelation, telling us to COUNT the number of the Beast, he wrote in the GREEK language.”

“In the Greek...this name is ‘LATEINOS.’ It signifies ‘Latin man’... from which region Romans derive their origin and their language. This word, too, signifies ‘ROMAN.’ In the Greek L is 30, A is 1, T is 300, E is 5, I is 10, N is 50, O is 70, S is 200. Count these figures. They count to exactly 666!”

“Certainly THE BEAST stands identified!”

“Thus the number 666 is indelibly BRANDED upon THE ROMAN EMPIRE!”

*Herbert W. Armstrong, Who Is the Beast?,
pp. 15-16*

NEW TEACHING:

“This beast is also identified by the number 666. To what does this numerical cryptogram refer? The mark or name is the same as the number of its name (Rev. 13:17). Many languages have letters which also are used as numbers. Latin, for example, has been one of those languages. The Roman number X equals 10, V equals 5 and so forth. A piece of graffiti from Pompeii reads: ‘I love her whose number is 545.’ The number stood for the name. This principle is what Revelation 13:17 is referring to.”

Paul Kroll, Inside the Book of Revelation, p. 24

Author's note: The above quoted paragraph is the only explanation given for the number 666 in the entire booklet. See also change 68.

139. SIGN OF CHRIST'S RETURN

Gospel Preached or Cosmic Disturbances?

OLD TEACHING:

“Mark this well. That gospel was not proclaimed to the world for 1,900 years. In the very first century, they turned to a different gospel – a gospel about Christ, but not the gospel OF Christ. Read that again. To this very day, nearly all churches and evangelists preach their own gospel ABOUT Christ, but not the gospel OF Christ about the coming kingdom of God to rule the world.”

“But in January 1934, Jesus Christ began proclaiming through me for the first time in 1,900 years the true gospel of the kingdom of God.”

“Then in verse 14 [of Matthew 24] Jesus comes to answer his disciples' second question: ‘...and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world? (verse 3). In verse 14 he answered that question, Jesus himself knowing it would not happen until some nineteen hundred years later. Here is Jesus' own answer to when the end of the world would come.”

“And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then the end come.”

“This very work of God, from which you have received this booklet, is one of the evidences that the end of this world of Satan and civilization as we know it is very near its end.”

*Herbert W. Armstrong, Are We In the Last Days?,
pp. 9, 11, 12, 14*

NEW TEACHING:

“You have probably received a copy recently of our new booklet Will Christ Return?”

“The material in the new booklet sheds additional light on two elements of Jesus’ words in Matthew 24 that we have not previously focused on. The first is about the specific sign of his coming. The second has to do with those who would come in his name.” **[Author’s note: See change 70.]**

“Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,” WN, Apr. 23, 1990

“Recall that the disciples had asked for the sign of Christ’s coming or appearance. Now the answer finally comes: ‘Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory’ (Matt. 24:30).”

David Hulme, Will Christ Return?, p. 19

“Mr. Snyder’s letter to us, dated April 29, 1991, stated: ‘The Church no longer makes the claim that the gospel was not preached for eighteen and a half centuries.’”

McDowell and Stewart, The Deceivers: What Cults Believe, p. 286

140. EXPOUNDING PROPHECY

Prophet Motive or Profit Motive?

OLD TEACHING:

“A staggering turn in world events is due to erupt in the next few years. It will involve violently the United States, Britain, Western Europe, and the Middle East. It’s already rather late for the Free World to come awake to the real meaning behind current world events!”

“And now we are approaching the final grand smash explosion. It will stagger the mind of man beyond the bounds of sanity!”

“Personal from Herbert W. Armstrong,” PT, Dec. 1980

“This is the most seriously-in-earnest article I have ever written for The Plain Truth. Our beloved country – yours and mine – now faces TOTAL DESTRUCTION!”

“The prophet Ezekiel was never freed nor allowed to travel from his prison camp in Babylon to the house of Israel.”

“So Ezekiel merely received and wrote the warning message.”

“IT HAD REMAINED FOR A MODERN 20TH CENTURY ‘Ezekiel’ to understand and deliver the message! YOU ARE READING THAT MESSAGE NOW!”

“WHO ELSE, in our time, knows who are the modern Lost Ten Tribes – the HOUSE OF ISRAEL? No other church or leader has this knowledge.”

“Personal from Herbert W. Armstrong,” PT, June-July 1980

“For 50 years I have been crying out to the world the Bible prophecies of this coming ‘United States of Europe’ – a NEW UNITED SUPERPOWER PERHAPS MORE POWERFUL THAN EITHER THE SOVIET UNION OR THE UNITED STATES!”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Co-worker Letter, July 24, 1983

“We are VERY NEAR THE END of this evil world.”

“You need to be faithful in PAYING GOD HIS TITHE, and in GIVING generous offerings. Your giving makes it possible for us to give THE PRECIOUS GOSPEL MESSAGE to the WHOLE WORLD, by radio, TV and in print.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Co-worker Letter, May 27, 1980

NEW TEACHING:

“As many religionists throughout the ages have found, one of the most effective ways to exercise religious mind control...is to keep people stirred up in a constant state of fear about impending doom and destruction, while proclaiming oneself as the only true leader possessing the true understanding of prophecy and how people can save themselves from what is ‘just about to burst on the world scene.’”

“Some preachers bill themselves as the only faithful voice proclaiming an urgent warning about the prophetic beast forming in a United Europe... reminding them to send a few dollars to support their work...”

“Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,” WN, Aug. 27, 1990

“Had the Church written exciting articles about how current events [the destruction of the Berlin wall and the reunification of Germany] portend the immediate beginning of the Great Tribulation, the income of the Work could have increased.”

“Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,” WN, Aug 19, 1991

“...certain ones...have now set themselves up as special ‘prophets,’ or ‘watchmen’ of the Church or the nation, using fiery language to proclaim that ‘This is the end!’”

“In this manner, they are able to stir up unsuspecting people, who are not well grounded in the Scriptures, to support them and to look to them as great leaders.”

“Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,” WN, May 21, 1990

141. APOSTLE

Same as New Testament Office or Modern Administrator?

OLD TEACHING:

“In a special group festival held at Belknap Springs, in Oregon, in the autumn of 1951, I was shocked – and so were those there – to hear Herman

L. Hoeh, then recently graduated from Ambassador College, say with conviction, as if with authority, 'Mr. Armstrong IS NOT A PROPHET – but a man called to the same kind of commission as the original evangelists and apostles of the first century Church of God – to proclaim the Message – the Announcement – the Good News of the Kingdom of God – the Message that Christ brought from God and taught His disciples."

"Personal from Herbert W. Armstrong," TW, Feb. 1972

"Just as the proofs in the life of Paul set him forth as an apostle of Jesus Christ, in our time others have also been used by God in powerful ways. Through one, Herbert W. Armstrong, the Worldwide Church of God was established. Through him, the doctrines of God were restored to the Body of Christ... Through him, demons have been cast out, and many have been healed. Isn't that the fruit, the seal, of apostleship?"

"Several years before his death he finally recognized by the fruits that God had appointed him an apostle."

L. Leroy Neff, "How Many Apostles Were There?", GN, Sept.-Oct. 1987

One thing that helped convince Mr. Armstrong that he was indeed in the office of an apostle was when it was pointed out to him what the wording was on his 1932 ordination certificate:

"This official document is to certify that H.W. Armstrong is a recognized licensed minister, and *apostle of the true primitive faith...*"

Autobiography of Herbert W. Armstrong Vol. I, p. 504

NEW TEACHING:

"It has been the practice of the Church to refer to Mr. Armstrong, and to me, as having the office of apostle. Some have confused this terminology, assuming it connotes an office equal to that of the apostles of the first century."

"...the Church uses the term 'apostle'...only as a designation of the highest spiritual and administrative office in the Church."

"Personal from Joseph W. Tkach," WN, Mar. 31, 1992

142. CHILDREN OF MEMBERS

Should Stay in Church or May Have Valid Reason to Leave?

OLD TEACHING:

"Your children are in a special (consecrated) category. You may TEACH THEM about Christ – about the things of the Bible. Their chances of being CONVERTED when sufficiently mature are MULTIPLIED!"

"Brethren, God's Church is not showing even half the growth it should have from the oncoming generation of our members. This shows we have NEGLECTED the teaching of our children! When God has called YOU for special service in loyally backing the proclaiming of the Gospel to the world

by God's Church, He intended that your children should also be called and enter into the Work of God's Church."

Herbert W. Armstrong, "Your Children — Future Gods?", GN, Sep. 1979

NEW TEACHING:

"On the [WCG] youth camp-out I mentioned earlier, one girl told my wife: 'Sometimes I wish I didn't go to my church. My parents don't trust anyone outside, and they never let me do anything.'"

"One way to avoid provoking your children, which the scripture warns us against...is to show them that you...respect their growing need for independence and autonomy."

"What parent, deep down, wants a child to blindly adopt parental beliefs? So perhaps there is, after all, one valid reason for teens to move away from the religion of their parents. And that is if they honestly cannot accept it."

Michael Warren, "Help Your Teens," PT, Jan. 1993

143. THE S.T.P. AND DOCTRINAL TEAM

Curse or Blessing?

OLD TEACHING:

"Those 'intellectuals' surrounding my son, who was left to administer the Work from Pasadena headquarters, were conspiring to liberalize Church doctrines, to destroy and remove from circulation the articles, booklets, etc., I had written on BASIC TRUTHS. The Church of God was being molded more and more like a liberal Protestant denomination."

"Finally, by 1977, a voluminous project, called the Systematic Theological Project (STP), was prepared in scholarly and systematic 'university' style."

Herbert W. Armstrong, "The History of the Beginning...of the WCG," GN, Apr. 1980

"This group of liberals [wanted]...unity in watered-down doctrines that older loyal ministers did not and never would accept! THAT WAS NOT UNITY – IT WAS DIVISION!"

Herbert W. Armstrong, "What Is a Liberal?", GN, Mar. 1979

"Many of those leading ministers who were loyal to Christ's apostle – and who held tightly to the DOCTRINES Christ had put into the Church through His apostle – were demoted in office or shanghaied away to another part of the world."

Herbert W. Armstrong, "Why My Son No Longer Stands...with Me," GN, Apr. 1979

NEW TEACHING:

"I have instructed that we undertake a long-term plan of setting down the basic, clear, foundational truths of God's Word in a doctrinal manual."

“But now, so that you are aware, some of the STP material may be corrected and updated for use in helping produce a new doctrinal manual.”

“Personal by Joseph W. Tkach,” WN, May 21, 1990

144. ADULTERY

Sin Against God, Family and Society or Symptom of a Bad Marriage?

OLD TEACHING:

“Adultery, fornication, masturbation, homosexuality are so COLOSSALLY SINFUL BECAUSE they violate, pollute, profane and destroy something so HOLY and so monumentally RIGHTEOUS in God’s sight!”

“People today don’t like to use God’s plain-language term, adultery. When a husband or wife commits adultery, each uses a more modern less-sinful-sounding term, ‘cheating’ or ‘having an affair.’”

Herbert W. Armstrong, The Missing Dimension in Sex (1981), p. 176

NEW TEACHING:

“Adultery reveals something about one’s marriage. When a partner goes outside the marriage to find fulfillment or gratification, the act yells out that there is wrong inside the marriage.”

“In the words of Maggie Scarf [Intimate Partners]: ‘Adultery is a form of communication. It is a way of acting out a message...and that message is: ‘For me, this marriage isn’t working.’”

“Adultery or an affair is not something that happens to someone but rather is something that happens between two people who are not intimately relating to each other. ‘The affair itself is a symptom of a global marital disturbance; it is not the disturbance itself,’ writes Maggie Scarf.”

*Paul Kroll, “Couples Who Don’t Love Enough,”
PT, July 1988*

145. “PERFECT IN HIS GENERATIONS”

Refers to Noah’s Ancestry or to His Character?

OLD TEACHING:

“This is the genealogy of Noah. Noah was a just man, perfect in his generations.”

Genesis 6:9 (NKJV)

“Noah, was ‘perfect’ in his generations. That is, his heredity, ancestry (Gen. 6:9).”

“Proof of this lies in the meaning of the Hebrew word translated ‘perfect.’ It may refer either to spiritual character (Gen. 17:1) or to physical characteristics (Lev. 22:21)...So a good rendering of Genesis 6:9 is that

Noah was the only ‘just’ man (in spiritual character), and also ‘unblemished’ (in his genetic heritage) among his contemporaries.”

“The subject matter of the chapter is the generations ancestry of Noah.”
Herbert W. Armstrong, Mystery of the Ages, p. 147

NEW TEACHING:

“...the Hebrew word *tamiyim* ['perfect'] is frequently used for the physical perfection of the sacrificial animals...”

“One might ask why the Hebrew text of Genesis 6:9 used the plural ‘in his generations.’ Noah’s life covered many generations (Genesis 6:3)...”

“The Hebrew term means nothing more than freedom from moral blemish.”

“*Q & A from PGR,*” WN, Dec. 3, 1990

146. BIBLE VERSIONS

Conservative and Word-for-Word or Liberal and Paraphrased?

OLD TEACHING:

“Translations can be broken down into two broad categories according to the technique used by the translator. These are the more literal translations and the more free renderings.”

“The more literal translation is best represented by the King James Version. It attempts to follow the Greek and Hebrew text very closely, even word for word if possible.”

“The freer method of translating is that used by most recent versions. Here the attempt is made to render sense for sense rather than word for word...He may have to paraphrase and even add words or phrases not actually in the original.”

*Lester L. Grabbe, “Which Translation Should You Use?”,
WCG Article Reprint*

“Modern-language translations alone are not sufficient. They may be excellent translations, making outdated expressions clear. But they need to be compared with the English text of the *Authorized* or *King James Version* and/or the *New King James Version*.”

*H.L. Hoeh, “Which Bible Translations Are Best?”,
WCG Article Reprint, 1984, p. 10*

NEW TEACHING:

“The *New International Version* is a completely new translation...mid-way between a literal rendering and a free paraphrase.”

“For a person who wants to do more than read the Bible occasionally, the *New International Version* is worth considering as one’s first Bible.”

Paul Kroll, “Choosing a Bible?”, PT, May-June 1993

“Unless noted otherwise, scriptures are quoted from the *Holy Bible, New International Version.*”

Standard credit on inside front cover of all more recent Plain Truth magazines.

147. PROTESTANT LANGUAGE

Sentimental and Meaningless or Good Way to Communicate?

OLD TEACHING:

“We need, just now, to be warned against being deceived into a false standard of spirituality.”

“Some people have deliberately cultivated spiritual-sounding language.”

“This is not to discount or to criticize the natural emotional expression resulting spontaneously from a genuine spiritual experience, or the true spiritual language springing from an honest heart.”

*Herbert W. Armstrong, “True Spirituality,”
GN, June-July 1984*

“Haven’t you honestly been a bit confused by this religious terminology?”

“Do you know that most religious people who use all these religious words usually don’t know any more than you do what they really mean?”

“Why are these religious terms used most of the time loosely, vaguely, meaninglessly?”

Herbert W. Armstrong, What Do You Mean...Salvation?, p. 12

“Did you ever notice that *The World Tomorrow* is not at all like the RELIGIOUS broadcasts on the air? It NEVER starts out with religious hymns, and a voice in a sentimental syrupy tone saying, ‘Dear friends in Radio-land, I trust that this broadcast will bring a blessing to your hearts – isn’t it WONDERFUL to know the Lord?’ Do you know what happens when such religious broadcasts start on a radio station? Well, MOST people tuned in snap the dial quickly.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Should You Try to “Convert” Others?, p. 1

NEW TEACHING:

“Suffering people need to know that Jesus Christ loves them. Now that plain biblical fact is too ‘sweet’ for some people, I guess.”

“Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,” WN, Jan. 12, 1993

Author’s note: Protestant buzz-words and terms in the proposed new booklet, *What Is the True Church?*, were: “holy huddle,” “salvation solution,” “spiritual environmentalists,” “invisible church,” “Christian pilgrims,” “kingdom life support system – the church.” Divinity school language in the booklet *God Is...: arianism*, “cos-

mological argument,” “existentialism,” “henotheism,” “immanent,” “modalism,” “monoaltry,” “nihilism,” “omniscient,” “ontological argument,” “pantheism,” “shema,” “teleological argument,” “theism.”

148. BIBLICAL NUMBERS

Important or Not?

OLD TEACHING:

“You asked about the significance of numbers which occur frequently in the Bible.”

“The number one denotes unity or commencement.”

“The number three denotes completeness or resurrection.”

“The number seven denotes spiritual perfection.”

“The number 12...means organizational beginnings...”

WCG PCD Letter L046

“Six is the number of MAN and materialism.”

Autobiography of Herbert W. Armstrong, Vol. 2 (1987), p. 124

“God has set time running in cycles of 19 years.”

Personal from Herbert W. Armstrong,” TW, Feb. 1972

NEW TEACHING:

Author's note: References to biblically important numbers (3, 7, 12, 19, 40, 360, 1260) were completely deleted in all WCG literature.

149. THE EARTH

Not Created in Chaos or Was It?

OLD TEACHING:

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was [or became] without form, and void...”

Genesis 1:1 (NKJV)

“For thus says the Lord, who created the heavens (he is God!), who formed the earth and made it (he established it; he did not create it a chaos, he formed it to be inhabited!)...”

Isaiah 45:18 (RSV)

“For God is not the author of confusion...”

I Corinthians 14:33 (NKJV)

"The words for 'without form and void' are *tohu* and *bohu*."

"Why would [God] create the earth in disorder and then have to straighten it out? That doesn't make sense! One scholar points out that the Hebrew word for 'created,' *bara*, used in Genesis 1:1, 'implies that the creation was a perfect work.'"

"In the first three chapters of the Bible, and many other places where you find the Hebrew word *hayah*, in almost every case it denotes a condition that was different from a former condition."

"Plainly the word was (*hayah*) here has the meaning of 'became.' The Rotherham translation of Genesis 1:2, out of the original Hebrew language, is this: 'Now the earth HAD BECOME waste and empty.'"

"In Jeremiah 4:23, Isaiah 34:11, and in other places in the Bible, you find the same words, *tohu* and *bohu*, meaning 'chaotic' and 'in confusion.' In every case that condition is a result of sin."

"The earth was created perfect. Then it BECAME chaotic as a result of [Satan's] rebellion. And in six days, God remade the earth, reshaped it, refashioned it, and created human beings upon it (Psalm 104:30)."

Herbert W. Armstrong, Did God Create A Devil?, pp. 2-3, 9

NEW TEACHING:

"This interpretation is called the Gap Theory."

"The problem with this proposal is that to translate the Hebrew word *hayah* in Genesis 1:2 as 'became' rather than 'was' is technically *possible*, but the majority of scholars feel it is an unlikely rendering..."

"How Old Is the Universe?", PT, July 1993

150. CHURCH OF GOD (SEVENTH DAY)

Part of Sardis Era or Not?

OLD TEACHING:

"In 1930 a division occurred among the Oregon brethren, resulting in the formation of the Oregon Conference of the Church of God. The Sardis era of the Church had become, virtually spiritually dead."

Herbert W. Armstrong, "Recent History of the Philadelphia Era...", WN, June 24, 1985

"And so it was that some time in the 19th century, a small congregation of the true Church of God was established in the peaceful Willamette Valley of Oregon."

"The Sardis era (Rev. 3:1-6) was by this time spiritually dying and had become impotent in spreading the true gospel of Christ."

Herbert W. Armstrong, Mystery of the Ages, pp. 288, 289

NEW TEACHING:

"Last week, Greg Albrecht, Michael Feazell, Vic Kubik and I visited the general offices of the Church of God (Seventh Day) in Denver, Colorado."

“Over the years, as many of you know, we have labeled the Church of God (Seventh Day), which is our parent organization, as being the Sardis church, and therefore spiritually dead. I’m sure we all realize that this was not viewed as a compliment. I apologized for any offense that may have been caused, and they were extremely gracious toward us. It was not surprising to find that they are far from spiritually dead.”

Joseph Tkach Jr., “Church Administration,” PGR, June 2, 1993

151. INTERPRETING THE BIBLE

Not Necessary or Is It?

OLD TEACHING:

“To understand any general subject in the Bible, it is necessary to view all the scriptural evidence touching that particular subject. And we cannot read our inherited or desired meaning into any particular passage; for ‘no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation’ (II Peter 1:20), but each passage is interpreted by, and in the light of, other texts.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “...Faith Is Required for Salvation?”, TW, Aug. 1971

“The Bible ought never to be interpreted. It means what it says, and it says what it means. Taken as it is, it makes sense.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “What Do Churchgoers Believe And Why?”, GN, Feb. 1984

“Today we have hundreds of interpretations of the Bible. But you never hear of hundreds of interpretations of a biology textbook. Why? Because biology textbooks do not rebuke and correct men.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “How to Understand the Bible,” PT, Nov.-Dec. 1983

“Yet the TRUTH is all PLAINLY preserved for us IN THE BIBLE – but religious leaders have insisted on ‘interpreting it’ – putting their twisted meaning on it!”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “Billions Not Being Judged?”, GN, Jan. 1981

“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.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “7 Keys to Understanding the Bible,” GN, Dec. 1984

“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!”

How to Study the Bible, p. 16

NEW TEACHING:

“...Mr. Armstrong also taught some things that were not strictly the Bible message, but were his own interpretations of certain scriptures.”

“Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,” WN, Mar. 31, 1992

“It is not a matter of sincerity, but a matter of correct interpretation of the Bible.”

“Today, we understand that we were wrong to have labeled as plain truth what was in reality only speculative interpretation.”

Joseph W. Tkach, “Prediction Addiction,” PT, Sep. 1993

“We must also recognize that many literary styles occur in the Bible, and each must be interpreted appropriately.”

Greg R. Albrecht, “True Source for Christian Belief,” PT, Feb. 1992

“The Bible is, of course, different from any other book in that it is inspired and infallible. But for matters of interpretation the Bible does not take on some special magic that changes basic literary patterns of interpretation.”

“This is an area of much abuse with interpretations ranging from the skeptical, naturalistic method that virtually eliminates prophecy to the wild, bizarre method that sees in every contemporary event a ‘clear’ fulfillment of a biblical prophecy.”

“In interpreting prophetic images, seek the general meaning of such images in the Bible itself. Approach prophecy carefully with a sober attitude.”

Greg Albrecht, The Plain Truth: Archetypes and Paradigms, reference used: “Summary of ‘Practical Rules for Biblical Interpretation’”

“No question in parable interpretation has been more hotly contested than the allegorical method vs. the one-point approach.”

“Many modern Bible students come down somewhere in the middle: They try not to over-interpret the parables.”

Norman L. Shoaf, “What Jesus’ Parables Reveal,” PT, July 1993

Author’s note: All literature became loaded with references to interpretations and interpreting. The WCG freely admitted that it was only giving its own interpretation of the Bible.

152. THE SABBATH

Literal Creation or Literary Creation?

OLD TEACHING:

“And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. Then

God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.”

Genesis 2:2-3 (NKJV)

“And [Jesus] said to them, ‘The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. Therefore the Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath.’”

Mark 2:27-28 (NKJV)

“If [the Sabbath] was made for mankind, we should suppose it was made when MAN was made. But we must not ‘suppose.’ We must have BIBLE AUTHORITY!”

“Let’s turn back to the description of the time when MAN was made.”

“There were a full SEVEN DAYS of creation! Not six – SEVEN! On the seventh day HE MADE THE SABBATH! But the Sabbath was made, not by WORK, but by REST...[God] created the Sabbath by resting.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Which Day Is the Christian Sabbath? (1976), pp. 23, 24

NEW TEACHING:

“If Genesis 1 isn’t intended to be strictly literal or chronological, what is it saying? Primarily, that God is Creator.”

“Whether the days of creation were literally 24 hours long, or whether they were an inspired literary creation, the Sabbath is still emphasized.”

*M. Morrison, “Should Genesis 1 Be Interpreted Literally?”,
Reviews You Can Use, July-Aug. 1993*

Author’s note: To the best of our research, even all Sabbath-keeping churches acknowledge a literal creation week. The authority of the 24-hour Sabbath springs from that account—what was created on the seventh day was the Sabbath. See Exodus 20:8-11.

153. “BORN AGAIN” At the Resurrection or At Conversion?

OLD TEACHING:

“Jesus answered and said to him, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.’”

“Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.”

John 3:3, 5-6 (NKJV)

“So also is the resurrection of the dead. The body is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is

sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body."

"And as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly Man. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed – in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet."

I Corinthians 15:42-44, 49-52 (NKJV)

"As we are now flesh, we shall be SPIRIT – at the resurrection. That is when we shall be 'BORN AGAIN' – when we see, enter into, the Kingdom of God – when we are spirit – at the resurrection!"

Herbert W. Armstrong, "Just What Do You Mean...Born Again?", p. 16

NEW TEACHING:

"Mr. Armstrong's analogy of human gestation is a good analogy. But we must not confuse it with the biblical analogy of being 'born again,' which is referring to Christian conversion."

"Personal from Joseph W. Tkach," WN, Jan. 28, 1991

Author's note: The "born again" change was railroaded through with numerous untruths and silly reasoning. If a person could be helped to see through the deception of the "born again" change, he would not be able to accept other erroneous changes in areas like the family of God, character development, the doctrine of the trinity, antichrist, the kingdom of God, sons of God, becoming God, etc. The "born again" change was the first of these to be made and set the stage for the rest to fall like dominoes. *For this reason, and because it was a big change on many people's minds, the next dozen changes recorded in this book (154 through 165) have been included.* Over two dozen more nonsensical ideas, unprovable interpretations and bible study errors used in manufacturing this huge deception have NOT been included. Many people, ministers and even some leaders of the "splinters" still believe this new idea and, therefore, many of the related heresies that are inseparable from it.

154. FIRSTBORN FROM THE DEAD

Birth/Resurrection Connection or Title of Preeminence?

OLD TEACHING:

"For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be *the firstborn among many brethren*."

Romans 8:29 (NKJV)

“Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature.”

“And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the *firstborn from the dead*, that in all things he might have the preeminence.”

Colossians 1:15, 18 (KJV)

“Grace to you and peace from...Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the *firstborn from the dead*, and the ruler over the kings of the earth.”

Revelation 1:4-5 (NKJV)

“Christ was born a SON of God by a resurrection from the dead (Rom. 1:4). He was only the first to be SO BORN of GOD, of MANY BRETHREN.”

“God is to have MANY SONS born of Him. Of all these, JESUS was the first to be SO BORN.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Just What Do You Mean – Born Again?, pp. 42, 43

NEW TEACHING:

“The argument is proposed, on the strength of Colossians 1:18 and Revelation 1:5, that Christ would not be called the firstborn from the dead unless others would be born in the same way later.”

“This interpretation is wrong. There is no term *first* or a term *born* in the text. The term *firstborn* is used, which is a title. The meaning of the title is, not order of birth, but privilege.”

K.J. Stavrinides, “Conception and Resurrection,” WN, Dec. 9, 1991

155. PROTESTANT “BORN AGAIN”

Ignores the Resurrection or Ignores True Conversion?

OLD TEACHING:

“[Jesus] launched immediately into the fact that the KINGDOM OF GOD, ruling all nations, could not be set up UNTIL the time of the NEW SPIRIT BIRTH – the time of the RESURRECTION!”

“Today’s theologians do not know even that! They deny a real second birth as a spirit being. They spiritualize away the real truth by assuming that merely saying that one accepts Christ as his Savior constitutes being born again. In this, Satan has deceived them and in turn they have deceived millions of others.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Mystery of the Ages, p. 224

“That tremendous, glorious event of being BORN of God is to take place AT THE RESURRECTION OF THE JUST – at the time of Christ’s second coming to earth!”

“And THAT TRUE BORN-AGAIN EXPERIENCE will be incomparably more GLORIOUS than the false, vague, meaningless so-called ‘born-again experience’ that deceived THOUSANDS think they have had now.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Just What Do You Mean – Born Again? (1972), pp. 40, 45

“Many who believe they are ‘born again’ on receiving the Holy Spirit are more in error in terminology than in what happens...”

*Herbert W. Armstrong, Just What Do You Mean...
Conversion? (1972), p. 14*

Author's note: In other words, they somewhat understand conversion—they are just in error by labeling it “born again.”

NEW TEACHING:

“[Mr. Armstrong] had come to see, correctly, that the popular ‘born again’ concept led many people to misunderstand true Christian conversion as laid out in Scripture.”

“Mr. Armstrong’s purpose was to point out the difference between true conversion and false conversion.”

“Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,” WN, Jan. 28, 1991

156. GENNAO

Refers to all Stages of the Reproductive Process or Not?

OLD TEACHING:

“Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is [gennao] in her is of the Holy Spirit.”

Matthew 1:20 (NKJV)

“And since the Greek *gennao* is an all-inclusive term – referring to begetting by the father, but also, secondarily according to the lexicons, including the process culminating in birth, the translators had to decide which English term to use in each case.”

“In every instance where the Greek *gennao* refers to Spirit-begotten Christians, it should be rendered ‘begotten.’”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Just What Do You Mean – Born Again?, p. 35

Author's note: Mr. Armstrong quoted five Greek-English lexicons to show that the word *gennao* can refer to either begettal by the father (*begotten*) or birth by the mother (*born*). We checked five additional lexicons and found the same definition—*gennao* can be translated either “born” or “begotten,” depending on the context.

NEW TEACHING:

“...the Church must now redefine its explanation of the verb *gennao*...”

[Author's note: The only explanation given is about the translated words *born* and *begotten*]

“Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,” WN, Jan. 28, 1991

“Also, we must address the Greek word *gennao*, here translated ‘born.’ *Gennao* can be translated either ‘born’ or ‘begotten’...”

“*Gennao* means either ‘born’ or ‘begotten,’ depending upon whether the mother’s or father’s role is being spoken of.”

B.W. Schnippert, “*The...Miracle of Being Born from Above*,” WN, Feb. 3, 1992

“*Gennao* derives its meaning from the root *genna* (birth). It means ‘to produce through birth.’ Whether the agent is male or female, the meaning of the verb is the same, ‘to bring a child into the world.’” **[Author’s note: No lexicon is quoted to substantiate this definition, and it does not fit the definitions found in the ten lexicons noted above.]**

K.J. Stavrinides, “*You Must Be Born From Above*,” WN, Dec. 9, 1991

Author’s note: In a videotaped message by Joseph W. Tkach played in all churches in the spring of 1993, he addressed the problems members were having with doctrinal upheaval within the Church. He touched on the “born again” change by announcing, “*Gennao!* It’s a word! Look it up!” The topic was people leaving the Church over what they believed to be doctrinal error, but still no lexicon definition was given.

“What does *gennao* mean? Does *gennao* mean ‘conception’ or does *gennao* mean ‘born again’? Well, I’ll tell you. I am here to tell you on the authority of Jesus Christ that *gennao* means to be ‘born again’! To be ‘born from above.’” **[Author’s note: Still, no lexicon definition was quoted.]**

Joseph W. Tkach, “*A Point of Light*,” sermon played
in all churches, Aug. 1993

Author’s note: Ron Kelly visited the Grand Rapids, Michigan congregation in the spring of 1993. He stated that the issue is not the word *gennao*, but rather the translated word *begotten*. Since all parties on both sides agree that the word *gennao* can rightly be translated “begotten,” move on to change 157 to settle the issue.

157. BEGOTTEN

Refers to the Father’s Role in Impregnation or Not?

OLD TEACHING:

“At the time the father begets and the mother conceives – of the union of sperm cell and ovum – the fertilized ovum becomes an embryo.”

“‘To beget means begetting, the action or process of generating or producing; generation’ [from *New English Dictionary of Historical Principles*,

1888]. It is interesting also, in this dictionary to find the following: ‘Begettal (f. beget v. + al, cf. Committal) Begetting, 1873, C.M. Davies: They believe in his preternatural begettal by the Holy Spirit.’’

“Now a word of explanation about this English verb *beget* or the adjective form, *begotten*.’’

“Beget refers to the father. And the father’s action is to cause the start toward the process toward birth.”

“The experience of conversion, in this life, is a begettal – a ‘conception’ – an ‘impregnation’ – but NOT YET A BIRTH! This we have made very PLAIN!”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Just What Do You Mean – Born Again?, pp. 22, 33, 35, 37

A synonym by Webster’s definition is “one of two or more words or expressions of the same language that have the same or nearly the same meaning.”

Following are some synonym lists from *The Synonym Finder*:

“**beget** 1. father, sire, procreate, generate, engender, *get*; breed, propagate, reproduce, spawn; *impregnate*, Biol. fecundate, Biol. *fertilize*.”

“**conceive** 4. beget, procreate, father, sire; generate, engender, propagate, reproduce; *become impregnated*, *become pregnant*, *become fertilized*, *come with child*.”

“**impregnate** 1. *inseminate*, *make pregnant*, *get with child* or young, Sl. knock up; fertilize, fructify, make fruitful, fecundate; beget, create, procreate, engender, generate.”

“**engender** 2. *beget*, create, procreate, father, sire, *sow the seeds of*, *conceive*, give birth to; breed, propagate, reproduce, spawn.”

J.I. Rodale, The Synonym Finder, pp. 106, 206-207, 353, 545

“**Beget, get, and sire** imply the *procreating act of the male parent*; usually ‘beget’ is preferred in reference to men and ‘get’ and ‘sire’ in reference to animals [he that begetteth a fool doeth it to his sorrow – Prov. 17:21] [a bull may be unable to get calves].”

Webster’s New Dictionary of Synonyms

“**begotten** past part. of beget” **beget** 1. Obsolete a. To acquire b. *To get (with child)* 2. To procreate as father or sire; to generate”

Webster’s New International Dictionary Second Edition

“beget 1(obsolete): to acquire especially through effort 2a: to procreate as the father : SIRE b: to give birth to : BREED 3(obsolete): *to make a woman pregnant*”

Webster’s Third New International Dictionary

“**beget** 1. To acquire (usually by effort) – 1602. 2. To procreate, generate; occasionally said of both parents ME. b. *GET (with child)* – 1611. 3.

Theologically applied to the relationship of the Father to the Son in the Trinity ME.”

Shorter Oxford English Dictionary

Author's note: What does “get with child” mean? “169.10 Fertilize, fructify, fecundate, fecundify; impregnate, inseminate, spermatize; get with child or young; pollinate or pollinize, pollen; cross-fertilize, cross-pollinate or crosspollinize, cross-pollen”(Roget's International Thesaurus 4th Edit).

Mr. Armstrong plainly understood the correct meaning of begotten, both archaic and otherwise.

NEW TEACHING:

“Mr. Armstrong knew that *gennao* is often translated in the KJV as ‘begotten.’ But because ‘begotten’ is used of the Father, Mr. Armstrong used this term as if it were a counterpart of *conceived*. *Begotten* is an archaic word in English, and Mr. Armstrong was not aware of this misunderstanding of its definition.

“The correct definition of *begotten*, however (and the one used in the days of King James), is not solely the father’s role in conception, but always includes the birth. In other words, if a man has begotten a child, he has actually received (or gotten) the child.”

“On the other hand, if his wife experiences a miscarriage, he has not begotten a child.”

Author's note: Notice carefully how the next explanation contradicts this new definition (which by the way was not supported by a dictionary) of begotten as “always including the birth.”

“In Matthew 1:20, the King James Version translates the verb *gennao* as ‘conceived.’ [Author's note: Matthew 1:20 reads – “**Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is [gennao] in her is of the Holy Spirit.”**]”

“In this sense, begotten would be preferable to conceived. Translators, however, often prefer a good English translation in spite of the literal meaning of the original text.” [Author's note: First we were told that a child is not begotten until it is born, then we were told that a child in the womb can be referred to as having been begotten.]

“Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,” WN, Jan. 28, 1991

“And it’s interesting to note how the King James translators used the word *begettal* when they were writing it in 1611. Hebrews 11:17 – ‘By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac; and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son.’”

“The interesting thing there is that Isaac was not in Sarah’s womb at the time nor was he a newborn infant. So begettal does not refer to conception or birth, but to the son Abraham had gotten for himself.” [Author’s note: A review of the *dictionary* definitions shows that the 1611 usage of begotten was to “get with child” and that “get with child” is a synonym for impregnate, inseminate, fertilize.]

Joseph Tkach Jr., “Born from Above,” sermon played
in all churches, Sep. 1992

Author’s note: As with the preceding *gennao* definition change, not ONE dictionary was quoted to prove this new definition of *begotten*.

158. ANAGENNAO

A Word and Analogy in the Bible or Not?

OLD TEACHING:

“313. *anagennao*; to beget or (by extension) bear (again): – beget, (bear) X again.”

Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has *begotten* us *again* [*anagennao*] to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.”

I Peter 1:3-5 (NKJV)

“Seeing that ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently, being *born* [or *begotten*] *again* [*anagennao*], not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever.”

I Peter 1:22-23 (KJV)

“Human life starts with what the Bible terms *corruptible seed* – physical male sperm. Divine life starts with that which is incorruptible – the Holy Spirit of God entering the human person.”

“Peter gives an analogy of this: ‘Being born again...’ (I Peter 1:23). Being – in process of – not having been – not yet an immortal person – but being ‘born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible...’ (Other translations use the term begotten.) Greek: *anagennao* – to beget – anew – (Young).”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Just What Do You Mean – Born Again?, pp. 26-27

NEW TEACHING:

“Let me read...to you from the Louw-Nida Lexicon...about *gennao*: ‘In a number of languages the use of *anagennao*’ – which is a longer word that’s not used in the Bible – ‘in the sense of to be born again is extremely difficult for people to understand, even as it was in biblical times’ – because of this idiomatic usage.”

“So let’s move to a second biblical fact. And that is the New Testament does not use the analogy of conception. Hope that doesn’t shock anyone, but the New Testament is void of that analogy. It does not use it.”

Joseph Tkach Jr., “Born from Above,” sermon played in all churches, Sep. 1992

159. I JOHN 3:9**Refers to the Future or to the Present?****OLD TEACHING:**

“Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.”

I John 3:9 (KJV)

“[We] have many scriptures showing that it is NOT IMPOSSIBLE for converted Christians to sin – it was NOT IMPOSSIBLE even for Jesus! Yet, in I John 3:9, in the A.V., we have the flat statement that, if and when we are actually born of GOD, we shall not be able to sin – IT WILL THEN BE IMPOSSIBLE!”

“This is speaking of the time when we shall be spirit – BORN of God.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Just What Do You Mean – Born Again?, p. 39

“God is a family into which we may be born...And when we are born of God we will not even be able to sin.”

Joseph W. Tkach and the Editorial Services staff, “God Restored these 18 Truths: How Thankful Are You For Them?”, WN, Aug. 25, 1986

NEW TEACHING:

“Even before the death of Mr. Armstrong, the Church understood that I John 3:9 is not really speaking about an impossibility to sin, but of the need of the Christian not to abide in sin.”

“This means that the expression ‘born of God,’ in I John 3:9, must refer to this life.”

“Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,” WN, Jan. 28, 1991

160. DUAL SONSHIP OF CHRIST**Biblical or Not?****OLD TEACHING:**

“And we declare to you glad tidings – that promise which was made to the fathers. God has fulfilled this for us their children, in that He has raised up Jesus. As it is also written in the second Psalm: You are My Son, today I have begotten [gennao] thee.”

Acts 13:32-33 (NKJV)

“...concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh *and* declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead...”

Romans 1:3-4 (NKJV)

“Jesus was, in the human flesh – His first birth – a descendant of David, and, by the resurrection from the dead – (born AGAIN) – the Son of God, now no longer human, but composed of SPIRIT – a Spirit Being.”

“Of course we understand, and so did Paul in writing the above, that Jesus was also the Son of God while in the human flesh. Though born of a human woman, He was sired by God. But this is comparing the two births – the one from the human Mary, as descended from the human David – the other, by His resurrection, in the same manner we may be.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Just What Do You Mean – Born Again?, p. 21

NEW TEACHING:

“In Acts 13:32-34, Luke wrote: ‘This day have I begotten [gennao] thee,’ which would suggest a reference to the resurrection. Those who espouse this interpretation *would have to grant that Christ became the Son of God at the resurrection* – which contradicts countless passages in the New Testament where Christ is declared to be the Son of God, even before his resurrection.”

“Romans 1:4 says that Jesus Christ was ‘declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.’ The difficulty presented by this passage is not one of translation, text or context, it is one of exegesis.” **[Author’s note: Exegesis means “interpretation.”]**

K.J. Stavrinides, “Conception and Resurrection,” WN, Dec. 9, 1991

161. NICODEMUS

Knew Who Christ Was or Not?

OLD TEACHING:

“There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher from God...”

John 3:1-2 (NKJV)

“The ‘we’ implies that the divine identity of the Messenger and the Source of His Message was known to the Pharisees.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Just What Do You Mean – Born Again?, p. 12

“After this, Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly, for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus; and Pilate gave him permission. So he came and took the body of Jesus. And *Nicodemus*, who at first came to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds. Then they took the body of Jesus, and bound it in strips of linen with spices, as the custom of the Jews is to bury.”

John 19:38-40 (NKJV)

NEW TEACHING:

“Notice that Nicodemus addressed Christ as a rabbi and said that the Jews knew he, Christ, was a teacher come from God.”

“But to Christ the statement was a gross understatement, almost like an insult.”

“Christ was not merely a teacher come from God or a rabbi. He was God in the flesh, the Messiah, the Lamb of God and Savior who would take away the sins of the whole world. But Nicodemus didn’t understand that.”

“Nicodemus, in spite of his religious title, was in spiritual darkness.”

B.W. Schnippert, “The...Miracle of Being Born from Above,” WN, Feb. 3, 1992

“Another assertion that is made is that Nicodemus was completely blinded as to Jesus’ Messiahship – and this is what is leveled at us, that we’re saying that, and that of course that’s not true. We don’t say that, because it isn’t true. Nicodemus recognized Christ as a Messiah, but he was more than just the Messiah to the Jews, he was the Son of God. That’s what Nicodemus didn’t see.”

J. Tkach Jr., “Born from Above,” sermon to be played in all churches, Sep. 1992

Author's note: See John 1:37-41, 47-49 for proof that others who called Christ “Rabbi” understood that He was the Son of God and the Messiah.

162. WIND ANALOGY

Pictures Spirit Beings or Pictures Converted Men?

OLD TEACHING:

“That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not *marvel* that I said to you, “You must be born again.” The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. *SO IS EVERYONE* who is born of the Spirit.””

John 3:6-8 (NKJV)

“Here is the crux point that explains it all: Jesus said: ‘That which is born of the flesh **IS** flesh: and that which is born of the Spirit **IS** spirit.’”

“You cannot see wind. Wind is compared to spirit. It is INVISIBLE. That’s why mortal FLESH, as we now are, cannot SEE the Kingdom of God. Those who inherit it will **be** spirit – normally invisible to eyes still human.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Just What Do You Mean – Born Again?, pp. 13-14, 15

“For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself does; and He will show Him greater works than these, that you may **marvel**. For as the Father *raises the dead* and gives life to them, even so the Son gives life to whom He will.”” **[Author’s note: Reference these verses to chapter 11 – Lazarus’ resurrection.]**

“Most assuredly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear will live... Do not *marvel* at this; for the hour is coming in which *all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth* – those who have done good, to the *resurrection* of life, and those who have done evil, to the *resurrection* of condemnation.””

John 5:20-21, 25-29 (NKJV)

“Even if I bear witness of Myself, My witness is true, for I know where I came from and where I am going; but *you do not know where I come from and where I am going.*””

John 8:14 (NKJV)

Author’s note: There are 106 references in the book of John to Christ coming and going as a Spirit Being. (In contrast, there are only 8 references to this in the other three gospel accounts combined.) There are also 20 references to resurrection, and over 40 references to eternal life, in the book of John. This is the context of John.

NEW TEACHING:

“[Jesus] was referring to an invisible element (verse 8) that must come from God in order to transform a human being.”

“In other words, a man’s change is evident in the result of fruit of the Spirit (just as the sound of the wind is proof that the wind is blowing).”

“Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,” WN, Jan. 28, 1991

“Of course Nicodemus would marvel. He would marvel because it seemed bewildering that a supposed religious leader should be told he didn’t have a spiritual mind.”

“The context, when properly understood, supports ‘born again’ (from above) being conversion, and does not in any way support the resurrection.”

B.W. Schnippert, “The...Miracle of Being Born From Above,” WN, Feb. 3, 1992

Author’s note: There are no references in John to the fruits of the spirit coming and going. There is also no place in John where anyone was told not to marvel because they would see people converted.

163. BIBLICAL PREGNANCY TERMINOLOGY

“With Child” or “With Fetus?”

OLD TEACHING:

“The unborn child in his mother’s womb is the child of his father and mother, though not yet born – delivered from the womb. So are we, if God’s Spirit dwells in us – if we are being led by God’s Spirit – children of God.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Just What Do You Mean – Born Again?, p. 20

Author’s note: The Bible does not use different words to distinguish between born and unborn children. The Greek word translated “babe” in Luke 1:41—“the babe leaped in her womb”—is the same Greek word translated “infants” in Luke 18:16—“then they also brought infants to him that He might touch them.” In the Old Testament, the Hebrew word translated “children” in Genesis 25:22—“the children struggled together within her”—is the same Hebrew word translated “child” in Exodus 2:10—“and the child grew, and she brought him to Pharaoh’s daughter.”

The words *fetus* and *embryo* do not appear anywhere in the Bible. All through the Bible, pregnancy is depicted by the expression “with child,” not “with fetus” or “with embryo.”

NEW TEACHING:

“The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children, not ‘embryos,’ not ‘fetuses’ – he doesn’t say ‘we are God’s conception.’

“According to Greek dictionaries the Greek word *teknon* which is translated there ‘children’ literally means ‘born ones,’ not ‘conceived ones,’ but ‘born.’” [Author’s note: As with the *gennao* and *begotten* changes, no dictionary or lexicon has been quoted. See definitions of *teknon* below.]

“When God inspired the Bible, was he confused? He didn’t know which word that he was supposed to inspire the person to use to convey the meaning?”

“John says ‘little children,’ not ‘little embryos,’ ‘little fetuses who are conceived.’”

“‘The Spirit itself bears witness with our spirit that we are...’ what? ‘The spiritual embryos’? ‘The spiritual fetuses’? No, ‘the children of God.’”

Joseph Tkach Jr., “Born from Above,” sermon played in all churches, Sep. 1992

Author’s note: After an exhaustive search, no lexicons or dictionaries were found that gave “born ones” as the definition of *teknon*. The definition found was in every case simply “child,” with the exception of the two following sources which show that the word was sometimes used to refer to embryos: “*teknon* the child from the standpoint of origin (the embryo in Barn. 19,5:Did. 2,2).” *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament Vol. 5, Edited by Gerhard Friedrich.* “*teknon* 1. literally – a. child in relation to father and mother – The unborn embryo is also called *teknon* B 19,5; D 2,2.” *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature, by Walter Bauer, Second Edition, Revised and Augmented by F.W. Gingrich and Frederick Danker.* In the same sermon quoted above, Mr. Tkach Jr. stated that the Art Bauer and Gingrich lexicon was the most scholarly lexicon available.

164. SPIRITUAL FETUSES

Awaiting Spiritual Capabilities or Same as Physical Fetuses?

OLD TEACHING:

“Those who inherit [God’s Kingdom] will be spirit – normally invisible to eyes still human.”

“[The Spirit-begotten human] is in the gestation state toward spirit-BIRTH, but not yet BORN of the Spirit. He yet has a lot of spiritual developing and growing to do – acquiring the spiritual character-image of God.”

“But when BORN again, of GOD, we shall have ETERNAL LIFE INHERENT – of our own!”

“...when we are actually born of God, we shall not be able to sin...”

“What does the GLORIFIED Christ look like? His eyes blaze forth like flames of fire!”

“And THAT is the way YOU and I shall look, if and when we are finally BORN of GOD!”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Just What Do You Mean – Born Again?, pp. 15, 23, 28, 39, 40

NEW TEACHING:

“And let’s look at the following, because if we’re only conceived, then many scriptures don’t apply to us. Because if we’re only conceived then we’re only spiritual embryos or spiritual fetuses.”

“A fetus isn’t capable of believing.”

“Fetuses don’t love one another. They’re not capable of that yet.”

“Embryos and fetuses don’t cry ‘Abba’ and ‘Father.’ They’re not capable of language yet.”

“Embryos and fetuses don’t walk. They have to be carried in mama’s tummy.”

Joseph Tkach Jr., “Born from Above,” sermon played in all churches, Sep. 1992

Author’s note: As Mr. Armstrong pointed out that spiritual embryos are developing toward a higher plane of life than physical embryos—one that includes being made of invisible spirit, being able to travel through air, being unable to sin, being able to live forever, and having other spiritual capabilities. Physical embryos are a type of *spiritual* embryos, but the two are not identical. Spiritual embryos are not waiting to be able to walk and talk, but to be able to travel and communicate by spiritual means.

165. BABE/CONVERSION ANALOGY Not a Contradiction or Is It?

OLD TEACHING:

“There is the beautiful symbolism – the real meaning of baptism.”

“Going down into the water pictures the DEATH of Christ, and of the old self.”

“Burial in the water pictures the BURIAL of Christ, and of the old self.”

“Coming up out of the water pictures Christ’s RESURRECTION, and a spiritually resurrected person walking henceforth ‘in newness of life.’”

Herbert W. Armstrong, All About Water Baptism, pp. 16-17

“Some analogies have referred to people converted in the Millennium as children rather than as part of the Bride...While this point is true, it can be confusing if combined with the marriage analogy.”

“There are many analogies in the Bible. Each has a valid point. But not all analogies are meant to be mixed together.”

“In one analogy, for example, Jesus is likened to a mother hen. In another, He is the Shepherd, and we are His sheep. A shepherd does not marry His sheep! Neither does a hen marry her chicks, nor does brother marry brother. *We must be careful not to mix analogies.*”

“Q & A from the PGR,” WN, Dec. 12, 1988

Author's note: Bible analogies can also have multiple applications with no contradiction. Satan is like a lion (I Peter 5:8), but so are the righteous (Proverbs 28:1). The newborn babe analogy is used to refer to newly converted brethren (I Peter 2:1-2), but Jesus Christ Himself used it when referring to His own imminent resurrection to spirit life: "A woman, when she is in labor, has sorrow because her hour has come; but as soon as she has given birth to the child, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world. Therefore you now have sorrow; but I will see you again and your heart will rejoice, and your joy no one will take from you" (John 16:21-22, NKJV).

"Peter continues, chapter 2: 'Wherefore...as newborn babes...' ...He is not saying we are already born babes in God's Kingdom – but as – or like newborn babes. It is an analogy..."

Herbert W. Armstrong, Just What Do You Mean – Born Again?, p. 27

"...types and antitypes are not always alike in every detail. When a physical baby is born, it is not ready for marriage. When the spiritual child of God is born, he will be fully mature for the spiritual marriage."

"Personal from Herbert W. Armstrong," GN, Mar. 1984

Author's note: Baptism pictures death, burial and resurrection (rebirth) to newness of life. The literal events pictured, however, will happen in the future. To insist that a "rebirth" at conversion entirely does away with the fact that we will be "born again" at the resurrection is as silly as saying that we will never die because we already "died" at baptism. Some early Christian literature referred to three births: "genesis – 3. threefold birth of Christ (Nativity, Baptism, Resurrection) dist. by Jo.Nic.nativ.(M.96,1440A) 4. hence of man's threefold birth, physical, baptismal, and in resurrection, Gr. Nyss, Eun. 4(2 p. 64.21; M.636C)."

Patristic Greek Lexicon, Edited By G.W.H. Lampe, D.D., Univ. Of Cambridge.

NEW TEACHING:

"Romans 7:4-6: 'Wherefore my brethren, you also are become dead to law by the body of Christ that you should be married to another.' Embryos and fetuses don't marry."

Joseph Tkach Jr., "Born from Above," sermon played in all churches Sep. 1992

"...in His booklet, *Just What Do You Mean...CONVERSION?*...Mr. Armstrong went on to explain that the convert has not received a full measure of the Spirit but is a spiritual babe."

“...he wrote, ‘But, suppose, like an 8- or 10-month-old baby trying to learn to walk, as he “walks” this NEW WAY, he stumbles, “falls down,” as it were, and SINS...’ ...in explaining the process of Christian growth, Mr. Armstrong did not use the fetus analogy, he used the analogy of a child already born!”

“Mrs. [name], don’t you agree that the analogy of a child already born represents the Christian life better than that of an unborn fetus?”

*David G. Hunsberger, WCG PCD
Letter to Member, Feb. 23, 1993*

166. ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH Apostate or Not?

OLD TEACHING:

“First, note Revelation 17. Here is pictured a woman...This woman is a fallen woman – *an apostate church* – and a great one, called ‘the great whore’....”

“It is well known by ALL who understand Bible prophecy that this 17th chapter of Revelation pictures the Roman Catholic Church ruling over the so-called Holy Roman Empire.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Who Is the Beast?, pp. 20-21

“Thus, from false brethren within the Church, Satan succeeded finally in deceiving the vast majority in the Church. He succeeded in turning this majority into a growing false and counterfeit church.”

“This false Christianity became a great church and is revealed in Rev. 17 and elsewhere in the Bible...”

“Thus, as in the prophecy of Revelation 13:15, the Church did not herself martyr the true saints [for Sabbath keeping], but ‘caused’ them to be killed.” [Author’s note: **“And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the martyrs of Jesus...” Rev. 17:6.]**

Herbert W. Armstrong, Where Is the True Church?, pp. 16, 20, 22

NEW TEACHING:

“By the fifth century, *Christianity* was the Roman Empire’s official religion, and *the church* could no longer be seen as a ‘little flock’ at odds with the world.”

“...by the time of Augustine (354-430), *the church* concluded that the millennial period...was not totally in the future.”

“Onto the scene stepped one of the most important propagators of dispensationalism: John Nelson Darby.”

“By 1928, Darby came to believe that the whole *church* was *apostate*.” [Author’s note: **The rest of the article goes on to discredit Darby. In this same article Augustine was called an “early Christian church father.”]**

Norman L. Shoaf, “Jesus Christ Is Coming,” PT, Sep. 1993

“Many events have forced *Christians* to look at themselves and see where they have fallen short of Jesus Christ’s example.”

“The bloodletting unleashed during the Crusades – in spite of Jesus’ comment about his servants in John 18:36 – [for example].”

Dan C. Taylor, “Growth With Conviction,” PT, July 1993

“We do not consider the Roman Catholic Church to be pagan (polytheistic)...”

“One could say that it is a form of idolatry to place reason above revelation in determining God’s will...However, in generally accepted speech, without that particular context being given, it would not be correct to say that the Catholic Church practices idolatry.”

“We do believe that some of the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church were borrowed or adapted from pagan religious practices... However, this does not mean that it would be correct in general discussion to refer to the Catholics as pagans.”

David G. Hunsberger, WCG PCD Letter to Member, Nov. 30, 1992

“As *Christians* we must face the bitter truth that we have supported hatred and racism...”

“*We have launched crusades...* Sometimes we have beaten, tortured and killed non-Christians, thinking we were doing Christ a service.”

“But some Christians argue, ‘We didn’t start it; they did it first.’”

“We need to be reminded that there are no excuses or justifications for Christians to hate and destroy. Our Lord and Savior was crucified for us. He did not instruct us to crucify others, but...to love our enemies...”

Greg Albrecht, “It’s Time to Speak Up,” PT, Jan. 1994

167. THE MILLENNIUM

Christ’s Earthly Reign at His Return or Differing Views?

OLD TEACHING:

“The Bible shows that God’s Master Plan for working out His purpose here below is a 7,000-year plan – with some 6,000 years allotted to this world of Satan, followed by 1,000 years of Christ’s reign over all nations of this earth.”

“It is only when the world and its leaders have come to the place where they have to realize their utter helplessness before their own problems and that their only hope from here on is reliance on and obedience to God, that God will intervene and bring about the end of this world by sending Jesus Christ.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Are We in the Last Days?, pp. 2, 17

NEW TEACHING:

“Differing Views of the Millennium”

“**Amillennialism.** The belief that Christ will not rule on the earth, either before or after his second coming.”

Premillennialism. The belief that Christ will return before his earthly reign.”

Postmillennialism. The belief that Christ will return after an earthly reign that does not require his presence.”

Norman L. Shoaf, “Jesus Christ Is Coming,” PT, Sep. 1993

“Despite the changes, even a cursory examination of WCOG’s official statement of beliefs is likely to raise eyebrows among trained theologians.”

Author’s note: The article quoted above did not state which view of the millennium the WCG now believes, but it did attempt to thoroughly discredit premillennialism—the view Mr. Armstrong held—as being a “school of prophetic interpretation” used by “literalist” Bible students to try to determine “detailed endtime prophetic scenarios.” See also changes 168 and 169.

“Chris Hall...added that the section on the Trinity is unorthodox and that the inclusion in the doctrinal statement of such peripherals as the angelic realm, tithing, and *the millennium* ‘makes me suspect a group that majors in the minors. This is one characteristic of a cult.’”

Randy Frame, “Worldwide Church of God Edges Toward Orthodoxy,” Christianity Today, Nov. 9, 1992

“We have to admit that we have indeed tended to ‘major in the minors.’ That is, we have often given more attention to the speculative...than to the great concepts and truths revealed to us by God.”

“Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,” WN, May 21, 1990

168. LENGTH OF THE MILLENNIUM

A Literal 1,000 Year Period or Maybe Not?

OLD TEACHING:

“Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a *thousand years*; and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the *thousand years* were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshipped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a *thousand years*. But the rest of the dead did not live again until the *thousand years* were finished. This is the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of

Christ, and shall reign with Him a *thousand years*. Now when the *thousand years* have expired, Satan will be released from his prison and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog to gather them together to battle, whose number is as the sand of the sea."

Revelation 20:1-8 (NKJV)

"The Feast of Tabernacles, or Feast of Ingathering, pictures the soon-coming, long-awaited, peaceful rule of the Messiah upon this earth for a prosperous, joyful 1,000 years."

Raymond F. McNair, "The Coming Millennium: Utopia at Last," GN, Sep. 1982

NEW TEACHING:

"Millennialism. The belief in a period of the rule of Christ on earth. The most *literal* view understands this time as being 1,000 years."

"Early Christians were premillennialists. But by the time of Augustine (354- 430), the church concluded that the millennial period (*which may or may not equal exactly 1,000 years*) was not totally in the future:

"Now Augustine (354-430) wrote *The City of God*, calling Revelation a spiritual allegory and saying the Millennium was realized in the Church."

Norman L. Shoaf, "Jesus Christ Is Coming," PT, Sep. 1993

"...much of the Bible is written in poetry [one third – *PT, 9/93*], analogy, simile, metaphor and symbol. Therefore, we should not always interpret every Bible statement literally."

God Is..., p. 22

169. SOCIETY IN ZECHARIAH

Will Occur in Millennium or Goal for People Now?

OLD TEACHING:

"God is not going to intervene or send Jesus Christ to set up a better civilization and the wonderful, happy, peace-loving world tomorrow, until humanity and its leaders have had to admit their utter failure in providing peaceful, happy and useful lives on this earth."

Herbert W. Armstrong, Are We In the Last Days?, p. 15

"We know, literally and specifically, how a glorious utopia will soon grip this troubled planet!"

"Thus saith the Lord of hosts: There shall yet old men and old women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, and every man with his staff in his hand for every age. And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof" (Zech. 8:4-5)."

"Harmony. Stability. Peace. No wonder the Festival foreshadowing this perfectly balanced society stresses family participation."

"How the Feast of Tabernacles Pictures God's Family," GN, Sep. 1991

NEW TEACHING:

“The young feel the old mistrust and dislike them, while the old feel the young resent and disrespect them.”

“The words of the prophet Zechariah sound strangely unreal in such a world: ‘This is what the Lord Almighty says: “Once again men and women will sit in the streets of Jerusalem, each with cane in hand because of his age. The city streets will be filled with boys and girls playing there”’ (Zechariah 8:4-5).”

“But the society that Zechariah described is one worth *emulating*, one worth *striving for*. It’s a healthy, happy, balanced community that includes all its members, young and old.”

“Zechariah’s words reflect a goal for all people to discover the same secret that Roy, Stephen and Richard have discovered – that the gaps of age and background can be bridged, and it’s worth the effort.”

David Austin, “Bridging the Gap,” PT, Apr. 1993

“God’s purpose was that Adam and Eve and their descendants expand the Garden of Eden until it filled the whole earth (Genesis 1:27-28). In the same manner, he means for Christians to expand what he has given us spiritually – the kingdom of God – until it fills the whole earth.”

Sheila Graham, “Stop Abusing God’s Creation,” PT, Mar. 1993

“Working Toward A Better World Tomorrow”

Back Cover Logo, PT, Oct. 1993

170. PEACE ON EARTH

At Christ’s Return or Before Christ’s Return?

OLD TEACHING:

“Haven’t you heard men speak of the Kingdom of God something like this:

‘By Christians everywhere working together to bring about world peace, tolerance and brotherly love, the Kingdom of God may at last be established in the hearts of men.’”

“We have hydrogen bombs stock-piled in such power and volume that they could blast all human life off this planet several times over. There are two other destructive weapons today in existence, either of which could erase humanity from the earth.”

“It’s time we face the hard, cold, realistic FACT: humanity has two alternatives: either there is an Almighty, all-powerful GOD who is about to step in and set up THE KINGDOM OF GOD to rule all nations with supernatural and supranational *FORCE* to bring us PEACE – or else all human life would be obliterated (Matthew 24:22).”

“If the deceived religionists, who think the CHURCH is the Kingdom of God were right, and there is not going to be any supernatural and all-

powerful WORLD GOVERNMENT which is the Kingdom of God, then humanity is utterly without HOPE. All human life is in danger of extinction."

"It's about time you come to know who are the false prophets, and WHO is speaking the true Word of God faithfully."

Herbert W. Armstrong Just What Do You Mean...Kingdom of God?, pp. 8, 25-26

"Think of it. The glorified Christ – coming in all the splendor, the supernatural power and the glory of God Almighty – coming to save mankind alive – coming to stop escalating wars, nuclear mass destruction, human pain and suffering – coming to usher in peace, abundant well-being, happiness and joy for all mankind."

"In Isaiah 2:2-4 and in Micah 4:1-3 it says: 'And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established... and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.'"

"Think of it! No more wars...World peace at last."

Herbert W. Armstrong, Mystery of the Ages, pp. 306, 311-312

NEW TEACHING:

"What must we do to stop fighting and have peace?" It's a straightforward question, but one we don't seem to be able to answer."

"But is peace really so complicated? Young people have a way of simplifying things."

"Listen to the voices of this younger generation."

"If we want peace we should start at home. That is how peace builds. Family to family, village to village, city to city, nation to nation."

"I propose that Christianity must rise and prove its beliefs and show war leaders the real meaning of peace."

"Tolerate for once, peace will come..." If every living thing...sticks to this Chinese proverb, I'm sure there will be peace."

"Just as the problem lies on us, the solution lies in us."

"Many young people said they realized that peace...must begin in the hearts of individuals."

"Let's hope they really believe that. The generation that truly understands this will be the first to know a world peace. Jesus' heavenly Father's 'business' was – and still is – to change the hearts and minds of human beings...Jesus Christ dedicated himself to bringing the kingdom of God with its peace and salvation to all humanity."

John Halford, "It's Our World, Too!", PT, Nov.-Dec. 1993

"The heroic figure of a man beating his sword into a plowshare was inspired by the words of the Old Testament prophet Isaiah. His vision of peace included nations that would 'beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruninghooks' (Isaiah 2:4)."

“...God enables and empowers human beings to turn the machines of war into implements of agrarian prosperity.”

“When Jesus Christ is Lord, weapons of war become tools of peace.”

“...Christ, the King of the kingdom, can transform human beings from warmongers to peacemakers.”

Greg R. Albrecht, “Swords into Plowshares,” PT, Oct. 1993

“The way of life that Jesus taught has always faced challenges. His message of hope, salvation and the kingdom of God has often come into conflict with the kingdoms of this world.”

“Jesus knew the kingdoms of this world would not give way easily.”

“The opposition would wax and wane across the ages.”

“Christianity and the New Millennium,” PT, Jan. 1994

“*Postmillennialism.* The belief that Christ will return after an earthly reign that does not require his physical presence.”

Norman L. Shoaf, “Jesus Christ Is Coming,” PT, Sep. 1993

Author's note: In a ministerial pocket conference in Tulsa, OK (11/93), Joseph Tkach Jr. announced that Christ is already on Earth, since God is omnipresent without a body at any given place and time. Someone asked, “What does it mean when He said that all eyes will see Him when He returns to augment the millennium?” His answer was said to be very unclear about how these two concepts jive. This sounds an awful lot like Matthew 24:23: “Then if anyone says to you, Look, here is the Christ! Or There! do not believe it.” Also see changes 2 and 206.

171. THE BIBLE

Coded Book or Not?

OLD TEACHING:

“The Holy Bible is unique among all books ever written. The very fact that its truths are revealed here a little, there a little means it is a coded book, not to be understood until our present time of the end...[Dan. 12:8-9.]”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Mystery of the Ages, p. 100

“Jesus used parables to conceal the true meaning from those He did not intend to understand!...But, later, He did explain in plain language the true meaning to His disciples.”

“And in exactly this same manner, we find...prophecy cloaked mysteriously in SYMBOLS which have HIDDEN the true meaning from men these 1850 years!”

Herbert W. Armstrong, The Book of Revelation Unveiled at Last!, p. 20

“The Creator reveals and instructs in a highly coded book, the Holy Bible. Its profound message is opened to human understanding through the presence and indwelling of the Holy Spirit...”

*Herbert W. Armstrong, “Human Mind Versus Animal Brain,”
PT, Jan. 1986*

NEW TEACHING:

“...Gnostic heretics...set up a substitute system of achieving eternal life only for a select group of those who acquired special secret knowledge... And such caste systems don’t die easily.” **[Author’s note: This was an article about members leaving over doctrinal differences.]**

“Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,” WN, Nov. 17, 1992

“The belief that one has special, inside information can easily lead to an attitude of spiritual superiority and divert that person from the true message of Jesus Christ.”

“Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,” WN, Aug. 27, 1990

“Is the kingdom of God a secret, given only to a chosen few? Did Jesus tell his parables, which seem so simple, so accessible and so timeless, to keep outsiders from grasping the truth?”

“It is not intellectual but volitional blindness and deafness that is in view...”

*Norman L. Shoaf, “Were Parables Used to Hide the Truth?”,
PT, July 1993*

“...we continued to proclaim, out of what we sincerely believed was ‘special knowledge through Bible prophecy,’...worldwide calamity...”

Joseph W. Tkach, “Prediction Addiction,” PT, Sep. 1993

“...maintaining that only those with the Holy Spirit can...comprehend spiritual truths...lies in a confusion between knowledge and attitude.”

Joseph Tkach Jr., “Question and Answer,” PGR, Aug. 24, 1993

172. ALL SCRIPTURE Profitable for Doctrine or Not?

OLD TEACHING:

“You know, we have gotten away from believing that the Bible means what it says. We may not be ATHEISTS. We may not ridicule the Holy Bible. But we are living in an age of SKEPTICISM. We are living in an age of doubt.”

“Very few people TREMBLE before what it says or regard it as having REAL AUTHORITY [Isa. 66:1-2, 5].”

Herbert W. Armstrong, The Bible – Superstition or Authority?, p. 7

“Humans have written uncounted millions of books. People BELIEVE what these books say, though they may be partly, mostly, or totally in error and devoid of truth.”

“People take these books literally to mean what they say. Yet of the Bible they will say, ‘You surely don’t take the Bible literally, do you?’ They will not believe this book means what it says. It is the very Word of the living God, but they refuse to believe what God says.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Your Awesome Future..., p. 19

“Examine, now, the Ten Commandments, God’s basic code, upon which all his laws, social, economic, civil and religious, hang.”

“The entire Bible is...a magnification in specific detail of these basic principles.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “‘Thou Shalt Not!’,” PT, Jan. 1984

“Remember, ‘All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness’ (II Timothy 3:16).”

How to Study the Bible (Pasadena: Ambassador College Press, 1976), p. 7

NEW TEACHING:

“...much of the Bible is written in poetry, analogy, simile, metaphor and symbol. Therefore, we should not always interpret every Bible statement literally.”

God Is..., p. 22

“Many types of writing make up the Bible.”

“There are allegories, metaphors, similes, epics, riddles and wise sayings.”

Norman L. Shoaf, “What Jesus’ Parables Reveal,” PT, July 1993

“Obviously, these are not literal statements – the biblical authors used poetic license, metaphors, similes—even hyperbole to make their points.”

John Halford, “Science and Religion,” PT, July 1993

“This does not mean the Bible is incomplete or inadequate. It simply means that the Bible is not intended as a science textbook nor a history textbook...”

Joseph W. Tkach, “The Greatest Scientist,” PT, July 1993

“The Bible is not a science textbook, however. Scripture assumes the existence of God...”

Greg Albrecht, “About this Issue,” PT, July 1993

“Genesis 1 and 2 may be poetic or parabolic in nature and God may not have intended it to be taken as a literal historical narrative.”

Richard Burky, “Creative Development: A Better Explanation Than Evolution,” Reviews You Can Use, July-Aug. 1993

“One third of the Bible was written as poetry.”

“*Poetry of the Bible*,” PT, Sep. 1993

“Generally, parables are not predictive prophecy, nor does every element have a specific or literal meaning.”

Greg R. Albrecht, “*Why You Need the Church*,”
PT, May-June 1993

“Now Augustine (354-430) wrote *The City of God*, calling Revelation a spiritual allegory and saying the Millennium was realized in the Church.”

Norman L. Shoaf, “*No One Knows*,” PT, Sep. 1993

“Descriptive, Not Prescriptive: As students of the Bible, we must understand that the book of Proverbs is not a book of laws. It is within the section of Scripture called ‘Wisdom Literature.’ Proverbs 22:6 is...inspired scripture...but it is inspired as a literary style and should be understood and interpreted accordingly. It is not a law or guarantee.”

Neil Earle, “*But, I Tried My Best*,” PT, Nov.-Dec. 1993

“In their accounts, the Gospel writers addressed specific needs of the early Church. Thus, according to Dr. Fee, the four Gospels bear a closer resemblance to stories than to modern biographies.”

“Many biblical scholars, including Dr. Fee, believe that Matthew’s ‘Sayings’ was a loose collection of Jesus’ words, perhaps in the style of the book of Proverbs.”

“*Questions*,” PT, Nov.-Dec. 1993–

“Ecclesiastes, along with the books of Job and Proverbs, is called wisdom literature.”

“...the purpose of wisdom literature was not to establish specific doctrines...”

“Biblical wisdom literature...has a different inspired purpose: to provide philosophical guidance, practical advice and perspective on life...”

“*Questions*,” PT, Jan. 1994

“Many refer to the book of Acts to establish doctrine.”

“Acts is primarily historical, *not doctrinal*.”

“If we want a clearer understanding of doctrine, the didactic portions of Scripture are a better place to look than Acts is. *God seems to have especially inspired Paul with doctrinal truths*.”

E. Williams, “*Are We Saved By Baptism?*”,
Reviews You Can Use, Nov.-Dec. 1993

Author’s note: First, doubt was cast on the book of Genesis, all prophecy, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Job, the four gospel accounts,

and the book of Acts by saying they were not profitable for doctrine. Then it was announced that Paul's writings seem to have been *especially* inspired for doctrine. But did they really believe even that? Part of Paul's writings had been rejected by calling them customs of his time (see change 108) or non-binding personal judgments (see change 106). We should all be able to guess which scriptures recorded by Paul the WCG used for doctrine! As Mr. Armstrong wrote in his article "Millions Do Not Know What Christ Really Was!": "Peter knew that men would *especially* try to twist and pervert the writings of Paul in regard to the law of God. He was inspired to write that Paul's epistles contained 'some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction'" (II Pet. 3:16).

This completely diabolical teaching should be every true Christian's call to arms: "For weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, *casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God...*" (II Cor. 10:4-5).

"God's laws are not arbitrary rules. They are based on spiritual principles. We should keep the laws of God not with arbitrary exactness, but according to the spiritual intent."

Michael Morrison, "Literal and Figurative," PT, Feb. 1994

173. COMMANDMENT KEEPING

Humanly Possible or Not?

OLD TEACHING:

"Many religious people – many ordained ministers – will tell you, 'It is impossible to keep the Law.' Are they telling the truth? What does your Bible say?"

"Notice! Of the parents of John the Baptist, you will read: 'And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless' (Luke 1:6)."

"Why, if it is impossible, did Christ command that if we would enter into life, 'keep the commandments'? (Matthew 19:17.)"

"Yet you cannot, alone of yourself, keep the Law spiritually! That is not a contradiction. You can keep the literal letter, but not the spirit."

Herbert W. Armstrong, What Do You Mean...Salvation?, pp. 21, 22

"Christ said: 'Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect,' so, professing Christians say, 'It's impossible to keep God's Law, let alone be perfect.'"

Herbert W. Armstrong, Which Day Is the Christian Sabbath?, p. 45

NEW TEACHING:

“Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus (Luke 10:25). ‘Teacher,’ he said, ‘What must I do to inherit eternal life?’ He said to him, ‘What’s written in the law? What do you read there?’

“And he answered and said, ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and all your soul and all your strength and all your mind and all your neighbors as yourself.’”

“Of course he wasn’t doing that! Let’s be real. ‘And he said to him, ‘You have given the right answer. Do this and you will live.’ Only one catch, *you can’t do it.*”

But he knew the law.

“Verse 29: ‘But wanting to justify himself, by’ – cause he didn’t do it. *Neither does anyone else.*”

Michael Feazell, “Assurance,” Sermon, June 7, 1992

Author’s note: The given title of the above sermon was “Assurance.”

The word assurance was used 21 times in the sermon. From the handbook of *Major United Methodist Beliefs*: “We believe in assurance... And we United Methodists believe that everyone can enter into the joy of this experience” (p. 90). The doctrine of assurance is the central belief of all Methodists.

“No human, or nation, can keep the law perfectly. Paul even went so far as to say that the law was a curse to him, because he could not keep it.”

*Greg Albrecht, The Plain Truth: Archetypes and Paradigms (n.d.:n.p.),
CG U.S. Regional Conference,
Philadelphia, Aug. 25-27, 1992*

“Christians are unable to keep the commandments...We can’t do it by ourselves even with the Spirit of God.”

Joseph W. Tkach, Sermon given in Atlanta, Georgia, Dec. 17, 1994

“You see, the law cannot give us salvation. All it can do is condemn us, since we all are lawbreakers. And God knew in advance that nobody could keep the law.”

Joseph W. Tkach, PGR Letter to Ministry, Dec. 21, 1994

174. THE HOLY SPIRIT

“It” or “He”?

OLD TEACHING:

“What about the fact that John uses the personal pronoun “he” when referring to the Holy Spirit or Comforter in...his Gospel?”

"In the Greek language, like the Romance languages (Spanish, Italian, French, etc.), every noun has what is called gender; that is, it is either masculine, feminine or neuter."

"Even such an inanimate object as glass – being utterly devoid of any real life – has masculine gender in Spanish. *El vaso* is the Spanish equivalent of the two words 'the glass' in English. The article 'el' and the 'o' ending to the word *vaso* give the word 'glass' masculine gender in Spanish. Yet by no stretch of the imagination could a glass be considered a male person in the human sense. That would be ridiculous!"

"Likewise in the Greek language, the gender of a word has nothing whatever to do with whether the thing designated is really masculine or feminine in the human sense at all. If it did – what a contradiction in the Bible itself! For in the Old Testament the Hebrew word for spirit – *rauch* – is usually feminine, and only rarely in a masculine form."

"The Greek word *parakletos* ('comforter' in English) has masculine gender; hence the translators' use of the personal pronoun 'he' for the Greek pronouns *ekeinos* and *autos*. 'It' would have been a far better rendering into the English language – just as in John 1:32 and 6:63, and Romans 8:16 for example."

The God Family and the Holy Spirit, p. 8

"Much is also made of the fact that in a number of places in modern translations the masculine pronoun *he* is carelessly used in connection with the Holy Spirit. But not always – sometimes the Holy Spirit is referred to as it in these very same translations. For example, in the passage describing the first coming of the Holy Spirit for the founding of the Church of God..."

Herbert W. Armstrong, Mystery of the Ages, p. 56

NEW TEACHING:

"The Spirit Himself,' or 'itself,' I should say. You know, there's another situation. Ever since we tried to clarify what we mean by the Trinity, there's some, because they didn't read it accurately, drew the conclusion that now we are espousing and teaching the Trinity as the Catholic Church teaches. Read it! Wherever we've made reference to the Father, we refer to the personal pronoun *he*. When we refer to Jesus Christ we referred to the personal pronoun *he*. When we referred to the Holy Spirit, no personal pronoun! *It!* We just clarified some things. But we didn't change the meaning in any way, shape, or form, that now we espouse the doctrine of the trinity. But there's some who want to sit back and are very quick to judge and to criticize and to condemn." [Author's note: See change 11]

Joseph W. Tkach, "A Point of Light," Sermon sent to all churches, Aug. 1993

"The Comforter, the Holy Spirit, will be relentless in *his* work of transforming you from what you are into a child of God."

Joseph W. Tkach, "It's Your Move," PT, Jan. 1994

175. CHRISTMAS

Pagan Day With Christian Name or Christian Festival?

OLD TEACHING:

“[The] people of the Roman world began to accept this now-popular Christianity by the hundreds of thousands.”

“But remember, these people had grown up in pagan customs, chief of which was this idolatrous festival of December 25th [Saturnalia]...and...the influence of the pagan Manichaeism, which identified the SON of God with the physical SUN, gave these pagans of the fourth century...their excuse for calling their pagan-festival date of December 25th (birthday of the SUN-god [and Nimrod]), the birthday of the SON of God.”

“And that is how ‘Christmas’ became fastened on our Western world! We may call it by another name, but it’s the same old pagan sun-worshipping festival still! The only change is in what we call it!”

“But if we got Christmas from the Roman Catholics, and they got it from paganism, where did the pagans get it? Where, when, and what was its real origin?”

“It is a chief custom of the corrupt system denounced all through Bible prophecies and teachings under the name of Babylon. And it started and originated in the original Babylon of ancient Nimrod!”

“We are shocked to learn the truth – some, unfortunately, take offense at the plain truth! But God commands His faithful ministers, ‘Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgression!’”

“We have professed to be Christian nations, but we’re in Babylon, as Bible prophecy foretold, and we don’t know it! ‘Come out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues’ – now to soon fall – is the warning of Revelation 18:4.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, The Plain Truth About Christmas, pp. 11, 12, 13, 23

NEW TEACHING:

“Christmas originated at a time when the cult of the sun was particularly strong at Rome...Though the *substitution* of Christmas for the pagan festival cannot be proved with certainty, it remains the most plausible explanation for the dating of Christmas.”

“Only now, it was reasoned, they could honor the birth of Jesus – the real light from heaven. ‘With the triumph of Christianity, Christmas *replaced* the pagan festival, Christians having applied “Sun of Righteousness” (Mal. 4:2) to Christ’...”

“There may be some uncertainty as to why December 25 (or January 6) was chosen to commemorate Jesus’ birth.”

“There can be little doubt that the Church was anxious to distract the attention of Christians from the old heathen feast days by celebrating *Christian festivals* on the same days.”

“The *Encyclopedia Britannica* lists practices the Christmas season has absorbed. ‘...Fires and lights, symbols of warmth and lasting life, have always been associated with the winter festival, *both pagan and Christian.*’”

Clayton Steep, Christmas: The Untold Story, pp. 2, 3, 5, 7

“We do believe that some of the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church were borrowed or adapted from pagan religious practices. Making Christmas coincide with the pagan Saturnalia would be an example.”

David G. Hunsberger, WCG PCD Letter to Member, Nov. 30, 1992

Author's note: Did you catch the “paradigm shift” (a popular term used often by the apostates) in the above quotes? Whereas Mr. Armstrong taught Christmas is the *exact same* pagan festival it has always been since the time of Nimrod, the new teaching speaks of Christmas as if it were a separate, independent Christian holiday that in some way ended up on a date formerly used for the observance of “old heathen feast days.” Mr. Armstrong NEVER taught that Christmas “replaced” Saturnalia, was “substituted” for Saturnalia, or was made to “coincide” with Saturnalia. He taught that Christmas WAS Saturnalia with a Christian-sounding name attached. Notice that one of the above quotes states that there is such a thing as a Christian winter festival as well as a pagan one. Also keep in mind that Alexander Hislop’s *The Two Babylons*, which supports Mr. Armstrong’s teaching about Christmas, has been discredited by the WCG administration as having “absolutely no chronological framework to support the author’s conclusions” (see change 125).

“The term *pagan* will be removed from the booklet *Pagan Holidays or God’s Holy Days – Which?* ‘That word needlessly incites people,’ said Mr. [Greg] Albrecht.”

Jeff E. Zhorne, “International Editors Meet, Updated on Church Literature,” WN, Jan. 28, 1991

Q. “During the Christmas season, why do you cast a gloomy atmosphere on the celebration? As God loves all of us, can’t you be more understanding of those with different beliefs?”

A. “Although the Bible does not teach nor command the observance of Christmas, *we respect your difference on belief.* It is not our intent to condemn others...”

“We understand that not all *Christians*, including many Sabbatarians like ourselves, observe [the biblical Holy Days]. We believe, however, that the tradition of Jesus and the apostles warrants our observance of them, rather than the traditional holidays...”

“Questions,” PT, Nov.-Dec. 1993

Author's note: Surely, if the WCG believed that Christmas was an idolatrous pagan festival that was an abomination in the sight of God, it would say so, whether it "needlessly incited people" or not. The current administration was not afraid to speak out about racism, for instance. While we should always respect a person's RIGHT to have a difference of belief, the difference of belief ITSELF should not be respected if it is wrong. So the WCG claimed to respect the belief of Christmas observance. Mr. Armstrong did not condemn others. He taught that the Bible condemned Christmas. Warning someone that he is doing wrong is for his own good—it is not condemning him.

Why is the "paradigm shift" of viewing Christmas, as a Christian festival that absorbed a few possibly questionable customs, important? Apply the following reasoning taken from a letter written to a member by Joseph Tkach Jr. (April 12, 1989) to the new view of Christmas and see what you get: "Now the symbols may have been carried over. But, so have all kinds of symbols. Are we going to junk our Thunderbird and Firebird automobiles because the hood ornaments depict objects of ancient Indian myth and worship? Are we going to avoid entering public buildings, which are decorated with statues of pagan gods? Shall we cast our money away because some of it has artwork that copies designs and figures from mythology, astrology, etc.? Paul told us plainly that an idol is nothing—unless in our own minds we regard it as something (I Cor. 8:4)."

"We have especially fallen short of Paul's priorities in how to proclaim Christ by using the terms *pagan* and *paganism* as verbal bludgeons. A symbol or practice deemed less than fully Christian (including the cross, national or *religious holidays* and medications), would quickly be branded 'pagan' *in the past*."

"*A pagan origin fallacy* wrongly assumes that once an idea or practice has pagan or false connections, any *similar (or even parallel) development* must also be thoroughly and fundamentally pagan and false."

"*Let's ask God to help us grow in love sufficiently to eliminate this false paradigm from the Church.*"

Joseph Tkach Jr., "Church Administration," PGR, Jan. 11, 1994

176. CHRISTMAS CUSTOMS

Originated in Paganism or Maybe Not?

OLD TEACHING:

"[Semiramis] claimed a full-grown evergreen tree sprang overnight from a dead tree stump, which symbolized the springing forth unto new life of the dead Nimrod. On each anniversary of his birth, she claimed, Nimrod would visit the evergreen tree and leave gifts upon it. December 25th was

the birthday of Nimrod. This is the real origin of the Christmas tree.”
[Author’s note: See also change 77.]

“Among the ancient pagans the mistletoe was used at this festival of the winter solstice because it was considered sacred to the sun, because of its supposed miraculous healing power.”

“Holly berries were also considered sacred to the sungod.”

“The *Encyclopedia Americana* says: ‘The holly, the mistletoe...are reliques of pre-Christian times.’ Of paganism!”

“The yule log is in reality the ‘sun log.’ ‘Yule’ means ‘wheel,’ a pagan symbol of the sun. Yet today professing Christians speak of the ‘sacred yuletide season’!”

“Even the lighting of fires and candles as a Christian ceremony is merely a continuation of the pagan custom, encouraging the waning sun-god as he reached the lowest place in the southern skies!”

Herbert W. Armstrong, *The Plain Truth About Christmas*, p. 15

NEW TEACHING:

“The *Encyclopedia Britannica* lists practices the Christmas season has absorbed. ‘...Food and good fellowship, the Yule log and Yule cakes, greenery and fir trees, gifts and greetings all commemorated different aspects of this festive season. Fires and lights, *symbols of warmth and lasting life*, have always been associated with the winter festival, both pagan and Christian.’”

“Though the modern Christmas tree can easily be traced back to seventeenth century Germany, it ‘may well be a descendant of some sacred tree carried about or set up at the beginning-of-winter festival...’”

“Branches of holly and mistletoe were likewise displayed. Not only did these plants remain green through the winter months, but they also bore fruit at that time, thus *symbolizing life* in an otherwise dead season.”

“Little is known about the real Nicholas, except that he was a bishop in Asia Minor in the fourth century A.D. Reportedly he was a *very generous man*.”

“Giving gifts at Christmas *probably* originated with the pagan Roman custom of exchanging gifts...at the New Year...”

Clayton Steep, *Christmas: The Untold Story*, pp. 7, 8, 16

Author’s note: Plainly the WCG softened its teaching on the customs of Christmas. About the worst thing the new Christmas booklet had to say about them was this: “These traditions are of *human* origin.” They were portrayed as human customs of uncertain origins that symbolize virtues of Christianity such as warmth, life, and generosity. *This same tactic of casting doubt on the pagan origins of a teaching or symbol and then painting it in glowing Christian terms* was also used in the attempt to convince members to accept the doctrine of the Trinity and the use of the cross.

“Trinities abounded in pagan beliefs, of course. Some modern Christians who reject the doctrine of the Trinity believe the early church embraced the doctrine to make Christianity more palatable to pagans...But there is more to the story than that.”

“The Trinity doctrine developed in large parts as an attempt by Christians to harmonize these three [the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit] with the scriptural teaching that God is one.”

“Thus the Trinity doctrine has been accepted as a mystery – part of the ‘mystery of godliness’ (I Tim. 3 :16).”

God Is..., pp. 41, 44

“First, there is no question that the cross, in various shapes and designs, is found almost everywhere in the ancient world, and in most remote pre-Christian ages.”

“However, why and how Christians began to use the symbol of the cross in their worship is somewhat obscure.”

“But we cannot establish conclusively at this time whether or not the Christian cross came out of paganism. Possibly, or even probably, it did not.”

“To say dogmatically that early Christians picked up the cross from paganism because they wanted to call their pagan beliefs Christian is neither a fair claim, nor is it provable.”

“The charge is highly speculative and reaching such a conclusion is irresponsible.”

Paul Kroll, “Should We Use The Word Cross?”, WN, Feb. 9, 1993

“The cross of Christ is the foremost symbol of sacrificial service, of calling to a mission in the service of God – the mission of declaring the praises of God...”

“Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,” WN, Feb. 23, 1993

“If a person wears a cross as a reminder of all these things, how can anyone gainsay that? We must not allow the misuse of the cross by some churches to dictate how we should view it in the light of the Bible teaching.”

“Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,” WN, May 11, 1993

Author's note: Again, doubt was cast on its pagan origins and certain aspects of Christmas were painted in glowing terms.

“One of the parts of the story some neglect is the beginning. The Bethlehem story.”

“The Bethlehem story reveals how God gave himself to us and for us. It's also called the Incarnation.”

“New Testament scholar Gordon Fee...teaches and lectures with great feeling on the mystery of what theologians call the Incarnation – the fact that God became man.”

“The central miracle asserted by Christians is the Incarnation.”

Greg R. Albrecht, “He Gave Himself,” PT, Nov.-Dec. 1993

177. CHRISTMAS GIFT-GIVING Wrong or Not?

OLD TEACHING:

“Listen to how fourth-century writer Libanius described end-of-the-year gift-giving and partying in the ancient non-Christian Roman Empire: ‘Everywhere may be seen...well-laden tables...The impulse to spend seizes everyone. He who through the whole year has taken pleasure in saving... becomes suddenly extravagant...A stream of presents pours itself out on all sides.’”

“Christmas 2,000 Years Before Christ!”, GN, Dec. 1985

“The excuse of giving gifts that comes from the story of the birth of Christ regarding the wise men giving Christ gifts is misapplied in our giving one another gifts. The reason the wise men gave gifts to Christ was because He was a King.”

“Ten Reasons Why I Don’t Keep Christmas,” PT, Dec. 1979

“No, the custom of trading gifts back and forth does not stem from this scriptural incident at all, but rather, as quoted from history above, it is the continuance of an ancient pagan custom. Instead of honoring Christ, it invariably retards His Work, often sets it back, at the Christmas season every year.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, The Plain Truth About Christmas, p. 21

NEW TEACHING:

“Are all the activities surrounding Christmas wrong? Is there anything wrong with giving gifts? Certainly not!”

“Personal by Joseph W. Tkach,” PT, Nov.-Dec. 1991

“Let’s always remember that [Jesus Christ] gave us the greatest gift possible – himself.” (*Table of Contents: “He Gave Himself.”*)

“During this season of the year, as editor Greg Albrecht reminds us in his article, ‘He Gave Himself,’ let’s not overlook God’s greatest gift to us.” (*“About this Issue,” p. 2.*)

“God came into time and space in the Incarnation. He united himself with us giving us the greatest gift.”

“He gave humanity the ultimate gift, he gave us himself.”

“The act of God becoming man is the greatest gift ever given, the ultimate expression of love.”

“God’s greatest gift included his human birth...”

“Love Means Giving.”

“Jesus came to show us how and what to love. He showed us that love means giving of ourselves for others.”

“God in the flesh was God’s greatest gift.”

“So God sent us the greatest gift. He *gave* himself.”

“Truly this is the greatest gift. And you can receive the greatest gift, if you believe.”

“The Bethlehem story reveals how God gave himself to us and for us.”

“Jesus moved among us as God in the flesh to *give* us the clearest demonstration of what God was like. He *wrapped* his divinity in the cloak of humanity.”

Greg R. Albrecht, “He Gave Himself,”
PT, Nov-Dec 1993

“...request your own free copy of this informative booklet *Christmas – The Untold Story*.

“It is our gift to you, and will be sent absolutely free of charge.” (*Back cover.*)

PT, Nov.-Dec. 1993

178. “LET’S PUT CHRIST BACK INTO CHRISTMAS”

Impossible or Good Reminder?

OLD TEACHING:

“The season to be jolly is nearly upon us again. With it will come parties, gifts, family get-togethers – and very likely a stern reminder not to forget the ‘real meaning of Christmas.’”

“Such an admonition stems from a sincere desire to circumvent the blatant, overwhelming commercialism of the season. But as usual, the warning will be almost totally ignored, and understandably so. The ‘real’ meaning of the holiday has always been annoyingly vague.”

“[Christ] might even advise those who worry that the celebration of Christmas has deviated from its intended religious purpose to stop worrying, because the public today truly IS keeping the ‘real’ meaning of Christmas – as an utterly pagan, openly hedonistic festival.”

“Why the World Needs Christmas,”
PT, Dec. 1973

“‘Let’s put Christ back into Christmas,’ some say when they notice the commercialism. Yet this saying is of itself a sad commentary on the entire subject. When you put all your research together...you can quickly see that the true Jesus Christ of Nazareth who lived in Galilee nearly two thousand years ago never was in Christmas.”

“Ten Reasons Why I Don’t Keep Christmas,”
PT, Dec. 1979

NEW TEACHING:

“During this season of the year, as editor Greg Albrecht reminds us in his article, ‘He Gave Himself,’ let’s not overlook God’s greatest gift to us. Because of Jesus Christ, we can have hope, and so can our children.”

Sheila Graham, “About this Issue,” PT, Nov.-Dec. 1993

“He Gave Himself – If we are not careful, we can fail to focus on why Jesus Christ came to this earth in the first place.”

Table of Contents, PT, Nov.-Dec. 1993

“Jesus’ birth was a miracle of unparalleled significance for humanity...”

“Don’t just hum the Christmas tunes. Believe the good news!”

Joseph W. Tkach, “Believe the Good News!”, PT, Nov.-Dec. 1993

179. THE CHRISTMAS STORY

Veils or Reveals the Purpose of Christ’s Coming?

OLD TEACHING:

“The traditional Christmas story is propagated by Satan the devil to deceive the world about the true purpose of Christ’s existence on this earth.”

“The real Jesus Christ is a powerful spirit being who is shortly to take over the rulership of this world from Satan!”

“By deluding society into keeping Christmas – and all the other so-called Christian festivals – Satan diverts attention from God’s true Holy Days that dramatically reveal the destiny of man.”

Philip Stevens, “The Plot Against Christ’s Birth,” GN, Nov.-Dec. 1988

“The traditional picture of Jesus Christ’s birth is just another attempt by a Satan influenced world to focus our minds away from the role our Savior is playing today. Instead of the image of a strong, glorified Christ working through His Spirit-led Church, we are left with a helpless babe in some dark and uninviting animal shed.”

Philip Stevens, “No Room at the Inn? No Way!”, GN, Dec. 1986

“In this false Babylonish system, the ‘Mother and Child’ (Semiramis and Nimrod reborn) became chief objects of worship. This worship of ‘Mother and Child’ spread over the world...long before the birth of Christ!”

Herbert W. Armstrong, The Plain Truth About Christmas, pp. 11, 13

NEW TEACHING:

Author’s note: The next quote to follow is taken from a back cover PT advertisement for the new Christmas booklet. The backdrop of

the ad is a soft, pastel image of snow on evergreen trees. The ad asks the question, "...does the tradition of celebrating Christmas help us to understand Christ's real *purpose* for coming to earth?" Amazingly, an article in the same PT answers the question in the affirmative (see the second quote to follow).

Q. "To everything there is a season, a time for every *purpose* under heaven."

"The holiday season is perhaps the most hectic time of the year for many of us. But it's also a good time to stop and reflect on the purpose of life itself. Why do we celebrate the holidays that we do?"

"For instance, does the tradition of celebrating Christmas help us to understand Christ's real purpose for coming to earth?"

Back Cover, PT, Nov.-Dec. 1993

A. "One of the parts of the story some neglect is the beginning. The Bethlehem story."

"The Bethlehem story reveals how God gave himself to and for us."

"The miraculous and supernatural birth is a sign that God has come in the flesh to dwell with humanity. The unique name Immanuel means 'God with us.' *The eternally begotten Son of God dwells in the flesh for the purpose of the salvation of the world.*"

*Greg R. Albrecht, "He Gave Himself,"
PT, Nov.-Dec. 1993*

Author's note: An article titled "Born To Be King" in the Nov.-Dec. issue of *Youth 92* (pp. 25-26) was illustrated with two photographs of a Christmas nativity scene. The caption of the first photo reads, "From his birth, some people wanted to worship Jesus as a king; others wanted him dead! What was the real significance of his birth? What does it mean for us today?" The article contained no comment about the wrongness of the scene.

"Michael Card was commissioned by the National Day of Prayer committee to write their theme song. His new album, 'Come to the Cradle,' was released in June."

"Don't Forget," PT, Nov.-Dec. 1993

"If God is so good, why doesn't he come down here and do something about all this crime and war and poverty?" That's a fair question many ask this time of year."

"The fact is, God did come down here and do something about human suffering."

"He did it by being born in humble circumstances to a virgin..."

“Jesus’ birth was a miracle of unparalleled significance for humanity...”
“To deny it is to walk in death even while we still live.”

Joseph W. Tkach, “Believe the Good News!” PT, Nov-Dec. 1993

180. CELEBRATING CHRISTMAS

Forbidden by Bible or Nowhere Mentioned in Bible?

OLD TEACHING:

“Today, I’m afraid, some look at SIN through Old Testament eyes. Unless there is a literal, specific, ‘Thus saith the Lord, Thou shalt NOT,’ then they say, ‘Isn’t it OK?’”

“WHY does God’s true Church regard smoking tobacco as a SIN? No specific scripture says ‘Thou shalt not smoke.’”

“The attitude [is], ‘We want to be like the world, and if there is not a specific “thou shalt not,” isn’t it OK?’”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “Satan Hasn’t Given Up on Makeup,” WN, July 11, 1983

“Now if I had decided [our teaching on smoking] as some of our ministers wanted to decide doctrine, I would have said, ‘The Bible does not contain a specific LAW against smoking.’”

“The liberal is one that has a DIFFERENT APPROACH to questions of human conduct than God, or those who have really been CONQUERED by God and are being led by God’s Holy Spirit.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “What Is a Liberal?”, GN, Mar. 1979

“Don’t we have to adjust our religion to the changing times? After all, wasn’t the Bible completely written some 1900 years ago? We live in a different world today! That’s one argument. Yet, are we free to reason out our own religion? Are we going to render the decision on our own fates, in the final judgment?”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Which Day Is the Christian Sabbath?, p. 8

“Christians are to heed what is written in the Old Testament (I Corinthians 10:6, 11). That means when God told Israel not to adopt pagan customs (Deuteronomy 12:20-32)...we ought to pay attention to His judgment...and not try to reason around it.”

“Our lives should not be guided by an apparent absence of instructions.”
“How Specific Does God Have To Be?”, PT, Jan. 1981

NEW TEACHING:

Author’s note: A few years after Mr. Armstrong’s death, a sermon by Michael Feazell on the subject of “Differences of Administration” was played in all churches in which he stated, “Of course, we’re

looking into things. Modern religious holidays are *nowhere mentioned in the Bible.*"

"We do not teach or command the observance of Christmas because of *the silence of the Bible on this topic.*"

J. T. Lapacka, "Why the WCG Does Not Observe Christmas,
WN, Jan. 4, 1994

Author's note: What is the significance of the above statements? What is the current administration's track record for decision-making when they feel a subject is "nowhere mentioned in the Bible?" Here's how they rationalized approval for interracial marriage.

"The Bible does not directly comment on this subject in the form of a law or a commandment. In other words, the Bible does not describe racial intermarriage as sin."

"Therefore, we all should understand that if biblical principles do not identify racial intermarriage as sin, neither should the Church."

"God does not give a 'Thus saith the Lord' in answer to the question of interracial marriage."

"Personal by Joseph W. Tkach," WN, July 30, 1990

Author's note: As changes 175-180 show, the objections WCG traditionally held to celebrating Christmas are no longer considered valid. Nothing was left to prevent WCG from teaching its members that they may observe Christmas. The new booklet on Christmas (*Christmas: The Untold Story*) points out one feeble issue and pretends that it has been the reason that some Christians have objected to the day, while others have not.

"...Puritans in England were offended by the popular Christmas celebration. Excesses in eating, drinking and other matters were common during the seasonal festivities."

"But while the Puritans were opposing the keeping of Christmas, other segments of Christianity were, of course, promoting it. The truth is the various denominations in Christianity never have been of one mind concerning Christmas!"

Clayton Steep, *Christmas: The Untold Story*, p. 10

Author's note: A precedent was set? Was the teaching on any other subject changed by sidestepping the issue of pagan origins, by deciding that it was nowhere mentioned in the Bible, and by pretending that the only objection the Church ever had to it was that it

could lead to excesses in drinking and other matters? The teaching on birthday celebrations was changed in this very way.

“In the past, the Church made an administrative decision to forbid birthday celebrations in an effort to protect members from the wrong attitudes and conduct that can occur...”

“A worldly birthday celebration is one in which someone’s birth date is used as an excuse for expecting gifts or, for adults, as a means to promotion in one’s job. Among teens, birthday parties often end in drunkenness or other immoral conduct under the guise of a ‘party spirit.’”

“The Church, however, has come to appreciate the other side of the question too – that members need to make judgments on their own (in cases where the Bible does not speak or the Church chooses not to speak), especially in cases where they know for certain that their participation in a birthday celebration...will produce God’s type of closeness and unity.”

“Any celebration that expresses God’s standards is wholesome, and the Church does not denounce it. This includes birthday celebrations, anniversaries, *national holidays* and many personal occasions...”

“*Q & A from the PGR, WN, July 17, 1989*

Author’s note: In the past, the WCG taught that having dinner with relatives on Christmas day was permissible, as long as no special connotation was placed on the meal and the motivation for attending was to see relatives, but it never taught that a member should or needed to attend. Now, however, the current administration teaches that it would be *inappropriate* to *avoid* having a *special* dinner with the family.

“Are all the activities surrounding Christmas wrong? Is there anything wrong with giving gifts? Certainly not. Is there anything wrong with rejoicing that Jesus was born? Of course not. The angels and shepherds certainly rejoiced. Is there anything wrong with goodwill, pleasant feelings, or cheerfulness in the name of Jesus Christ? No.”

“*Is it then appropriate to avoid having a special dinner with the family on Christmas day? No. Is it wrong to fellowship and talk about Jesus at Christmas time? No.*”

“*Personal by Joseph W. Tkach, PT, Nov.-Dec. 1991*

“Winners of the annual *Christmas lighting contest* sponsored by the Big Sandy chamber of commerce were announced this week by chamber officials.”

“Winners will receive their prizes at the chamber’s annual awards banquet set for Thursday, January 21st, at *Ambassador College*.”

“*Big Sandy Lighting Contest Winners, Big Sandy and Hawkins Journal Dec. 23, 1992*

"Perfect love casts out fear. We don't have to be fearful or hung up over, 'Oh, we can't do that, I'll be breaking the Sabbath.' That's fear, that's not love."

"*Go to a Christmas parade with the kids.* You're not going to be changing your religion and worshipping an idol if you go to a Christmas parade Saturday morning in Batesville with the kids. If you take the kids down there because you know the kids are going to love it, you want them to see the pageantry, you want them to hear the music, the color, the jugglers, the horses, whatever is in the parade – you take a couple of hours with the kids and tell them, 'You know, we're doing this because it's the Sabbath and I have time for you.'"

"There's no little list that says, 'Thou shalt not go to a Christmas parade on the Sabbath.'"

"*Go to your non-member mate's office Christmas party.* That shows him you love him...He'll appreciate that. *You don't get drunk.* You don't sleep all day the next day and miss Church because you have a hangover..."

Pete Kendell, Sermon by WCG Field Pastor, Arkansas, 1993

"I broke the Sabbath one time, and I know I broke it looking back on it, because of the fruits. *I broke the Sabbath because I refused to put up a Christmas tree on the Sabbath.*"

"Would you believe you would be breaking the Sabbath when you refuse to put up a Christmas tree?"

"This is when I first came into the Church. My wife was still a good practicing Catholic and I knew Christmas was 'pagan.' And I wasn't having anything to do with it."

"And she went by herself in the car and got the Christmas tree..."

"She told me later, and she said, 'That day I hated you and I hated that Church.' You know, that's not God's purpose in keeping the Sabbath. I broke the Sabbath by not putting up that Christmas tree. *I should have got down there on the floor with her and helped her put up that Christmas tree and even helped her with the decorations.*"

"I should have done it, but I was just thick-headed, the same stiff-necked stuff that Jesus Christ was angry with in Mark 2. The same stuff – he hates that. Let's build love among one another, especially in families."

Pete Kendell, follow-up sermon to the first above quoted sermon, Arkansas, 1993

181. PROTESTANT CHURCHES

Daughters of Babylon or True Churches?

OLD TEACHING:

"...in the churches of this world some believe in government by the entire congregation...and call themselves 'Congregational.' Others have organized themselves into government by ministers...and call themselves 'Presbyterian.' Some follow Luther and call themselves 'Lutheran.' Some

follow Wesley, who was strong on ‘method,’ and call themselves ‘Methodist.’ Some learned...about baptizing and call their church after the name of that doctrine, ‘Baptist.’”

“...what about all the many organized churches labeled under the category ‘Christianity’ – some with millions of members? They are all described in Revelation 17:5: ‘Mystery, Babylon the great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth.’”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Mystery of the Ages, pp. 247, 249

NEW TEACHING:

“In 1825, [George Muller] entered the university at Halle. His aim was to become a minister of the Lutheran Church.”

“Muller began to fellowship with members of the Brethren movement, and was offered a position as pastor of a local church.”

“The orphanages at Ashley Down in Bristol, England, were George Muller’s testimony to the continuing work of Jesus Christ in and through the church.”

“Miracle at Ashley Down” and Table of Contents, PT, Sep. 1993

“We each have our own story to tell. What were you like before you came to believe in Christ? How did you come to know him? How has he changed your life?”

“So tell your story. ‘William Booth, the founder of the Salvation Army, was stung into wholehearted Christian service by a skeptic who said, “If I believed what you Christians believe, I would not rest...from telling people about it” ...’

Jeff Zhorne, “Lighting the Way,” PT, Nov.-Dec. 1993

“Groups such as the Salvation Army epitomize the Christian mission to participate by standing together against forces that are eroding and destroying our society and families.”

Greg Albrecht, “Making A Difference,” PT, Feb. 1994

“Almost 50 years ago, German theologian and Lutheran pastor Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906-1945) was executed by the Nazi government.”

“In his death as in his life, Bonhoeffer had inspired many people...[the] camp doctor...present during Bonhoeffer’s final hours...wrote:

“I saw Pastor Bonhoeffer...kneeling on the floor praying fervently...I have hardly ever seen a man die so entirely submissive to the will of God” ...”

Paul Kroll, “Grace Is Free...,” PT, Jan. 1994

“Habitat for Humanity...was founded...by Millard and Linda Fuller.”

“The Fullers moved to a Christian community...guided by three principles: [the first being] all Christians are one in Christ regardless of background...”

“Habitat for Humanity takes the gospel out of the church and into the community.”

Earl H. Williams, “Homes for the Homeless” and Table of Contents, PT, Jan. 1994

Author's note: In a May 1994 video sermon played in all churches, Joseph Tkach stated that the Protestants are not harlot daughter churches of the Great Whore.

182. REPENTANCE AND SIN

Not Understood by “Christianity” or Are They?

OLD TEACHING:

“But what is sin? Why, when men preach, don’t you hear that explained, defined, made clear and understandable? Why are these religious terms used most of the time loosely, vaguely, meaninglessly?”

“Why do some religious people today teach that it is all right for Christians to go right on breaking the Law? Why do they say grace means license to disobey God’s Law?”

Herbert W. Armstrong, What Do You Mean...Salvation?, pp. 12, 21

“I John 2:4 says that if any man claims to know the Lord and keeps not his commandments that man is a LIAR! Surely there are many liars among professing Christians today!”

“What IS sin? The Bible definition is: ‘Sin is the transgression of the law’ (I John 3:4).”

“Repent means turn from sin – turn FROM transgressing the law – the commandments, one of which is to keep the Sabbath holy.”

“The Sabbath is HOLY to God. To profane it is like slapping God in the face – treating him with contempt.”

*Herbert W. Armstrong, “Why Churches Observe Sunday,”
PT, Nov.-Dec. 1984*

“But that Fourth Commandment!...It says REMEMBER that God made the Sabbath day HOLY TIME, and told us to keep it holy! That Commandment people definitely don’t want to keep!”

“The FOURTH Commandment is God’s TEST Commandment! Not that many people do obey the other Nine. But they are willing to admit they should.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “How You Are Being Tested!”, GN, Apr. 1980

“The Sabbath, as stated above is the one test commandment – the one even professing so-called Christians refuse to obey. In I John 2:4 we read: ‘He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.’”

“The substitution of the pagan Sunday to counterfeit God’s Sabbath is a primary stratagem of Satan in deceiving all nations, and counterfeiting God’s TRUTH as well as God’s Church.”

“Jesus said: ‘...in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandments of God, ye hold the tradition of men...Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition’ (Mark 7:7-9).”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Where Is the True Church?, p. 23-24

NEW TEACHING:

“[John Newton] renounced his sinful life and became an avid student of the Bible.”

“He was ordained an Anglican minister in 1764.”

“Newton is known for the more than 280 religious songs he wrote. Most of us are familiar with his hymn titled ‘Amazing Grace.’”

“Toward the end of his life, John Newton grew deaf and nearly blind. It was said that in his final days he whispered to a friend:

“‘My memory is nearly gone. But I remember two things: That I am a great sinner...and that Christ – is a great Savior!’”

Terry D. Warren, “God’s Amazing Grace,” PT, Jan. 1993

“Christianity generally agrees with the clear teaching of Paul: ‘Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We died to sin; how can we live it any longer?’ (Romans 6:1-2).”

“John Wesley, English theologian and founder of Methodism, was in general agreement. He said, ‘The nature of the covenant of grace gives you no ground, no encouragement at all, to set aside any instance of obedience; any part or measure of holiness.’”

Donald L. Jackson, “‘Once Saved, Always Saved,’” PT, Nov.-Dec. 1993

“Almost 50 years ago, German theologian and Lutheran pastor Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906-1945) was executed by the Nazi government. But his writings and life continue to exert a profound effect on Christians today.”

“Like other men and women of God before him, Bonhoeffer willingly suffered for the name of Jesus Christ.”

“Bonhoeffer had a lot to say about cheap grace.”

“Cheap grace...said Bonhoeffer, is ‘the preaching of forgiveness without requiring repentance.’”

Paul Kroll, “Grace Is Free...,” PT, Jan. 1994

183. CHRIST’S TEMPTATION

Qualified Him to Rule or Not?

OLD TEACHING:

“Jesus had been required to overcome Satan – to resist and defeat him, in order to qualify to sit on the throne of the whole earth.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, The Incredible Human Potential, p. 102

NEW TEACHING:

“In the future, let’s all make it a point to avoid saying that Jesus qualified or had to qualify, which tends to give a wrong impression about our belief in his divinity.”

*Joseph W. Tkach, “How Do You React to Change?”,
WN, July 22, 1991*

184. CHRIST’S SUFFERING

He Actually Learned From It or Just Pretended To?

OLD TEACHING:

“Jesus SUFFERED! But it is recorded, ‘Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation...’ ...He was made perfect, through suffering – He learned by the things that He suffered!”

*Herbert W. Armstrong, “Why You Are Alive,”
Youth 83, May 1983*

NEW TEACHING:

Letter to Editor: “There is a subtle problem with George Hague’s article ‘He Tasted the Dust’ that should be made clear to any who might have gotten the wrong idea. The wrong idea is that God had to undergo human suffering and trials to understand them. The correct idea is that God underwent these trials and suffering so that we would believe he understood. It is our inherent incredulity that God was helping us with, not God’s inability to understand human suffering.”

Editor’s Response: “...you have an interesting point. Thanks.”

“Letters,” PT, Apr. 1993

185. THE ACTING PROFESSION

False Pretense or Not Wrong?

OLD TEACHING:

“Is it RIGHT for children to...pretend to BE A PERSONALITY, a CHARACTER, an INDIVIDUAL they are not...?...Never forget pretense is a WRONG PRINCIPLE! It is hypocrisy, untruth, falsehood, a sham and a mockery.”

The Plain Truth About Child Rearing, p. 94

NEW TEACHING:

“Acting, as such, is not wrong. It depends on what is being acted out and whether it is beneficial and uplifting.”

*“Questions and Answers,”
GN, May-June 1989*

186. CURSE OF THE LAW

The Penalty for Disobeying It or The Law Itself?

OLD TEACHING:

“Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law. Therefore we don’t have to keep the law – Christ kept it for us.”...Or so goes a familiar – but erroneous argument!...Simply stated, the curse of the law is the penalty for disobedience.”

*Vince Szymkowiak, “Just What Is ‘The Curse of the Law’?”,
GN, Jan. 1986*

NEW TEACHING:

“...Jesus did not just come so that everyone...could keep the law more perfectly. He came to save the world from sin and to impute his righteousness to those he would call...Paul even went so far as to say that the law was a curse to him, because he could not keep it.”

*Greg Albrecht, *The Plain Truth: Archetypes and Paradigms* (n.d.: n.p.),
WCG U.S. Regional Conference, Philadelphia,
Aug. 25-27, 1992*

187. MERCY

Based on Repentance or Based on Compromise?

OLD TEACHING:

“Protestant theologians offer a few very hard and fast rules...’ When I counsel,” a minister told me, “I’m not in the habit of telling people what to do. I merely outline the question so they can find the answers themselves. There simply isn’t any fixed answer for every question.””

“In other words, this theologian avoids committing himself...He knows that in all too many cases the person counseled will ‘decide for himself’ the way of fornication, adultery or sodomy.”

“They say: ‘Jesus had compassion on the woman taken in adultery. He dealt with her UNDERSTANDINGLY, with LOVE, and MERCY and COMPASSION.’ They make it sound very sentimental – very ‘righteous.’ BUT THEY NEGLECT TO SAY THAT JESUS ALSO SAID TO THE WOMAN: ‘GO AND SIN NO MORE!’...If this woman had not REPENTED, Jesus would have had no compassion with rebellion...Now notice this subtle, clever, cunning deception of Satan at work. Notice how words like ‘love,’ ‘compassion,’ ‘mercy,’ are used to TWIST God’s truth and His WORD, into representing that sex SINS should be treated with ‘love’ and ‘compassion.’ Notice how GOD’S LAW is rejected as evil – and how SIN is represented as GOOD to be condoned!”

*Herbert W. Armstrong, *The New Morality*,
pp. 100, 110*

NEW TEACHING:

“Seldom will you get a simple answer out of me for a question concerning mental health, because we’re complex people,’ says Bob King, executive secretary for the Christian Association of Psychological Studies. ‘There are too many glib answers out there.’”

“Pastoral counseling assists people in clarifying the moral and spiritual dynamics of life’s challenges and encourages them to make their own constructive decisions,’ Mr. [Ron] Lohr [WCG pastor] said.”

*George Hague, “When You Need Help,”
PT, May-June 1994*

“When we consider those who fall victim to AIDS, let’s remember that ‘judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy...’”

*George Hague, “AIDS: The Judgment of God?”,
PT, July 1992*

Letter to Editor: “I’d like to make some comments concerning the article ‘AIDS: The Judgment of God?’...When homosexuals (perverts) are proud of their sins (sin) and parade publicly and advertise it, God in return destroys their body...”

Editor’s Response: “God is love, and he desires mercy over judgment (James 2:13). He doesn’t take pleasure in suffering of any kind. God is not looking for excuses to punish humans.”

*“Letters to the Editor,”
PT, Nov.-Dec. 1992*

“Jesus’ condemnation of merciless application of the letter of the law... supports the freedom of the believing spouse to divorce and remarry in situations involving mental and physical abuse, sexual abuse, addiction, and emotional and spiritual abandonment of the relationship...”

*WCG Official Divorce and Remarriage Policy,
Apr. 20, 1993*

“...we admit in certain cases like abuse, divorce may be the best or only alternative.” [Author’s note:— or jealousy, or greediness, or selfishness, etc. – see change 27]

*Judd Kirk, WT Broadcast,
Nov. 7, 1993*

“‘People look at me as if I’m loose,’ one pregnant girl said, ‘like I do it every night. One time was all it took.’”

“Somehow, people think the child is a mistake. That is not the way God looks at it. He says children are a blessing.”

“Some of the most influential people of history were illegitimate.”

“The story of the woman caught in adultery ought to be a lesson for us all.”

“God...tells us we all sin and that we are not to sit in judgment of one another.”

“*The Forgotten Fatherless*,” Feb. 1994

“...to be attracted erotically to someone of the same sex seems so strange and unnatural to many heterosexual Christians.”

“What many do not understand is that it is the gay life-style, and *not* the condition of homosexuality, that is sinful.”

“A homosexual...is an ex-gay, having decided to resist any sexual expression of his or her homosexual condition.”

“Is your congregation a place where homosexuals trying to obey God find a haven?”

John Halford and Dennis Luker,
“*Understanding the Struggle: Homosexuality*,”
PT, May-June 1994

188. BLOOD AND ORGAN DONATIONS

Pandora's Box or Christian Duty?

OLD TEACHING:

Author's note: The WCG originally taught that God never intended that man try to solve his self-inflicted ailments through surgery and blood transfusions, and cautioned its members that the possibility of contracting disease through these medical treatments was very high.

“If human heart transplants aren't posing enough ethical knots to untie, then the frightening prospect of brain transplants will.”

“*Organ Transplants*,”
PT, Sep. 1985

NEW TEACHING:

“The churches here exceeded their goal July 3 of donating 54 pints of blood, as part of their group blood assurance plan...Blood credit not used by members and their families will be used by needy people in the community.”

“*Update*,” WN, Sep. 2, 1991

Author's note: Judd Kirk stated on *The World Tomorrow* broadcast, Dec. 26, 1993, that Christians donate organs because God's way is the way of giving.

189. CREMATION

Pagan Custom or Perfectly Fine?

OLD TEACHING:

Author's note: WCG originally taught that cremation was a custom that originated in paganism, and that the biblical example was burial or entombment.

NEW TEACHING:

“The Bible does not specify a particular mode of burial for a Christian... The practice of cremation does not violate any biblical command and has been used by various cultures for centuries.”

WCG PCD letter L124

190. HEART SYMBOL

Pagan or Godly?

OLD TEACHING:

“In the Chaldean tongue, spoken in Babylonia, the word for ‘heart’ was bal. The heart – bal – became, because of similarity in sound, a symbol for Nimrod – the Baal or Lord of the ancient Babylonians!”

Herman L. Hoeh, “Valentine’s Day,” GN, Feb. 1985

NEW TEACHING:

“We should remember that it is God who made the heart. Reference is made to it many times in the Bible...misuse of an object by this or that group...should not prohibit a Christian from putting it to proper use.”

WCG PCD Letter L131

191. THE FALL OF MAN

Never Happened or Did it?

OLD TEACHING:

“Among the errors [Augustine] carelessly ASSUMED to be true was the idea of the ‘fall of man.’ He supposed, falsely, that God had created a perfect man – who was an immortal soul composed of spirit, fused with, and housed in a body of flesh. He assumed that this soul was endowed with a holy, pure, righteous nature, perfect in character. Then, when God wasn’t looking, Satan came along and WRECKED God’s perfect handiwork. Man ‘fell’ to a lower nature – one of lust – concupiscence – evil desire for sensual gratification.”

“When God finally beheld, with horror, the wreckage perpetrated by Satan – when God came to realize how Satan thwarted His PURPOSE – He had to think out some plan for ‘repairing the damage.’ In other words, redemption is God’s effort to restore fallen man to a condition as good as Adam was, before the ‘fall.’”

“Man did not ‘fall’...It was SATAN who FELL! (See Luke 10:18.)”

Herbert W. Armstrong, The New Morality,
p. 65

NEW TEACHING:

“Through these gifts, God sets about *to renew us in his spiritual image*...We live, said Paul, apart from God *in a spiritually fallen world*...”

Paul Kroll, “Grace Is Free...,”
PT, Jan. 1994

“The ‘Fall’ of Man...”

“Something terrible happens to the first couple’s pure ‘nature’...when they disobey God.”

“However we describe Adam and Eve as conscious persons – and how they ‘fell’ – one thing is certain. After eating the forbidden fruit, they became tainted goods, spiritually speaking.”

“The fall of man theologians call it, but really it was more like a crash.”

“We must also remember that Adam and Eve were originally created in God’s image.”

“Sin, then, regenerates itself with us and destroys our nature’s original pure form.”

Paul Kroll, “Falling for Sin,”
PT, Apr. 1994

“Adam and Eve were without sin. But they had the freedom to choose to disobey God. Sad to say, that is what they chose to do.”

“This event is known as the ‘Fall’ of humanity.”

“In spite of sin, all humans still have God’s image...”

“It is now God’s purpose...to restore in us his image.”

Clayton Steep, “In the Image of God,”
PT, May-June 1994

“Adam and Eve were created and placed in paradise, a state of perfection. But they didn’t remain in this state of perfection. Sin entered the picture. They were seduced, falling or crashing into a state of sin.”

“By their own choice, *they exchanged a state of righteousness and holiness for one of sin and evil.*”

Greg Albrecht, “The Lion and the Lamb,”
PT, Oct. 1994

192. EVE'S SIN

Sign Adam Wasn't Leading Properly or Not?

OLD TEACHING:

Author's note: Mr. Armstrong often taught that if Adam had been leading Eve properly, he would not have permitted her to be alone with the serpent or to disobey God.

NEW TEACHING:

“Some have said, ‘Eve sinned because Adam wasn’t leading her properly.’ A woman is perfectly capable of sinning on her own, regardless of what her husband does not do.”

“Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,” WN, May 22, 1989

193. THE SABBATH

Pictures a Millennial Rest or an Eternal Rest?

OLD TEACHING:

“The seven literal days of Creation were a type...God marked out six millennial days to allow man to indulge in the spiritual labor of sin, followed by *a millennium of spiritual rest*, under the enforced Government of God.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, *The Wonderful World Tomorrow*, pp. 47-48

“...the Bible shows that the weekly Sabbath is a type or foreshadow of *the coming millennial ‘Sabbath’* – the seventh millennial ‘day’ in God’s 7,000 year ‘week’ for the working out of His plan for mankind.”

“God intended the weekly Sabbath day to foreshadow or picture *the coming 1,000-year period* known as the Millennium...a 1,000-year ‘Sabbath’ of rest from Satan’s influence...”

“God’s Holy Sabbath,” *Bible Correspondence Course, Lesson 24*, p. 10

““There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.” [Hebrews 4] tells of the millennial rest to come...The Sabbath rest each week is a memorial of creation and a picture of *the soon-coming millennial ‘rest.’*”

L. Leroy Neff, *Are All Ten Commandments in the New Testament?*, p. 6

NEW TEACHING:

“The creative week sets a pattern...Because there is a Sabbath-like rest in our future, we rest now as a foretaste of *the eternal spiritual rest* God will give us...Let’s preach about the Sabbath as a celebration of...*the eternal rest* that has been made possible by Jesus Christ.”

Joseph Tkach Jr., “*Church Administration*,” PGR, Dec. 1, 1993

"Hebrews 4 paints an inspiring picture of the Sabbath rest we enter through faith in Jesus Christ."

"The 'rest typified by the Sabbath,' writes Wilfrid Scott, 'is seen as the rest of the heart, provided by Christ...to be realized partially now and fully in the life to come' ('Sabbath, Lord's Day,' *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, pages 410-411)."

Day of Renewal, p. 8

194. LAZARUS AND THE RICH MAN

Parable About Resurrection or Folklore?

OLD TEACHING:

"The experience of Lazarus and the rich man shows the resurrection from the dead – not an instantaneous going to 'heaven' or 'hell.' It is a resurrection from the dead – not from life. It shows mortality which dies, and is dead – not immortality which never loses consciousness..."

Is There a Real Hell Fire?, pp. 41-42

NEW TEACHING:

"The story of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31) is another example [to show that parables should not be interpreted literally]. It's hard to wrench from this parable exact details about the afterlife. Jesus was drawing on images from Jewish and Egyptian folklore, which his listeners would have realized, to show the gulf between the haughty of this world and those who by their humble submission have come to inhabit the kingdom of God."

*Norman L. Shoaf, "What Jesus' Parables Reveal,"
PT, July 1993*

195. REWARD OF THE SAVED

Inherit the Earth or Go to Heaven?

OLD TEACHING:

"Why, if the righteous go to heaven, did the Apostle John write: 'NO MAN hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven' – referring to Jesus Christ Himself (John 3:13)?"

"If the 'saved' go to heaven when they die, why did Peter say that King David, a man after God's own heart (Acts 13:22), 'is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day...For David is NOT ascended into the heavens' (Acts 2:29, 34)?"

"Matt. 5:3...The 'meek' and the 'poor in spirit' – in other words, humble Christians – shall inherit THE EARTH for an everlasting possession, and shall enter the 'Kingdom of heaven' which will be set up on earth!"

“And yet most people seem to be ignorant of the plain teaching of the Word of God and have carelessly taken for granted, without question, the false idea of ‘going to heaven’!”

“*Will You Go to Heaven?*”, *Bible Correspondence Course, Lesson 7, pp. 3, 10, 13*

NEW TEACHING:

“We don’t go to heaven upon conversion; we remain on the earth in our physical bodies.”

Paul Kroll, “Your Place in the Kingdom of God,” PT, Oct. 1993

“Through faith in the One who saves us, we are enabled to *see beyond this life, to the life in the age to come*. If we believe, we are raised to sit with Christ in heavenly realms (Ephesians 2:6).”

Joseph W. Tkach, “Believe the Good News!”, PT, Nov.-Dec. 1993

Letter to Editor: “I am on cloud nine since reading your *News of the Work* and want to thank you for the card you sent when my sister-in-law and her mother left this world to go to a better one.”

Response: *None. [Author’s note: This comment was printed with no qualification whatsoever.]*

“Letters,” News of the Work, Vol. VII, No. 1

“Let us press onward in zeal for ‘the prize for which God has called us heavenward in Christ Jesus’ (Philippians 3:14).”

Joseph W. Tkach, Co-worker Letter, Jan. 27, 1994

Author’s note: There is no current WCG literature in print debunking the “going to heaven” idea. In March 2000, the new Pastor General of the WCG stated in an open Q & A session held in the auditorium his validation of a statement that “[name] was saying, you know, Mr. Armstrong right now is in the Kingdom of Heaven...he’s CHEERING on the progress of the Worldwide Church of God...”

“Strain on! Press onward! Our goal is ‘the prize for which God has called [us] heavenward in Christ Jesus’ (Philippians 3:14).”

Joseph W. Tkach, Letter to Ministry, PGR, Jan. 25, 1994

“And whatever your theology might be, whatever your church is, I don’t think you’ll find anyone with a concept of heaven *where people are in need.*”

John Halford, “Little Houses on the Prairie,” PT, Jan. 1995

“If I were to die and *leave earth* today – What to my Lord Jesus would I say?”

“Cornerstones,” Poem, PT, Jan. 1995

196. CONVERSION

Usually at Baptism or When God Calls One?

OLD TEACHING:

“True, at Cornelius’ house they did receive the Holy Spirit...before water baptism...BUT THERE IS NO *PROMISE* THAT ANYONE WILL RECEIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT UNTIL BAPTIZED IN WATER – even though God in His wisdom and love may on rare occasions makes an exception. The command is, ‘Repent, and be baptized’ – and THEN ‘ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.’” **[Author’s note: Which is conversion – see change 45.]**

Herbert W. Armstrong, All About Water Baptism, p. 18

NEW TEACHING:

“Paul is teaching that, just as Abraham received salvation before circumcision, we receive conversion before baptism...When a person believes, he or she is ‘in Christ,’ sealed with the Holy Spirit.”

Earl Williams, “Are We Saved By Baptism?”, Reviews You Can Use, Nov.-Dec. 1993

“The promised baptism of is available to all who believe (Acts 2:38-39). Paul indicated that people usually received the Holy Spirit when they believed (Acts 19:2).”

“What is the evidence of God’s Spirit? What can prove that God is in us? His love.”

What the Bible Says About Speaking in Tongues, pp. 12, 13

Author’s note: The Acts 19:2 formula was perceived to occur more often than the Acts 2:38 formula.

197. GOD’S OMNIPRESENCE

By His Spirit Alone or in Totality?

OLD TEACHING:

“...God projects His Spirit to any place regardless of distance, but through His Spirit God is able to act on such objects or to change it as He wills. Thus, God is omnipresent.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Mystery of the Ages, p. 45

NEW TEACHING:

“GOD IS GREAT! He is...*Omnipresent*. He is present everywhere at all times.”

Clayton Steep, “The Problem with Praise,” PT, July 1993

“...the Bible shows us that God is: Unlimited in place.”

God Is..., p. 18

Author's note: Saying that God and the Holy Spirit are inseparable (see change 11) makes God omnipresent in His own totality, not through the Holy Spirit only.

198. GLORIFIED RESURRECTED BODIES Have Form or Are Shapeless?

OLD TEACHING:

“What does the GLORIFIED Christ look like? His eyes blaze forth like flames of fire! His feet glow like finely burnished brass. His face shines like the SUN, in FULL STRENGTH – so bright, it would blind your eyes if He were visible to you now!...as stated...in I Cor. 15, at Christ's coming our vile bodies shall be changed into SPIRIT, made IMMORTAL, fashioned like Christ's GLORIFIED BODY.”

*Herbert W. Armstrong, Just What Do You Mean – Born Again?,
pp. 40, 42*

NEW TEACHING:

“Spirit by nature cannot have body (i.e., extension in space)...So is it correct to speak of spiritual bodies?...If it means a body ‘composed of spirit,’ then no. We do not believe or teach such a thing. Spirit is not a substance of which anything can be composed...However, if by ‘spiritual bodies’ we mean a state provided by God, then the term is correct.”

*Joseph Tkach Jr., “Questions,”
PGR, Oct. 1993*

Author's note: This change led directly to the next three changes. The core and essence of the trinitarian concept that God has no body is based upon the misconception that it limits God to believe that, as a spirit, He can be “composed” or “have parts.” This belief is the foundation for believing no spirit, in order to be spirit, can have shape. To have shape is thought to mean it is not spirit somehow. Frankly, it is this concept that truly limits God and not vice versa. God can be in any form He wants—that's why He is God. But if one believes the idea that no spirit of any kind can have shape, then the next three changes (199-201) *MUST FOLLOW*. In addition, if I Corinthians 15 is a metaphor, no literal resurrection can be possible.

199. - 202. RECENT CHANGES ANNOUNCED

Author's note: The following changes were reported as having been stated at all WCG Regional Conferences: The Night to be Much Observed is merely a tradition in the Church; the New Jerusalem is not literal; there is no third heaven (it's a metaphor); Melchizedek may have been Shem; all Christians may have the same reward – no 1, 5, or 10 cities, etc.; humans will be resurrected physically; and jury duty is permitted, as is participation in the military service. Reliable reports from the WCG Tulsa Pocket Conference (Nov. 1993) told of several more changes:

199. RECEIVING THE HOLY SPIRIT
At Conversion or From Birth?

All people must have the Holy Spirit from birth (since it has to be everywhere or it would be limited, then it cannot be limited from or excluded from the billions of places where human beings are found at any given time). This same concept teaches that God is in rocks, trees, everything – like the American Indian “Great Spirit” concept. Conversion consists of learning to “activate” the spirit.

200. SPIRIT IN MAN
Unique Human Spirit or The Holy Spirit?

“We cannot exist or live apart from God. This is what we mean when we say that the Spirit of God is what sustains us and gives us life. It is not necessary to have an additional ‘spirit of man.’”

“We can speak of Stephen’s spirit or of someone else’s spirit, but we are only describing in whom the spirit was working, not actually separate spirits that could be placed in different locations.”

*David G. Hunsberger, Letter to Member,
WCG PCD, July 28, 1994*

201. ANGELS
Have Bodies or are Formless?

Angels cannot have bodies.

202. THE FALL OF SATAN

Literal Event or Mere Metaphor?

Satan never fell. He was Satan from the instant he was created and Isaiah 14:12 is a metaphor.

203. PRAYERS OF THE UNRIGHTEOUS

Not Heard by God or Are They?

OLD TEACHING:

“A sixth condition of answered prayer is one which is neglected and violated consistently by most professing ‘Christians.’”

“How can men persistently refuse to keep God’s commandments, and then expect Him to answer their prayers? Peter answers, ‘For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil’ (I Peter 3:12).”

*R.C. Meredith, “The Answer to Unanswered Prayer,”
WCG Article Reprint, 1970*

NEW TEACHING:

“Of course, anyone can offer prayers to God. In a manner of speaking, we can say that God hears all people’s prayers, simply because he is God.”

“Jesus tells us that God gives the rain and sunshine to all, even the unrighteous (Matthew 5:45).”

*Paul Kroll, “Talking with God,”
PT, Sep. 1993*

Author’s note: Take time to read about the importance of righteousness as described in the following prayers and scriptures—Job 27:8-9; 35:9-13; Psalms 18:20-24, 40-41; 34:15-16; 66:18-19; Proverbs 1:24-29; 15:8, 29; Isaiah 1:15; 58:1-14; Jeremiah 11:11, 13-14; 14:10-12; Lamentations 3:40-44; Ezekiel 8:17-18; Micah 3:1-4; Zechariah 7:9-13; John 9:31.

204. SENDING PRAYERS

Secretly From Your Room or Fax Them to the Wailing Wall?

OLD TEACHING:

“And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites. For they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door,

pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.”

Matthew 6:5-6 (NKJV)

“[Christ] cautioned the disciples never to pray ‘to be seen of men,’ but to enter into a closet or ‘secret place,’ and there commune with their Heavenly Father.”

Roderick C. Meredith, “The Power of Prayer,” WCG Article Reprint, 1970

NEW TEACHING:

“Fax-a-Prayer – Bezeq, the Israeli telephone company, has made it possible for customers to fax ‘God.’

“Customers so inclined can now send fax messages to Jerusalem. Bezeq employees fold the messages and place them inside crevices on the Western Wall, considered Judaism’s holiest site. The Jerusalem number is 972-2-612-222.”

“Cornerstones,” PT, Feb. 1994, p. 29

205. PROPHECY FULFILLED IN TYPE

Forerunner of Real Event or Metaphoric Fulfillment?

OLD TEACHING:

“Prophecy is DUAL! Notice the theme of duality running through the Bible. There was the first man Adam, and the second Adam, who was Christ (I Cor. 15:45-47). There is the Old Testament, and the New Testament. There was the old Jerusalem and a new heavenly Jerusalem. Study Matthew 24! Here, Jesus answered the questions of the disciples about the end of the age, and His imminent return! Many believe Matthew 24 was totally FULFILLED in 70 A.D. at the destruction of Jerusalem...But Christ did not lie. What happened in 70 A.D. was merely a forerunner, a type of the REAL FULFILLMENT of ALL the prophecies of Matthew 24!”

How to Understand Prophecy, pp. 11-12

“This same DUAL PRINCIPLE runs all through prophecy! First, a former or preliminary fulfillment that is merely the type or forerunner of a second, the final climactic fulfillment occurring, usually, during this CRISIS AT THE CLOSE we already have entered!”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “7 Keys to Understanding the Bible,” GN, Dec. 1984

“John the Baptist was a voice crying out in the physical wilderness of the Jordan River area, preparing for the human physical Jesus’ First Coming to a material temple at Jerusalem, to a physical Judah. But that was a prototype, or forerunner of a voice ‘lifted up’ ...crying out in the midst of today’s spiritual wilderness of religious confusion, announcing the imminency of Christ’s Second Coming as the spiritually GLORIFIED Christ, to

his spiritual temple (the Church resurrected to spirit immortality) (Eph. 2:21-22)."

Herbert W. Armstrong, Mystery of the Ages, p. 10

"God predicts vast reforms everywhere in the wonderful utopian era He says will soon break out on this earth."

"Today – the greatest...problem of all is the population explosion."

"But God has the solution, and how simple it is. Simply make most of the earth cultivable. Reduce the...mountains, raise up some of the...valleys..."

Herbert W. Armstrong, The Wonderful World Tomorrow, pp. 75-76

NEW TEACHING:

"Biblical prophecies often include figures of speech. Some predictions *came to pass* exactly as written. *Others were fulfilled in type – one thing representing another.*"

"Isaiah 40:3-4, for an extreme example, predicts that valleys will be raised and mountains brought low."

"Luke 3:4-6 indicates that this prophecy in Isaiah was fulfilled by the preaching of John the Baptist. The valleys and mountains of Isaiah 40:3-4 are apparently symbols for something else and therefore *not to be taken literally.*"

Michael Morrison, "Literal and Figurative," PT, Feb. 1994

206. CHRIST AS CONQUERING HERO

Literal King Soon to Come or Just a Metaphor?

OLD TEACHING:

"[Jesus] message was the good news of the coming world government of God – that is, the Kingdom of God, which shall rule all nations with the government of God."

"The Jewish rulers of Jesus' day thought He was proclaiming a government to be set up immediately – to overthrow the Roman Empire, then ruling Judea as a vassal state."

"They knew, from the prophecies of Daniel, Isaiah, Jeremiah and others, that their Messiah was to come. They overlooked completely the prophecies of His first appearing as the 'Lamb of God,' to be slain for the sins of humanity – being born as a babe, growing up, being rejected and despised by them, as recorded in Isaiah 53. They looked only to the prophecies of His second coming as the all-conquering and ruling king."

Herbert W. Armstrong, The Incredible Human Potential, pp. 177, 176, 205

"Some will say, however, that [David's] throne is established today in Christ. But Christ has not yet taken over this throne! He pictured Himself as the nobleman (Luke 19:12) who went to a far country (heaven) to get for Himself a Kingdom, and, who, after receiving the right to the Kingdom,

would return. Jesus Christ will not sit upon the throne of David until His second coming to earth, yet in the future!"

Herbert W. Armstrong, The U.S. and Britain in Prophecy, p. 65

"For that first thousand years, Jesus is to reign on the throne of His earthly ancestor David in Jerusalem (Isaiah 9:6-7)."

Herbert W. Armstrong, The Incredible Human Potential, p. 188

NEW TEACHING:

"Through Isaiah God prophesied that the Messiah would reign on David's throne with justice and righteousness forever (Isaiah 9:7). But did Jesus fulfill this prophecy?"

"If we had lived then and insisted on a literal interpretation of the prophecies that describe the Messiah as a conquering hero, we would have rejected Christ, the spiritual fulfillment of God's Word."

Michael Morrison, "Literal and Figurative," PT, Feb. 1994

207. SHUNNING HERETICS

To be Broadly or Narrowly Defined?

OLD TEACHING:

"[Of] all the religions and all the more than 250 denominations and sects in Christianity, 'NOT ONE, except the Worldwide Church of God, knows WHO and WHAT God is...what, and why, MAN IS...the TRUTH about the nation Israel...the TRUE GOSPEL Christ proclaimed...what happens in the hereafter...what salvation really is!'"

"Doesn't it, then, become abundantly apparent that we must all know precisely what God has prepared for those who love Him – and that we speak these amazing TRUTHS as they are – all speaking the same thing?"

"This is SO IMPORTANT to GOD that He had the apostle John, in the 90s, A.D., write...‘If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine...receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed’ (II John 10)."

"Personal by Herbert W. Armstrong," GN, Apr. 1979

"Are some of us trying to be more kind, merciful and considerate even than GOD? Are we actually disobeying God in our soft, fence-straddling approach toward certain others?"

"Now we COMMAND YOU, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly,' and, 'if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him...' (II Thessalonians 3:6, 14)."

"God is far more strict in all such matters within the Church than we have sometimes been inclined to be."

Herbert W. Armstrong, "Can We Fellowship the Disfellowshipped?", WN, 1980

"In Romans 16:17 it speaks of marking 'them which cause DIVISIONS and OFFENSES CONTRARY TO THE DOCTRINE WHICH YE HAVE LEARNED [and avoiding them].'"

"II Thessalonians 3:6, 14-15...is a COMMAND. And if we try to be MORE KIND – MORE RIGHTEOUS – than God and DISOBEY THAT COMMAND, we convict ourselves of disobedience to God's COMMAND!"

Herbert W. Armstrong, "Which Family Comes First?", GN, Apr. 1980

"Shocking though it is, the overwhelming majority have been deceived by ministers who come in the name of Jesus Christ, proclaiming that Jesus is the Christ, but who teach a different Gospel and a different faith!"

"Scarcely twenty years after the crucifixion of Jesus, the apostle Paul...cautioned Christians... 'Let no man deceive you by any means; for that day...shall not come except there come a falling away FIRST' (II Thess. 2:3)."

"These false teachers crept unawares – professing to come in the name of Jesus Christ. Yet they denied Jesus is the Christ by rejecting the only sign that proves that He is the Messiah (Mat. 12:39, 40)..." [Author's note: See change 81.]

"Whenever they were able to influence a majority in a local church these false ministers began to expel the true Christians...III John 9 and 10."

"But that did not mean the scattered individuals were not part of the Church. They were the Church because they were joined to Christ through the Holy Spirit. Those who drove them out became the false church – the church of the god of this world – 'the synagogue of Satan.'

"But Jesus promised to be with the faithful remnant of His Church to the end of the age – to guide His people into truth."

"As soon as Peter was martyred, probably around 80 A.D., events moved to a climax. There was not James or Peter or Paul. John alone was in charge. The apostasy was developing rapidly – especially in the West."

"[In Church history] we see the repeated fact that after a few generations, the local congregations are no longer composed of truly converted brethren, but of unconverted children and half-hearted believers who...go aside into total error..."

"If God has opened your understanding to His TRUTH, it is precious beyond price. 'If there come any to you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him Godspeed; for he that biddeth him Godspeed is partaker of his evil deeds' (II John 10-11)."

Herman L. Hoeh, A True History of the True Church, pp. 5, 6, 7, 8, 14, 23, 29

NEW TEACHING:

"[The] Bible says that the real difference between true and false Christians is whether they believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the promised Messiah..."

“That’s not just my definition, friends. That’s what the Bible says.”

“That’s the plain truth.”

“We have often used John’s instruction in his second epistle [2 John 10-11] as a reason to sever all contact with those who do not agree with us on every doctrinal point.”

“John was referring to Gnostic heretics who denied the true Messiahship of Jesus.”

“[The] people John is referring to are those who deny the truth that Jesus is the Christ!”

“God does not demand that we agree on every little point of doctrine.”

“Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,”

WN, Nov. 17, 1992

Author’s note: The above new teaching made all “Christians” of any belief in any church into true Christians as long as they accept Christ. On what basis need we ever worry about any doctrine under this definition? Mr. Armstrong said, “It is the duty of Christ’s TRUE ministers (and *how scarce today*), to PROTECT the begotten but yet unborn saints from *false doctrines*, from *false ministers*” (*Mystery of the Ages*, p. 262).

208. PASSOVER SERVICE

Called Passover or Also Lord’s Supper, Communion, Eucharist?

OLD TEACHING:

“The ‘communion,’ often *misnamed* the ‘Lord’s Supper,’ is actually the Passover – as the ordinance should properly be called.” –

Herbert W. Armstrong, “Does Easter Commemorate the Resurrection?”, GN, Apr. 1985

“The ‘communion,’ often called the ‘Lord’s Supper,’ is actually the Passover – as the ordinance should more properly be called.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, The Plain Truth About Easter, p. 26

NEW TEACHING:

“This spring, the Worldwide Church of God will introduce a revised ceremony for the Passover service. The term ‘Lord’s Supper’ is used in a few places in the ceremony.”

“However, some members have been told that the term ‘Lord’s Supper’ should not be used for our Christian service. We wish to correct this misunderstanding before Passover 1994 so that the use of the term in the ceremony will not detract anyone from full appreciation of the service itself.”

Bill Jacobs, “Lord’s Supper/Passover Article,”

PGR, Dec. 29, 1993

"Passover, Communion, Lord's Supper, Eucharist: All are traditional names for the observance commemorating Jesus' death. Should we use any (or all) of these to describe our service?"

"...the names Passover, Communion, Lord's Supper and Eucharist all have a biblical basis."

"Avoidance of these terms may lead Christians to forget certain aspects of the ordinance."

Ralph Orr, "The New Testament Passover," PGR, Dec. 29, 1993

"From the context of 1 Corinthians 11:20, the phrase 'Lord's Supper' is an acceptable term used in the New Testament. This same service is also called the New Testament Passover."

"Questions," PT, Apr. 1994

209. SATAN THE DESTROYER

God Permits Him to do a Lot of Damage or Not?

OLD TEACHING:

"And they had as king over them the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon, but in Greek he has the name Apollyon [margin: Lit. Destruction]."

Revelation 9:11 (NKJV)

"When the angels rebelled against God's government...physical destruction to the surface of the earth resulted."

"Satan is destroyer."

"Satan has power to do only what God allows."

Herbert W. Armstrong, The Incredible Human Potential, pp. 43, 120

"A third of the angels united with Satan in the rebellion. That is what caused the chaos on this earth."

"God placed the great cherub, Lucifer, to carry out His government on earth, but Lucifer refused to carry out God's will, God's commands, God's government. He wanted to substitute his own. So he disqualified himself."

Herbert W. Armstrong, Did God Create A Devil?, pp. 8, 9

"...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."

"Personal from Herbert W. Armstrong," GN, Dec. 1976

"And, as each rotten apple rots those next to it until the whole crate is rotten, so Satan proceeds."

"If, in the government of God on earth today, the 'rotten apples' are not thrown out early enough, they would destroy the whole government."

Herbert W. Armstrong, The Incredible Human Potential, p. 51

NEW TEACHING:

"The Gap Theory postulated that God's originally perfect creation had been wrecked by the pre-Adamic rebellion of Satan the devil, who was formerly the cherub Lucifer."

"Some of the dissenters from the Gap Theory...recognized the theory's weaknesses. The concept of a satanic rival of God so strong as to wreak havoc on God's creation, they pointed out, called into question the Creator's all-knowing, sovereign control."

Neil Earle, "The Battle Over Genesis 1," PT, Mar. 1994

Author's note: See change 149 for a fuller explanation of Satan's rebellion and the resulting destruction of the earth, and for proof that the current WCG administration is among the "dissenters from the Gap Theory."

210. GOD OF THIS WORLD

Satan or the God of Peace and Love?

OLD TEACHING:

"This world has a god – a false god – Satan the devil! He *pretends* to be 'an angel of light' (II Cor. 11:14). He has his religious organizations."

"Many have appropriated the very name 'Christian,' whose ministers, says your Bible, actually are Satan's ministers: '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' (II Cor. 11:14-15)."

"But do they actually call themselves the ministers of CHRIST? Read the verse just above the two just quoted – verse 13: 'For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ.' Yes, *Satan is the great counterfeiter.*"

"He palms himself off as GOD. He is called, in your Bible, the god of this world (II Cor. 4:4)."

Herbert W. Armstrong, Which Day Is the Christian Sabbath?, p. 53

"Satan is revealed as the 'GOD of this world' (II Cor. 4:4). The original inspired Greek should properly be translated, 'the god of this AGE.' And this worldly civilization *worships* its GOD. The appalling fact unrealized by the world is that Satan, not the Eternal, is its god!"

Herbert W. Armstrong, "Why God Permits Human Suffering," PT, May 1984

“Yes, [Satan] is the god of this world’s many religions. They know not the true God.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “Why Many Don’t Understand Pentecost,”
GN, May 1981

“Can you believe that of all the religions in the world, including...the Moslem and the Christian religions, not one (save the one original true Church of God, pictured in the twelfth chapter of Revelation as persecuted, small, hated by Satan) *knows WHO and WHAT God is?*”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “Your Human Potential Is Incredibly Greater,”
PT, Jan. 1979

NEW TEACHING:

“Faith in God by itself kills no one. It can save lives.”

“Two examples: Orthodox and Catholic leaders spoke out against ‘ethnic cleansing’ in Muslim Bosnia, and some Muslim clerics condemned the World Trade Center bombing.”

“The absurdity of doing evil to others in the name of God should be patently obvious. How can, for example, some Catholic Christian Croats justify their hatred of Orthodox Christian Serbs and their combined hatred of the Bosnian *Muslims* on grounds of faith?”

“Is not the God all three ethnic groups worship the God of peace and love? Then, how can his disciples justify hate and killing?”

Paul Kroll, “In the Name of God,”
PT, Mar. 1994

Author’s note: Since when do Muslims, Catholics and Orthodox Christians all worship the true God—the one here called “the God of peace and love”—and since when are these three groups “his disciples”?

211. KNOWING CHRIST

Linked to Commandment Keeping or Not?

OLD TEACHING:

“To the Thessalonians Paul wrote, ‘For the mystery of iniquity doth already work...’ (II Thes.. 2:7). It was the Babylonian mystery religion, started by Simon the Sorcerer (Acts 8), a religion of iniquity – lawlessness – a religion rejecting the law of God.”

“John wrote of these same perverters of the true gospel, denying obedience to the way of God. ‘He that saith, *I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him*’ (I John 2:4).”

*Herbert W. Armstrong, Your Awesome Future—
 How Religion Deceives You, pp. 6, 7*

“God commanded His people to keep His Sabbath as a sign...It advertises...certain identifying knowledge. But **WHAT KNOWLEDGE?** God answers: ‘...that ye may *KNOW* that I am the *LORD* that doth sanctify you.’

“**NOTE THOSE WORDS CAREFULLY!!** *It is the sign that IDENTIFIES to them who is their GOD! It is the sign by which we may KNOW that He is the LORD!!*”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Which Day Is the Christian Sabbath?, p. 53

“Is it possible to **BELIEVE IN** Christ – to worship Him in the customary manner of the day – and yet be lost? Christ Himself says YES! ‘Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that **DOETH** the will of my Father which is in heaven’ (Matthew 7:21).”

Herbert W. Armstrong, The Plain Truth About Healing, p. 44

“I John 2:4 says that if any man claims to *know the Lord* and keeps not his commandments that man is a **LIAR!** Surely there are many liars among professing Christians today!”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “Why Churches Observe Sunday,” PT, Nov.-Dec. 1984

NEW TEACHING:

“Paul had many things he could have boasted about, including an impeccable record of law-keeping, even by Pharisaic standards (Philippians 3:4-6). Yet he counted it all for loss, as *rubbish*, as *spiritually valueless*, ‘compared to the surpassing greatness of *knowing Christ* Jesus my Lord’ (verses 7-8).

“Paul’s own law-keeping...was *spiritually of no value*. Instead, Paul relied on faith in Christ as the key to *God’s gift of righteousness* (verse 9).”

“It is only through faith that we can be declared righteous in the sight of God.”

“So what was Paul’s goal? ‘I want to *know Christ...*’ To *know Christ*, to know his power, to share in his sufferings, to share in his death.”

“Personal from Joseph W. Tkach,” WN, Feb. 1, 1994

Author’s note: See changes 43 and 126 to understand what Paul was really saying in Philippians 3:7-8.

212. ATTAINING THE RESURRECTION

Obedience Required or Belief is Enough?

OLD TEACHING:

“Just ‘**BELIEVE** on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved’ is the popular teaching today. And that statement is absolutely true – if you understand what kind of **BELIEVING** is required.”

“Unfortunately millions are being deceived – led to trust in a faith that will *never save one single soul* – by a very popular and very false teaching.”

“What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?...Even so FAITH, if it hath not works, IS DEAD, being alone...I will shew thee my faith BY my works. Thou BELIEVEST that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works IS DEAD?” (James 2:14-20.)”

“...by putting all the scriptures on the subject of saving faith together, we learn that there are TWO KINDS of faith. And the kind so blindly trusted in by the majority of this day is nothing but a DEAD faith – and a *DEAD faith never will save one soul!*”

“A man came to Jesus and asked how to be saved. The Savior Himself replied, ‘...If thou wilt enter into life, KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS’ (Matthew 19:17).”

“A LIVING FAITH, the only kind that will SAVE, is an active faith – one that trusts God to make it possible to OBEY Him...to KEEP His blessed commandments.”

“And so it is possible through FAITH and the GIFT of God’s Holy Spirit for man to keep His commandments! And whoever claims differently God calls a plain LIAR (I John 2:4).”

“The common teachings of this day distort [Acts 16:31] to mean a mere belief in the FACTS of Christ’s existence, His sacrifice and His saving work. *Just accept these FACTS and accept HIM – without any obedience to God’s laws!* But the demons believe these things – and they TREMBLE – but they are not thereby saved!”

*Herbert W. Armstrong, The Plain Truth About Healing,
pp. 37, 38, 40, 41, 43*

NEW TEACHING:

“The trumpet blast to which the [Port Arthur cemetery’s] headstones refer will announce the second coming of Christ and...a resurrection (Rev. 11:15-19).”

“Jesus Christ will bring to life *all those who had died believing in him* and who have, since death, been dust in the ground, awaiting their resurrection.”

“The weather-beaten headstones on the Isle of the Dead give testimony to this resurrection.”

“Much of the colony’s population, prisoners and free alike, knew their resurrection would take place and they hoped for a new and better life, an eternal life. It would seem from the headstones that their belief gave them strength to endure...”

“Those prisoners of long ago...could focus with joy and relief on the certainty of the resurrection.”

Simone Worthing, “Isle of the Dead,” PT, Mar. 1994

213. WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD

Not Protestant or Is and Always Has Been Protestant?

OLD TEACHING:

“Brethren, do we not find ourselves taking for granted that the churches in what is called ‘Christianity’ are also God’s churches – that WE are just another of the many denominations, the only difference being that we hold to some different doctrines?”

“That simply is not true! We in GOD’S Church are not just one of all these churches.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “Why Did God Put You in His Church?”, GN, May 1974

“...when Satan failed to prevent the Church from being founded and getting off to a glorious start, what did he do next? He deceived certain humans into seeking to destroy the Church *from within*. There’s a saying: ‘If you can’t defeat them, join them.’ He caused some *within* the Church to turn to a false and counterfeit gospel.”

“Thus, from *false brethren within* the Church, Satan succeeded finally in deceiving even the vast majority in the Church. *He succeeded in turning this majority into a growing false and counterfeit church.*”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Where Is the True Church?, p. 16

“First, note Revelation 17. Here is pictured a woman. In II Corinthians 11:2, Ephesians 5:22-27 and elsewhere, we learn that ‘woman’ is a symbol for church. This woman is a fallen woman – an apostate church – pictured as ruling over many nations (Rev. 17:1,15).”

“But this church became a mother, and daughter churches came out of her in ‘protest,’ calling themselves ‘Protestant.’ And all have worldly, political church government. ‘Upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS’ (Rev. 17:5). Her daughters are called ‘harlots.’ Together, they are called ‘BABYLON.’ They are pagan, teaching pagan doctrines and customs, cloaked in the name of Christianity!”

“God’s last warning is this: ‘COME OUT of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of HER PLAGUES’ (Rev. 18:4)!”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Who or What Is the Prophetic Beast?, pp. 21, 26, 45

NEW TEACHING:

“Here are some points that can help put in perspective some of the strategic shifts that have occurred in our written publications.”

“*We are trying to position ourselves away from the fringes and more inside a Christian mainstream that itself shifted within the last quarter century.*”

Joseph Tkach Jr., “Journalistic Approach in the PT,” PGR, Apr. 13, 1994

"The next plank is, 'I must leave.' These are people who cannot deal with the change. They rationalize the change by saying 'they are turning protestant' or 'apostatizing.'"

"If you were to get out a chart where we are, would you put us with the Catholics? No. Would you put us with the Bhuddists?...No, you wouldn't put us there. You wouldn't put us with Islam. You wouldn't put us with Judaism...*No, you'd put us among the broad spectrum of Protestantism.* Some protestant leader has held nearly every position we hold doctrinally in the past. Did we not know this? I think we did. We just didn't want to realize that or acknowledge that. *NO, WE ARE NOT SLOWLY TURNING PROTESTANT—WE'VE ALWAYS BEEN THERE.*"

Joseph Tkach Jr, Australian Ministerial Conference, Feb. 21, 1994

214. HUMAN REASON

Dangerous Substitute for God's Revelation or Gift From God?

OLD TEACHING:

"I noticed the incident of the 'forbidden fruit.' It portrays the ever-living Creator instructing the man and the woman He had just created in what they needed to know. It portrayed Him revealing basic knowledge – knowledge undiscoverable and unobtainable, except by revelation from the SOURCE."

"The scientific method is observation, experimentation, and reason, but rejection of revelation. [Eve] disbelieved, disobeyed, seized the forbidden fruit, and induced her husband to join the experiment. They took to themselves production of the knowledge of what is good and what is evil."

"Result of that experiment: They died! And their posterity have been disbelieving, disobeying, relying on themselves for the production of knowledge, and dying, ever since!"

Herbert W. Armstrong, "Why I Talk With Heads of State," PT, Apr. 1979

"You don't know what is right and what is wrong except as God reveals. Paul would not have known what sin was if the law had not told him. Human nature will not teach you. Human nature is evil."

"...to take to yourself the authority to produce the knowledge of what is good and what is evil – to decide what you think is right and what is wrong, will result in death."

"...for any but God to decide – to assume the knowledge of what is good and what is evil – is to assume and arrogate to himself the prerogative of God – to elevate himself to be as God!"

Herbert W. Armstrong, "Were the Ten Commandments in Force Before Moses?", WCG Article Reprint, 1970

"You probably have seen pictures of the statue *The Thinker*. A man sitting alone, leaning forward, elbows on his knees, his hand supporting his

head. There, supposedly, he sits in deep thought, hour after hour, day after day – just thinking!"

"Supposedly that statue depicts the manner in which some of the religions of the world came into being."

"But *The Thinker* had nothing to think from! No foundation for his thinking. No facts on which to base his conjectures."

"The human mind is not equipped to manufacture truth with no basis for the truth!"

"Such basic TRUTHS are revealed, not thought out in any human mind. They come from God, not man! And in all biblically recorded cases the initiative was God's!"

"The world is full of religions that originated in the imagination, reasoning and speculating of certain humans. But they had no true basis to reason from. The TRUTH is REVEALED from GOD!"

"The amazing, unbelievable TRUTH is that the SOURCE of these popular beliefs and practices of professing Christianity was, quite largely, paganism and human reasoning and custom, NOT the Bible!"

Herbert W. Armstrong, Mystery of the Ages, pp. 11, 12, 13, 26

"This world, and all its civilizations – including its religions – consists of a system of beliefs and customs that have been derived from 'the way that seems right to man.' God says that way incurs the penalty of eternal DEATH. That way – the way that seems RIGHT – is the way of SIN."

"This world is not taught to OBEY GOD! Its false 'Christianity' teaches that God's Law is 'done away.' It actually puts human conscience, actuated by Satan's false teaching, in place of God's Law! It does not teach, as did Christ, that we must actually live by every word of GOD – of the BIBLE!"

"Your Bible says: 'God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in TRUTH' (John 4:24)."

"What do the churches of this world say? 'Worship God according to the dictates of your own conscience.' THAT IS CONTRARY TO WHAT GOD SAYS!"

"You must make your own choice. Rebellion means eternal PUNISHMENT of everlasting DEATH. God will save no person He does not RULE."

Herbert W. Armstrong, Which Day Is the Christian Sabbath?, p. 54

"It seems utterly unbelievable! The religions of this world do not know WHO or WHAT God really is!"

"Among the largest of the world's religions are Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, Shintoism, Hinduism, Islam and Christianity..."

"The intellectuals of the world in the first century were the Athenians. Certain philosophers of the Epicureans and of the Stoics encountered the apostle Paul."

"'What will this babbler say?' queried some in ridicule (Acts 17:18). Others sneered sarcastically, 'He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods.'"

“Here were the world’s most ‘scholarly.’ Paul was preaching the truth of GOD.”

“‘Ye men of Athens,’ said the apostle forthrightly and boldly, ‘I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions [idolatrous objects of worship], I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you. GOD that made the world and all things therein...’”

“WHO is GOD? CREATION is the basic proof of God. These Athenian Epicureans and Stoics did not even know that.”

“God reveals Himself in plain language in His Word, the Holy Bible.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “7 Proofs of God’s True Church,” PT, Feb. 1979

NEW TEACHING:

“Saying that ‘human reasoning is evil’ becomes a tactic that can be used to put down any intelligent challenge that disputes a belief.”

“This kind of misguided thinking is used by some to say that proper understanding of the Bible occurs by revelation apart from reason.”

“Why do some people fall for such a deception? Because they create a false dichotomy between revelation and reason as if the two are totally opposite.”

“Human reasoning is a gift from God to humanity...”

Joseph Tkach Jr., “Church Administration,” PGR, Jan. 25, 1994

“What is important, then, is to also carefully listen to what is being presented...then to examine the evidence. The evidence may or may not lie in the Bible.”

“There’s nothing objectionable in reason...Reason is a gift of God. The premise from which you reason doesn’t always come from God.”

“Dr. Stavrinides...is theologically trained and...thinks Greek...”

“The Greeks are logical. That’s one thing they’re very conscious of.”

“Mr. Armstrong...left the explanation [of what God is] unfinished, because he couldn’t figure out how to explain that there is one spirit if there are two persons.” **[Author’s note: See change 222.]**

“God is both thinker and thought. As thinker He is Father. As thought He is Son.”

“Greek logic leads to this. *This is not a New Testament revelation.* This is in fact a result of the Greeks thinking about the problem – or to put it this way, to get away from the Greeks so we don’t blame them for too many things – in Asia, the Buddhist religion, Hinduism, Confucianism, have often proposed answers to questions that westerners have never thought to ask yet.”

“The impact of the New Testament Church was in the Greek world where people had begun to discuss the very questions that the Jews were thinking about and were unable adequately to answer. And so, what we discover is indeed a people was being prepared to grasp something of the nature of God.”

Herman L. Hoeh, “Unfinished Business...,” sermon played in all WCG churches, 5 Mar. 5, 1994

“What the Church needs is to see its own role in a broader light, to confront modern issues, and to overcome obstacles that affect its worldwide mission. In order to facilitate this goal, the Worldwide Church of God has made a clear distinction between issues that are strictly biblical, and issues that are essentially theological or philosophical. The former are easily accessible through the Bible in any translation, while the latter require special training or expertise.”

“The Church highly respects the need for deeper theological work. It believes that a full and accurate statement on the nature of God would be a major achievement in the history of dogmatism, but, in the meantime, it defers to experts whose task is to dissect, analyze, and define what normally lies beyond the resources of the vast majority of believers.”

*K.J. Stavrinides, Reviews You Can Use,
Jan.-Feb. 1991*

215. HELPING A REBELLIOUS WORLD

Worthless Without Lawkeeping or We Should Imitate Ronald McDonald?

OLD TEACHING:

“Yes, as Jesus said, many cry out, ‘Lord, Lord,’ but absolutely REFUSE to obey the revealed will of Almighty God.”

“Describing how he will have to deal with these self-appointed ministers when he returns, Jesus said, ‘Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name done many wonderful works?’ (Matt. 7:22).”

“These ministers will tell Jesus how they used his name in preaching to great multitudes of people. They will explain how in the name of religion and Christ they overcame the ‘devils’ of superstition and ignorance in their mission schools and in their dealings with primitive people.”

“These men will wax eloquent in describing the wonderful works that they accomplished in the name of religion and Christ. They will inform Jesus of the great hospitals and clinics they established around the world.”

“They will tell Jesus of the homes for unwed mothers and battered wives, the camps for wayward boys, the missions they have established to feed and clothe the drunks and down-and-outs in the skid row sections of many cities, and the Christmas baskets and similar gifts they take to the poor on their religious holidays.”

“Is Jesus Christ – the Christ of the Bible – going to be pleased with all of these accomplishments in his name?”

“He answers, ‘And then will I profess unto them, I NEVER knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity’ (verse 23). Jesus will say he never – never at any time – knew these men as his servants! He tells them to depart from him!

"But notice what he says about their 'works.' He says, 'Ye that work iniquity.' The Greek word here translated 'iniquity' literally means LAWLESSNESS – disobedience to God's law!"

"Their religion is a futile attempt to treat the effect of automatic punishment caused by disobedience to the law of God."

*R.C. Meredith, "Religious Reawakening...Needed in Our Time?",
PT, Oct. 1983*

NEW TEACHING:

"I John 3:16 says, 'By this we perceive the love of God because he lay down his life for us and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren, but whosoever has this world's goods and sees his brother have need and shuts up his compassions from his how dwells the love of God in him? My little children, let us love not in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth.' And it pains me to think that Ronald McDonald foundation has better fulfilled Matthew 25 than we have in the past. That's painful. That's not good. 'You know what Matthew 25 says? I saw you sick, and I visited you in prison; thirsty, and I gave you drink; hungry, and I fed you. We were very inward focused. We took care of the people inside our fellowship by third tithe, but what did we do for people outside? People who are sick, people who are in prison, people who are in need?'"

"We said...we don't need to help them...Can we be mature enough Christians to admit that was wrong?"

Joseph W. Tkach, Australian Ministerial Conference, Feb. 21, 1994

Author's note: In Matthew 25, Christ said that they would see Him sick, in prison, hungry, or thirsty. This is speaking of converted Christians who have Christ dwelling in them. Visiting an unrepentant murderer or rapist in prison is not visiting Christ. His exact words were: "...inasmuch as you did it to one of *the least of these My brethren*, you did it to Me" (vs. 40). He is clearly talking about converted brethren. The context is plain.

216. VAIN WORSHIP OF CHRIST

Using the Traditions of Men or Pretending to Believe?

OLD TEACHING:

"Is it possible to BELIEVE in Christ – to worship Him in the customary manner of the day – and yet be lost? Christ Himself says YES! 'Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven' (Matthew 7:21)."

"Hear Him again! 'Howbeit IN VAIN do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men... (Mark 7:7-8)."

“There it is! From Jesus’ own lips! Such a dead faith – such worship – is IN VAIN. Those who trust in it, and in the men and denominations who teach it, ARE LOST! And the quicker we come to realize it, the better.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, The Plain Truth About Healing, pp. 11, 44

“Men evolve many arguments to evade the commandments of God – because the carnal mind is hostile to God, and is not subject to His LAW! (Rom. 8:7.) When men reject the commandments of God, that they may hold to their traditions (see Mark 7:6-9) they must devise arguments to justify their rebellion.”

“Did you realize that Christ Himself said you can not only profess His name and call yourself a Christian, but you may actually WORSHIP HIM – and do it in vain? Still totally ‘unsaved’?”

“Listen to the very words of Christ: ‘Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men...ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition’ (Mark 7:7-9).”

“Assembling for worship on Sunday is nothing but the tradition of MEN – and a pagan tradition at that! Those who do so reject the Commandment of God, disobey God’s Commandment to keep His Sabbath day holy, are guilty of COMMITTING SIN, and SUCH WORSHIP IS UTTERLY IN VAIN!”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Which Day Is the Christian Sabbath?, pp. 28, 100

NEW TEACHING:

“If you read Matthew 7:21-23 carefully, you will find that the passage says nothing about ‘belief.’ The passage is about people who do not bring forth fruit (verse 20). It is about people who say, ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do things in Christ’s name, but do not do the will of God. In other words, it is about people who do not even have ‘belief.’”

“You have taken Jesus’ statements about people who don’t believe, and tried to make them apply to people who do believe. *Jesus is talking about pretenders in Matthew 7:21-23, not about believers.*”

“Your second scripture was Matthew 15:9. Again, you want to make the passage say what it doesn’t say. Verse 7 makes it plain that Jesus is talking about the Scribes and Pharisees that came to him in verse 1. In verses 7-9, he said to *them*, ‘You hypocrites! Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you: “These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men.”’ This refers to the people to whom Jesus said it refers – the leaders of the Jews.”

“...are you in a position to determine whose hearts are far from Jesus and whose are not, thereby sitting in the judgment seat?...on what basis do you condemn the hearts of people who give their lives in service to Jesus, but don’t understand what you do about the right day on which to keep the fourth commandment?”

Joseph W. Tkach, Letter to field minister, Spring 1994

217. PREACHING THE GOSPEL

Done Only by One True Church or By All of Churchianity?

OLD TEACHING:

“Satan is a great COUNTERFEITER! He appears as ‘an angel of light’ (II Cor. 11:13-15). And he has his counterfeit CHURCHES! His ministers are deceived by him into believing they are ‘ministers of righteousness’ and of Christ (II Cor. 11:15; Matt. 24:5).”

“And indeed, many of them may be entirely sincere, being themselves deceived. Yet they have neither known nor preached Jesus’ true Gospel of THE KINGDOM OF GOD (Matt. 24:14).”

“It seems that today all churches have lost the gospel of Jesus Christ. They preach primarily their gospel ABOUT Jesus Christ.”

“...does any, except God’s true Church, proclaim the true gospel of the kingdom of God today?”

*Herbert W. Armstrong, Mystery of the Ages,
pp. 250-251, 294*

NEW TEACHING:

“In this letter, you asked for help to understand why we should preach the gospel *if other churches are already preaching it.*”

“Should James have quit preaching the gospel just because Peter was also preaching it? Should Paul have told God that there was no need for him to preach, since there were already many other apostles, and they were all preaching the same thing?”

“God has now revitalized *this church* with his gospel...It is our place and our duty to heed the call, to believe the gospel and to enter the field.”

Joseph W. Tkach, Letter to Member, Feb. 9, 1994

“We preach the gospel so *people will come to Christ, not so they will come to us.*”

“God has called us to preach the gospel...*regardless of who else is doing it...*”

“Other churches have their own responsibilities before God, and they answer to him for it.”

“[God] called us to preach the gospel, not to try to judge and condemn *all others who preach it.*”

*Joseph W. Tkach, Letter to Ministry,
PGR, Apr. 26, 1994*

Author's note: It is true many churches do teach the false gospel discussed in change 1.

218. COUNSELING WITH THE MINISTERS OF THIS WORLD

Worthless or Profitable?

OLD TEACHING:

“This ‘New Morality’ wears the cloak of respectability, because it is advocated by professional leaders – the psychiatrists, the doctors, the theologians.”

“The educated clergy are reared in the educational system. Gradually the younger ministers coming along absorbed the new ‘liberal’ teachings.”

“The attitude of the churches, and the theologians, was well expressed by a London businessman... ‘We must,’ he said, *‘adapt our religion to the changing conditions of a changing world.’*”

“An article by David Boroff, in the August, 1961, *Coronet*, summarizes the situation. Speaking of the Protestant clergy, he says in part: ‘...How can people practice a liberal ethic without falling into the trap of “anything goes”? Protestant theologians offer a few very hard and fast rules... “When I counsel,” a minister told me, “*I’m not in the habit of telling people what to do. I merely outline the question so they can find the answers themselves. There simply isn’t any fixed answer for every question.*”’

“In other words, this theologian avoids committing himself, or making himself legally liable for wrong results. He knows that in all too many cases the person counseled will ‘decide for himself’ the way of fornication, adultery or sodomy.”

“These ministers of Satan (see II Cor. 11:13-15) commit adultery and walk in lies (Jer. 23:14) – ‘they strengthen also the hands of evildoers, that none doth return from his wickedness: they are all of them unto me AS SODOM...!’ The Sodomites were DESTROYED for homosexuality... Yet today’s ‘New Morality’ clergy are approving it! Many are participating in it!”

“You doubt that many preachers, themselves, are homosexuals and adulterers? You just read, above, from the 23rd chapter of Jeremiah, that GOD says they are!”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “The New Morality,”
pp. 97, 98, 99, 100, 104

NEW TEACHING:

“Shouldn’t Christians be able to solve all their problems through prayer, Bible study and counseling with the ministry and members of their Church?”

“*Society...has changed tremendously since the Bible was originally written.* The Bible was primarily written in an agrarian, patriarchal society.”

“*Pastoral counseling* assists people in clarifying the moral and spiritual dynamics of life’s challenges and *encourages them to make their own constructive decisions.*’ Mr. [Ron] Lohr [WCG pastor] said.”

“Pastors understand the limitations of their training and certification,’ said Mr. Lohr, ‘so they often make referrals to other professionals for problems outside their expertise.’”

“*Seldom will you get a simple answer out of me* for a question concerning mental health, because we’re complex people,’ says Bob King, executive secretary for the Christian Association of Psychological Studies. ‘*There are too many glib answers out there.*’”

“...many Christians have received real, practical help from psychology. The key to this success is finding an appropriate psychologist.”

“Christians often prefer to counsel with fellow Christians, who in addition to using their professional training, use *biblical insights* to help their patients.”

George Hague, “When You Need Help,” PT, May-June 1994

219. REPENTING OF HOMOSEXUALITY

Thoughts Must Change or Just Outward Actions?

OLD TEACHING:

“Repentance is not merely being sorry for something one has done – or even many such sins. It is a real repentance of what one is and has been – of his whole past attitude and life apart from God. *It is a total change of mind and heart and direction of life.*”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Just What Do You Mean...Conversion?, p. 12

“Becoming converted means being CHANGED. When one receives the Holy Spirit of God, his whole viewpoint, his outlook, his purposes, goals, ways of thought – everything – becomes CHANGED! It is a renewing of the MIND – the Spirit of a sound mind.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, All About Water Baptism, p. 7

“Why do certain youths develop into homosexuals or transvestites?”

“Human beings are not born with an inherited sexual orientation or sexual instinct that drives them irrevocably in a certain direction.”

“Wrong and damaging emotional and sexual feelings take root in each human mind because humans do not resist them.”

“Though many deny it, all humans become, in one way or another, the slaves of deceptive sins, pleasures and feelings...”

“It takes strong spiritual power from God, as well as high human motivation and effort, to break the damaging cables of *wrong thinking* and feeling and then learn the right thinking and emotions revealed in the law of God.”

D. R. Schroeder, “Is It True Some Are ‘Born that Way’?”, PT, Sep. 1981

“Homosexuality is a perversion of the MIND. It is a psychic and *mental* and spiritual DISEASE. Once ‘hooked’ with it, true sex love for a wife or husband becomes impossible UNTIL the *mind* is changed – purified – straightened out!”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “The New Morality,” p. 114

“Every victim of this foul satanic *mind-branding* should pray earnestly, prevailingly with the whole heart, to the Holy GOD to remove root and branch that false concept. Pray, as did David, ‘Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit [attitude] within me’ (Ps. 51:10).”

“When David, filled with remorse and emotion, prayed this prayer, he was in brokenhearted repentance because of his SEX sin with Bathsheba, wife of Uriah. He was repenting of his wrong attitude toward sex. He was beseeching God to take this dirty attitude of lust out of his heart – to create in him a clean heart, and to restore a right spirit – or attitude – a right concept toward sex – *in his mind*.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, The Missing Dimension in Sex,
pp. 103-104

NEW TEACHING:

“...to be attracted erotically to someone of the same sex seems so strange and unnatural to many heterosexual Christians.”

“What many do not understand is that it is the gay life-style, and not the condition of homosexuality, that is sinful.”

“Please make sure you understand that last statement. Read it again if you need to.”

“A homosexual...is an ex-gay, having decided to resist any sexual expression of his or her homosexual condition.”

“This does *not* necessarily mean the homosexual becomes heterosexual; rather, it means he or she no longer engages in homosexual acts.”

“It is simplistic to say, ‘Well, homosexuals should work toward becoming heterosexual.’”

“...the thought of sexual relations with a woman (or a man, in the case of a lesbian) is usually as repulsive to a homosexual as a homosexual relationship is to a heterosexual.”

J. Halford & D. Luker, “Understanding the Struggle: Homosexuality,” PT, May-June 1994

Author's note: Would they say this about adulterers, child molesters, murderers or thieves? Make the applications and see that this principle does not apply to normal sin, let alone to perverted sin.

220. SIN

Can or Can't be Defined?

OLD TEACHING:

“But what is sin? Why, when men preach, don't you hear that explained, defined, made clear and understandable? Why are these religious terms used most of the time loosely, vaguely, meaninglessly?”

Herbert W. Armstrong, What Do You Mean...Salvation?, p. 12

“What IS sin? The Bible definition is: ‘Sin is the transgression of the law’ (I John 3:4).”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “Why Churches Observe Sunday,” PT, Nov.-Dec. 1984

NEW TEACHING:

“Sin is an internal power that does something to us. Sin enters us. It deceives and dominates us.”

“Of course, these are only ways of speaking about things we cannot see. Sin and human nature are not substances or fixed structures we can *identify, mark and box up.*”

Paul Kroll, “Falling for Sin,” PT, Apr. 1994

Author's note: The following articles were loaded with references to sin, but never gave the definition of sin or in any way link it to breaking God's Law: “Grace is Free...” Paul Kroll, Plain Truth, January 1994 – refers to sin 24 times, “Will God Forgive Me?” Neil Earle, Plain Truth, March 1994 – refers to sin 31 times, “Falling for Sin,” Paul Kroll, Plain Truth, April 1994 – refers to sin 54 times, “The Miracle of Rebirth,” Paul Kroll, Plain Truth, May-June 1994 – refers to sin 59 times. Plainly, references to sin became increasingly prolific in WCG literature, while the definition of sin disappeared.

221. NUDE ART

Does Not Measure up to God's Standards or Acceptable?

OLD TEACHING:

“God CLOTHED man! God intended man to KEEP CLOTHED!”

“God wills that we wear clothes – that we do not expose the sex region of the body – as a matter of decorum and propriety, and to avoid temptation that could lead to sinful wrong use.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, The Missing Dimension in Sex, pp. 31-32

“Intentional seducing of the eye clearly flies in the face of God's command that we ‘flee sexual immorality.’”

“A man or woman who blatantly displays the charms intended by God as reserved for a marriage partner can hardly be said to be ‘fleeing sexual immorality.’ Take heed: You who dress and act in this manner are breaking the spirit of the Seventh Commandment. God will not hold you guiltless.”

“What God Says About Your Sex Life,” GN, Feb. 1983

“In modern education we find perpetuation of false values, the teaching of distorted history, warped psychology, *perverted arts* and sciences, worthless knowledge.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, The Wonderful World Tomorrow, p. 13

"In the world tomorrow the problem of the perversion of art will not exist."

"Today we are confronted with a mixture of human-devised values. As a result we must decide what is acceptable based on the standard of God's laws as revealed in his written Word – the Bible. God's laws, written in the Bible, were given to man to define what is good. Whatever in the arts blatantly infringes the Ten Commandments is not good art. One should never become engrossed in literature, movies, music or other art forms that openly revel in and promote lust, coveting, sexual perversions, violent behavior, and other evils forbidden in the Ten Commandments or other lesser laws."

Clayton Steep, "Art," PT, Aug. 1982

NEW TEACHING:

"One celebrated case of damaged art involved Michelangelo's painted scene on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel in Rome's Vatican Palace."

"The restoration of Michelangelo's fresco is an apt metaphor for God spiritually cleaning his human creation of sin."

*Paul Kroll, "The Miracle of Rebirth,"
PT, May-June 1994*

Author's note: The above article is illustrated with photos of the interior of the Sistine Chapel—including hundreds of the nude figures painted by Michelangelo.

222. GOD BEINGS AND HOLY SPIRIT

Explained by Mr. Armstrong or Unfinished Business?

OLD TEACHING:

"In the beginning there existed two all-knowing, all-powerful, all-perfect SUPERBEINGS. Each possessed supreme MIND and CREATIVE power. One is called 'the Word,' the other is called 'God.' But the Word... was also God – though a separate Personage."

*Herbert W. Armstrong, "Why Humans Were Put on the Earth,"
Youth 83, Mar.-Apr. 1983*

"Here are TWO Personages, yet both are GOD. How is that? A man named David Smith may have a son named Paul. But Paul, though a separate individual, is also a Smith."

"The English 'God' is translated from the Hebrew *Elohim* – a uniplural [collective] noun. It is uniplural in the same sense as the words 'family' and 'church' – denoting more than one component forming the whole. Not two Gods – but ONE God consisting of more than one Person."

"*The Holy Spirit* is the spirit (not Ghost) that *emanates out from both God and Christ* everywhere in the universe. Through His Holy Spirit, God

projects Himself, in spirit, everywhere in the universe – yet both God and Christ have form and shape, even as man.”

*Herbert W. Armstrong, “7 Proofs of God’s True Church,”
PT, Feb. 1979*

“...Christ prayed that the Church would be kept as ONE, even as He and the Father are one. The Church is composed of many members, yet ONE BODY. And its members, more than one, are to be kept ONE in the sense of harmony and unity in love and purpose, as Christ and the Father are one – and they form ONE CHURCH, even as the Father and Christ form ONE GOD – yet more than one member, or one person.”

*Herbert W. Armstrong, “Why Christ Died—and Rose Again!”,
GN, Mar. 1983*

“A husband and wife are ONE FLESH, yet two persons.”

*Herbert W. Armstrong, “Is Jesus God?”,
GN, Dec. 1982*

“*The Spirit of the Father is also the Spirit of Christ.*”

“One thing more, the Holy Spirit is divine, spiritual love – the love of GOD flowing into you from God Almighty – through the living Christ!”

“You must go to God to obtain that kind of love. That is a love He gives you through the living Christ. That is His own love. It emanates directly from Him.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, What Do You Mean...Salvation?, pp. 22, 23

“This Spirit emanates from the very Person – the spirit Body of the Father. It begets us with His very life – GOD life – eternal life, on entering into us, precisely as a human ovum is begotten with the human father’s life when the sperm-cell from his body impregnates the ovum.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Missing Dimension in Sex, p. 40

“...Jesus said...‘I am the vine, ye are the branches.’ ...The LIFE (spirit life impregnated now) is received along with all other ‘branches’ from the main vine – Christ, the Head of the CHURCH!”

“The CHURCH is like a human mother who is pregnant.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Mystery of the Ages, p. 271

“This is so clearly brought out in the Bible, in I John 5:11-12: ‘And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.’ ...Our contact with Him through His Spirit is the umbilical cord through which we are partaking of eternal life from Him.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Just What Do You Mean – Born Again?, p. 28

“Whenever we become members of God’s begotten Family, we receive a portion – a seed or germ – of the Father’s Holy Spirit.”

"Added to the germ which proceeds from the Father there must be a continuous supply of Spirit sent from Jesus Christ so that our minds grow spiritually..."

"This begettal and growth through the Holy Spirit most people have never understood."

"From one end of the Bible to the other we are told about the shape and parts of each member of the God family."

"Even though the Father and the Son are in definite locations with respect to each other, spirit proceeds from them and fills the entire universe much like air fills everything on earth!"

Herman L. Hoeh, "How You Can Be Imbibed With the Power of God!", 1972

NEW TEACHING:

"Now, look what happens if you have one God the Father, one Lord Jesus Christ, each a cooperative, eternal, independent, separate spirit – marvelous harmony. But then you read in Scripture that some of you have the Holy Spirit of God that comes from the Father. Then you read that you have the Spirit of Christ in you. Now I ask, do you have two separate, eternal, independent, cooperative Spirits in you?... You see, there's something wrong there."

"Mr. Armstrong understood this. He said there is one Spirit. He would have been appalled to think it was otherwise. He never gave any reason to believe it, but he left the explanation unfinished, because he couldn't figure out how to explain that there is one Spirit if there are two Persons. In other words, the traditional teaching of the Church was unfinished business."

"He never resolved the problem of [how] the Logos and the Almighty, if Persons, which he understood them to be, could be one Spirit."

"God is both Thinker and Thought. As Thinker, He is Father. As Thought, He is Son." **[Author's note: See change 223 for a fuller explanation of this new idea.]**

*H.L. Hoeh, "Unfinished Business...," Sermon played
in all churches, Mar. 5, 1994*

"The Church taught that the Father and Son are two entities, not *separate* entities...Mr. Armstrong avoided the word *separate* and knew there was one Spirit. However, he could not resolve the problem of 'God,' for he said God is *impersonal* (a kingdom, later a family), of two beings who are one impersonal God, and each being a God being...Our past teaching erred."

Herman L. Hoeh, Letter to Member, Aug. 23, 1994

Author's note: A quick review of the old teaching portion of this change will show Mr. Armstrong certainly *did* use the word *separate* in reference to the Father and the Son, and that he said they were persons, not "impersonal."

223. CHRIST AS LOGOS

He was the Spokesman of God or the Thought of God?

OLD TEACHING:

“...YHVH...is the name, used in the Hebrew, for the same Person in the God Family that appears as *Logos* in the Greek (John 1:1-3) in the New Testament, and is translated ‘the Word.’ Its meaning is the One of the God Family who is the spokesman, by whom God (the Father of the God Family) created all things. It is the One who came in human flesh, Jesus Christ.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Why Were You Born?, p. 6

NEW TEACHING:

“*Logos* really means ‘the thought or utterance’ of God. ‘Spokesman’ is not a correct rendering of *Logos*.”

“*Logos* is one with the Father because he is the thought of the Father and thus proceeds from the Father. The Father’s thought became flesh in the person of Jesus Christ in order to save humanity.”

David G. Hunsberger, WCG PCD, Sep. 6, 1993

224. “US” IN GENESIS 1:26

Refers to God Beings or to God and the Angels?

OLD TEACHING:

“Now notice, in verse 21 of Genesis 1: ‘And God created great whales... after their kind, and every winged foul after his kind.’ Then in verse 25: ‘And God make the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind...’ And then in verse 26: ‘And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness...’

“This says plainly that God made whales after the whale kind – birds after the bird kind; cattle after the cattle kind, chimps after the chimp kind – but God made MAN after the GOD kind!”

“And notice, please, Elohim did not say ‘Let *me* make man after *my* kind’ but ‘Let *us* make man in *our* image, after *our* likeness.’ It is the GOD FAMILY speaking.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Why Were You Born?, p. 6

NEW TEACHING:

“‘Let us make man in our image, in our likeness,’ God declared (Genesis 1:26).”

“The first point that many readers notice is the use of the plurals ‘us’ and ‘our.’ These words are a reference to God and the angelic host in God’s heavenly court.”

*Clayton Steep, “In the Image of God,”
PT, May-June 1994*

"In...the Old Testament...in four passages...God uses 'us.' What's the significance of these exceptional passages? Mr. Kossey suggests that the answer is found in the context of humans interacting with the divine realm."

*Joseph Tkach Jr., "Church Administration,"
PGR, May 10, 1994*

225. CHRIST AT HIS CRUCIFIXION

Forsaken by God or Not?

OLD TEACHING:

"When Jesus cried out, 'Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?' (Matt. 27:46), He was not merely mouthing empty, emotional words."

"His death paid the penalty for every sin committed on this planet. But in paying this penalty, He had to take all these sins on His shoulders... (II Cor. 5:21)."

"Even if He were forced to abandon His own beloved Son, God the Father was not willing to compromise with sin."

"That's the way it had always been: 'I will forsake them, and I will hide my face from them...And I will surely hide my face in that day for all the evils which they shall have wrought' (Deut. 31:17-18)."

"God, therefore, was left with no alternative. If Jesus had become 'sin' for us, then God had to forsake Him."

"It should reinforce in our minds that sin – any transgression of God's spiritual law – will result in an estrangement from our heavenly Father."

Philip Stevens, "Forsaken!", GN, Mar. 1981

"Outside the city walls, at the Place of the Skull (Golgotha), Jesus was nailed to the cross. He was humiliated, spat upon, ridiculed, and jeered at."

"More than that, because at that moment he had taken on himself our sins, in order to pay the penalty in our stead, he was forsaken by even his Father, God."

Herbert W. Armstrong, Mystery of the Ages, p. 212

NEW TEACHING:

"Who can ever forget the words that Jesus Christ spoke while he was on the cross, 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?' (Matthew 27:46)."

"In times past, some of us have thought that God did forsake Christ then because Christ became 'sin for us' (2 Corinthians 5:21)."

"Jesus took on himself the punishment for all of our sins."

"In essence Christ was affirming that Psalm 22 was a Messianic psalm, and that just as God had not forsaken David (though to David it appeared he had), God surely was not forsaking his Messiah..."

“The truth of the matter is that our Father never forsook his righteous and perfect Son, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.”

David Gray, “*Did God Forsake Christ on the Cross?*”,
Reviews You Can Use, Mar.-Apr. 1994

226. PASSOVER SYMBOLS

Memorial of Christ’s Death or Also a Communion?

OLD TEACHING:

“[I Cor. 11:26] says ‘as often’ as we observe [Passover], ‘ye do show the Lord’s death till he come.’ And Jesus commanded, ‘This do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me’ (verse 25). We do it in remembrance of THE LORD’S DEATH – a memorial of His death.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, *How Often Should We Partake of the Lord’s Supper?*, p. 9

“The Passover was *transformed* by many false teachers from an annual memorial in memory of the death of Jesus Christ into a weekly memorial in honor of his resurrection, which occurred on Saturday.”

“Yet others were introducing for the first time the idea of a Sunday resurrection. [Author’s note: See also changes 82, 86 and 227.] Now observe what happened.”

“The Council of Nicaea decided...that Easter must be celebrated on Sunday and that the Passover must be forbidden.”

“Without regard to these decisions, many continued faithful.”

“Now heed what history says – heed what God says!”

Herman L. Hoeh, “*4,000 Years of Easter!*”, *GN, Mar. 1986*

NEW TEACHING:

“The [Passover] service is *not* simply a memorial.”

“There is a special sense of *communion* in the New Testament Passover service, which is much more than a memorial. It is a sharing in Jesus Christ.”

Joseph Tkach Jr., “*Church Administration*,” *PGR, Mar. 9, 1994*

227. NEW TESTAMENT PASSOVER

**Old Testament Passover With New Symbols
 or Completely New Ceremony?**

OLD TEACHING:

“Now notice Exodus 12:17, 24. The Passover was instituted an ordinance forever. Some will say circumcision was not done away, but was changed – today it is in the heart (Romans 2:29). In both cases God meant forever, and so, as we have seen, at the last Passover Jesus changed the manner of observance of this ordinance. No longer do we kill a lamb and eat it, since the Lamb of God has been sacrificed once and for all. Instead, we take

the bread, symbolizing His broken body, and the wine, symbolizing His shed blood, as a memorial, looking back to his death.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, How Often Should We Partake of the Lord's Supper?, pp. 7-8

NEW TEACHING:

“Despite the fact that Jesus called his Last Supper a Passover, he evidently did not mean that it was a Passover in the traditional sense. This is evident from its timing (at the beginning of the Passover day as opposed to the beginning of the Feast of Unleavened Bread) and the absence of most traditional elements associated with the Jewish festival.”

Ralph Orr, “The New Testament Passover,” PGR, Dec. 29, 1993

“Let's please remember that the New Testament Passover is *not* merely the Old Testament ceremony with different symbols. *It is a completely new ceremony*, in which the memorial of Christ's death is a symbolic meal. The Jews had their Passover meal in the evening after the lambs were killed. Now the Church has a superior meal.”

J. Tkach Jr., “Church Administration,” PGR, Feb. 9, 1994

228. NEW TESTAMENT SABBATH

Old Testament Sabbath Without Rituals or Entirely New Sabbath?

OLD TEACHING:

“Many have used the deceptive argument that God never MADE the Sabbath until He gave the Ten Commandments at Mt. Sinai. But [Exodus 20:11] says plainly that the seventh day of creation week...was, then, the SABBATH DAY.”

“Because of transgressions – that is, because the spiritual Law was being broken – God added, 430 years after Abraham, through Moses, a material and physical law of rituals and ceremonies (Gal. 3:16-19). That law was a PHYSICAL law, including animal sacrifices. It was a SUBSTITUTE Christ's sacrifice and the Holy Spirit...When the REALITY came...the substitute ended.”

“The Pharisees of Jesus' day observed some 65 stern regulations of ‘do's and don'ts’ which the human rabbis had instituted to make Sabbath observance a ‘yoke of bondage.’ Jesus Christ swept those human regulations aside.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Which Day Is the Christian Sabbath?, 1976

“...notice Jesus' own inspired words... ‘Think not [although many do want to think this] that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill’ (Matthew 5:17)...Jesus, in His own life, filled to the full and perfectly performed the spiritual intent and purpose of God's law...”

“Why did he do this? To do away with God’s laws by this means? That’s what men will try to tell you!”

Roderick C. Meredith, “Modern Christianity VS Christ,” 1973

Q. “I feel that your insistence on Sabbath keeping is an affront to the *liberty* of the gospel of Christ. I fail to see why Christians ‘have to’ keep the *ritual* law as given in the Pentateuch, but I agree that the moral law is unchangeable. As Christians, we must love God and our neighbors, for ‘love is the *fulfilling* of the law.’”

A. “First of all, the Sabbath is not a part of a *ritualistic* law. It is one of the basic Ten Commandments...”

“Jesus Himself talked about the *liberty* of the gospel. He said: ‘And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you *free*...Whosoever committeth sin [transgression of the law] is the servant of sin.’”

“It is *fulfilling* God’s law of love to keep the Sabbath. ‘For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments [including the Sabbath] are not grievous.’”

“Questions and Answers About the Sabbath,” WCG Article Reprint, 1978

NEW TEACHING:

“Paul K. Jewett eloquently states: ‘...the Messianic Sabbath, the *fulfillment* of the Sabbath rest of the Old Testament, has broken into our world...’”

“Jesus *fulfilled* the law just as he said he would (Matthew 5:17.)”

“David H. Field writes: ‘...Jesus...claimed that the Sabbath...was pointing straight at him!...The great Old Testament Scriptures which forecast the good news of man’s redemption in the language of sabbatical release had reached their *fulfillment* in him...’”

“The messianic Sabbath transcended the Sabbath of legalism.”

“Many of Jesus sharpest conflicts with the Jews erupted over his reinterpretation of the Sabbath.”

“The laws and rituals and prophecies in the Old Testament pointed to him.”

“...as Lord of the Sabbath, Jesus claimed *freedom*.”

“Christians rejoice in the *freedom* Jesus brought. They see through the trap of relying on rituals to earn God’s favor.”

“Christians continue to celebrate the Sabbath, not as the Jews did, but in the spiritual *freedom* brought by Jesus Christ.”

Day of Renewal, pp. 6, 7, 10, 14

Author’s note: The very title of the above quoted Sabbath booklet, *Day of Renewal*, made a statement in itself. The old booklet quote above under “old teaching” also makes its own statement, which is that Christians keep the Sabbath and no other day. The new booklet stresses over and over the “*freedom*” to be found in the Sabbath. It

stresses over and over “celebrating” the Sabbath. It stresses one should “luxuriate” in the Sabbath. The very last line of the book says all should “bask” in the Sabbath. It stresses, on page 19, no list of “dos and don’ts” should ever govern the Sabbath. At the same time, the booklet repeatedly stresses to get out and do good works and acts of compassion for others. Anyone who seriously observes the Sabbath is either a legalist, a Pharisee, worshipping the law, or self-righteous. On page 18, the Ten Commandments are called God’s moral law. Mr. Armstrong always called it a *spiritual* law as well. Finally, the end of the book makes clear that our observance of the Sabbath earns us no divine favor with God. Obviously, this is because (Sabbath) righteousness is imputed to Christians by faith, with works playing no part (stressed on page 5). Interestingly, pages 5 and 6 picture Christ and the Father *working* on the Sabbath and setting an example for us in this way. That is, we should be out doing the “work of Christ”—namely, helping “redeem sinful humanity” (page 6). Since there are to be no “dos and don’ts,” this concept, along with most all of the rest of the book, can be interpreted any way one wants! The booklet contains nothing about the Sabbath being a sign of the true people of God or even uses any scriptures to prove that the Sabbath is commanded to be kept now. The ridiculous humanly-devised term “Messianic Sabbath” is used to attack God’s Sabbath. It’s a Protestant invention referred to by a Protestant theologian on page 6 of the booklet. Christians came to have two choices: they may keep, “luxuriate in,” “bask in,” etc., the “Messianic Sabbath” of freedom that Christ supposedly brought, or keep the true Sabbath described throughout the Old Testament, and in this booklet derided as the Sabbath of legalism governed by “dos and don’ts” best depicted by the Pharisees who worshipped it and ruined it. *In the end, the Sabbath was thrown out altogether.*

229. SUNDAY KEEPING

Satan-Inspired Disobedience or God-Inspired Obedience?

OLD TEACHING:

“The Sabbath...is the one test commandment – the one even professing so called Christians refuse to obey. In I John 2:4 we read: ‘He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.’”

“As the Sabbath is the identifying sign of the people of God (Jew, gentile or any race), so Sunday is the mark that identifies the AUTHORITY of false Christianity – ‘BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS’ – because Sunday carries no other authority. The substitution of the pagan Sunday to counterfeit God’s Sabbath is a primary stratagem of

Satan in deceiving all nations, and counterfeiting God's TRUTH as well as God's Church."

Herbert W. Armstrong, Where Is the True Church?, p. 24

NEW TEACHING:

"Because we do not accept the traditional Christian reasoning that the apostles changed the observance of the Fourth Commandment to the first day of the week, we have tended to regard all Sunday-keeping Christians as children of the devil."

"Many of us even know people who are indeed *dedicated Christians*, yet are not in our Church."

"...we should not assume that people who faithfully keep Sunday never make any sacrifices to do so. The film *Chariots of Fire* depicted only one small example of sacrifices people have made to remain faithful to *God in Sabbath-keeping*, insofar as *God* has given them understanding."

"God is faithful to all who truly trust in him, and he does not forget their sacrifices of faith in obedience to him, even if their understanding is not quite perfect."

Joseph W. Tkach, Letter to Ministry, PGR, Apr. 26, 1994

Author's note: The astonishing quote above revealed that the WCG administration came to believe that SUNDAY-KEEPERS are dedicated, *obedient Christians*, that their Sunday-keeping is *faithful Sabbath-keeping*, and that *God* is the One who has given them their understanding.

"Do you condemn people as children of the devil just because they *keep the fourth Commandment on the wrong day*?"

"To *keep the Sabbath on Sunday*...is not the same thing as being in rebellion against *God*..."

"It is obvious, from the fruits, that some Sunday-keeping Christians have the Holy Spirit. It is simply not right to say that their lack of understanding about the day of *Sabbath-keeping* means they are in utter rebellion against *God*..."

Joseph W. Tkach, Letter to WCG field minister, Spring 1994

230. SIGN BETWEEN GOD AND HIS PEOPLE

The Sabbath or Faith in Christ?

OLD TEACHING:

"God commanded His people to keep His Sabbath as a sign."

"But HOW does the Sabbath IDENTIFY God – how does it point to the True God, rather than the false? Does not Sunday do just as well?"

"**POSITIVELY NO!!**"

“It was on the seventh day of that creation week that He rested from the work of creation. Not Sunday, the first day of the week.”

“CREATION is the *PROOF* of God – of His existence. It – the act of creating – identifies Him!”

“The Sabbath also was given as a *SIGN* which identifies WHO are the *PEOPLE* of God and who are NOT! [Exodus 31:13.]”

“THE SABBATH COMMAND IS THE ONLY one of the ten which is a *SIGN* identifying WHO are the real and true Christians today! It is the real *TEST* Command! The people of the world are willing to acknowledge the other nine Commandments – but the Sabbath Command is the one they positively *REBEL* against!”

“It IDENTIFIES those who have surrendered their will to God – who OBEY God, regardless of persecution or cost!”

“‘Yes,’ says the rebellious one, who would argue his way out of obedience, ‘but it is between God and the children of ISRAEL.’”

*Herbert W. Armstrong, Which Day Is the Christian Sabbath?,
pp. 53, 54, 57, 59*

“As the Sabbath is the identifying sign of the people of God (Jew, gentile or any race), so Sunday is the mark that identifies the AUTHORITY of false Christianity – ‘BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS’ – because Sunday carries no other authority.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Where Is the True Church?, p. 24

NEW TEACHING:

“John wrote: ‘Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well’ (I John 5:1). Accordingly, the Worldwide Church of God does not consider its membership to be all there is to the Body of Christ. Our position is that any person who has the Holy Spirit is a child of God, regardless of the church he or she belongs to, and we recognize that God works where he pleases. This is different from the position once held by the Church.”

*David Hulme WCG Director of Communications and Public Affairs,
letter to James Walker of the Watchman Fellowship, June 26, 1993*

“Your last verse was Exodus 31:16-17. You wrote: ‘Where that sign [Sabbath-keeping] is absent, no other form of religion can make people right with God.’”

“Would Paul agree with you that *faith in the Son of God* is not the *identifying sign* of God’s people?”

“It is obvious, from the fruits, that some Sunday-keeping Christians have the Holy Spirit.”

Joseph W. Tkach, Letter to WCG field minister, Apr. 12, 1994

“...we have tended to regard all Sunday-keeping Christians as children of the devil.”

“God does, however, make it our business not to condemn others who believe in his Son.”

“It is the *Holy Spirit* that *identifies* and unifies the true Church of God...”

“Therefore, we should understand that we do not form all there is of the true Church of God.”

“Well, then. Why can’t I just go to another church where I won’t have the problems of Sabbath-keeping?” one person asked...God expects us to be faithful with what we understand, even if he has not given that understanding to others.”

*Joseph W. Tkach, Letter to Ministry,
PGR, Apr. 26, 1994*

“What makes any church a valid church? *Faith in Jesus Christ.*”

Joseph W. Tkach, Letter to Member, Feb. 9, 1994

“*While the Sabbath was a sign or seal for Israel, the Christian’s identity involves faith and belief in Jesus Christ as Lord.*”

Day of Renewal, p. 9

Author’s note: A sermon video by Joseph W. Tkach was played in all churches on Pentecost, May 15, 1994. In the sermon, he stated the Sabbath was a sign between God and ancient Israel in the Old Testament, but that the sign between God and His New Testament Church is the Holy Spirit. This was also being commonly stated in WCG regional conferences.

“There are Christians in the Catholic Church, there are Christians in the Methodist Church, there are Christians in the Baptist Church, there are Christians all around this world!”

““Oh, how can there be, because the Sabbath is a sign between God and us, and that’s what sets us apart as Christians?” ...The Jews have the Sabbath and the Holy Days as their sign. Are they Christians?”

“Someone will say, ‘Well, what about those people who are observing the Sabbath on Sunday?’ If God hasn’t revealed to them the importance of seeing the difference between Saturday and Sunday is that going to jeopardize their salvation if they have faith in Christ?”

Joseph W. Tkach, Sermon given in Atlanta, Georgia, Dec. 17, 1994

“...we no longer condemn Christians who have chosen Sunday as their day of gathering together for their services to worship and praise God. Christianity is defined by the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit in the individual believer, not necessarily by outward customs or practices in group worship.”

David G. Hunsberger, WCG PCD Letter to Member, Nov. 18, 1994

“How sad that some among us were actually upset and angry to learn that there are true Christians in other churches besides ours. That in itself is an indicator of how far from Christ some of us have become – to the point that some of us actually find it unpleasant to know that God has called others besides us to salvation!”

“Isn’t that selfish, arrogant attitude one that pervades Christian churches? Many churches believe that they and they alone are the truly faithful and obedient fellowship of believers. And just like so many of the others, we have been guilty of the same *sin*.”

“There are Christian churches, congregations and Bible societies that are also, just as we are, doing God’s work in this dark world.”

“But as I have explained often, salvation is not in Sabbath and Holy Day keeping; salvation comes only by the generous grace of God and only through faith in Jesus Christ.”

“We should be able to exemplify the kingdom of God by extending the right hand of fellowship to believers who are different from ourselves.”

“But, true to human nature, some of us have allowed these blessings [the Sabbath and Holy Days] to become a snare by becoming arrogant and self-righteous about them...And, I’m sorry to say, it is one of the very things some among us have chosen not to repent of.”

“...we must not condemn and reject Christians God has called into other fellowships and given other tasks. I have explained before that the Sabbath was given as a sign of the special covenant relationship between God and his people, Israel. But the sign of God’s people in the New Testament is the Holy Spirit in them, expressing itself in love...”

“God will work with them as he sees fit.”

*Joseph W. Tkach, Letter to the Ministry,
PGR, Oct. 18, 1994*

“Do [we] claim to be the one true Church?”

“The one ‘true’ Church is the Body of Christ, made up of all believers who are called by God and in whom the Holy Spirit abides. It is not limited to corporate entities or any single church organization. God works where he wills, and it is not the place of any church to limit God’s work to itself (Mark 9:38-40).”

We’re Often Asked (1994), p. 5

“More than a third of the world is Christian, making Christianity the religion with the largest number of adherents in the world.”

One in Three Are Christian,” PT, Oct. 1994

“Africa not only has some of the world’s poorest countries, it also has some of the most Christian ones. An estimated 327 million Christians live in Africa...”

*John Halford, “The Challenge of Africa,”
PT, Nov.-Dec. 1994*

"How can we say there are many Christians outside the Worldwide Church of God?"

"It might help to imagine yourself holding a 10-meter pole. You take the pole and cut off 1 meter. Now you have two poles. One is 9 meters long, the other 1 meter. Stand them on end beside each other. in comparison to each other, which of the poles is little? The 1-meter pole, of course! That 1-meter pole represents 10 percent of the original pole. So 10 percent can be little."

"Therefore, if 10 percent of the world's population were converted, the Church would still be little and the world would still be deceived. With the world's population soon to exceed 6 billion, 10 percent of that figure is 600 million. Yes, 600 million can still be little in a world of 6 billion."

"This figure reminds me of John's vision of an innumerable multitude of converted (Revelation 7:9). That multitude is still a little flock living in a deceived world."

"Is 10 percent too big a figure? Then let's choose 1 percent. One percent of 6 billion is 60 million, still a hefty sum."

"...it seems evident from the Scriptures *and from logic* that Christ's little flock is many times bigger than we thought."

Ralph Orr, "How Little Is Jesus' Flock?", Reviews You Can Use, May-June 1995

"Concluding the conference, Mr. Tkach Jr. spoke about...why dissident groups are not biblically viable alternatives to the Body of Christ."

Paul Monteith, 'Mr. Tkach Outlines Vision,' WN, June 14, 1994

Author's note: Although the WCG administration came to believe that there are hundreds of millions of Christians and hundreds of churches forming the "Body of Christ," it continued to make an exception when referring to groups like The Restored Church of God (see change 103)—the only Church on Earth today which still holds to *all* of the biblical truths taught by Mr. Armstrong and has changed nothing. Once again, could anything be made more plain than from whom this persecution ultimately originates?

231. SABBATH BREAKING

A Reason Christ was Crucified or Not That Important to God?

OLD TEACHING:

"My sermon topic had been announced. [The visiting minister] knew I was going to speak on the subject of God's Sabbath. In his prayer this young preacher did his best to belittle me, discredit everything he thought I could say in my sermon, and given the impression I was not preaching the gospel."

"'I thank Thee, O Lord,' he prayed in a strong voice, 'that we have a CHRIST to worship, and not a day! Help us, O Lord, to preach CHRIST, and Him crucified – not about days and laws. Help us to be like the Apostle Paul,

who said, "I am determined to know nothing among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified."'"

"As he prayed, I realized he was trying to knock my sermon into some kind of a cocked hat before I could start preaching it – and that unless I had the right answer his prayer would cause many to be prejudiced, and to reject everything I would say. As he prayed, I prayed desperately, asking God to put the right answer in my mind. God did! Instantly I knew what to say."

"I am glad to know that Mr...(I don't remember his name) says he is determined to know nothing but Jesus Christ, and Him crucified, for I, too, am of the same determination. I am going to PREACH Jesus Christ, and Him crucified tonight! But to do that, one must first know WHY Jesus Christ had to be crucified!"'

"...I wonder," I continued, 'if people realize that SIN is the transgression of God's LAW – and that Jesus Christ was CRUCIFIED because you people have been transgressing His holy Sabbath! DON'T YOU PROFANE WHAT IS HOLY TO GOD ANY MORE!"'

Autobiography of Herbert W. Armstrong, Volume 1, 1986, pp. 511-512

NEW TEACHING:

"...you want to say that unless someone understands the Sabbath commandment exactly the same way you do, regardless of the person's faith in Jesus and life of dedication to obeying and serving him, that person is not a Christian. You don't care about the fruit of the Spirit in that person's life. *You don't care about how God views it*, or what the Scripture tells us about how a person is saved...To keep the Sabbath on Sunday...is not the same thing as being in rebellion against God..."

"It is obvious, from the fruits, that some Sunday-keeping Christians have the Holy Spirit. It is simply not right to say that their lack of understanding about the day of Sabbath-keeping means they are in utter rebellion against God..."

"That is the attitude and spirit we have had, however, and God is not pleased with it. We have misused...the Sabbath, by letting it become a source of pride and self-righteousness..."

"Please pray for a humble and understanding heart. Ask God to help you see where you might be looking at these things improperly. Ask him to help you be teachable, and to see *his will, his mind, and his priorities.*"

Joseph W. Tkach, Letter to WCG field minister, Apr. 12, 1994

"To disagree is perfectly normal...But Paul is telling us that, on issues other than life-changing faith in Jesus Christ, we need to refrain from condemnation of our brothers."

Joseph W. Tkach, Letter to Ministry, PGR, Apr. 26, 1994

"In our church circles, questions are sometimes asked about folks who do not keep Sabbath...or who endorse other doctrines...that are, *in our opin-*

ion, not taught in the Bible. The question goes, 'If these people are *acceptable to God*, then why should we keep Sabbath...?'"

"The practical side that we want God's best blessings..."

"The Sabbath is a gift of God to humanity...Refusal to accept gifts from our Friend can only put a *strain on relationships* and deprive us of blessings. Why would we want to do that?"

Calvin Burrell, "If Other Christians Don't, Why Must We?",

Day of Renewal (USA: WCG, 1994),

pp. 15, 16. Footnote, p. 15 "Calvin Burrell is General Conference president of the COG (Seventh Day)."'

Author's note: Incredible! Sabbath rejection became merely refusing a gift and would only "strain our relationship" with God? This is a ludicrous statement on top of the fact that it comes from the president of a dead (Sardis) church (so pronounced by Christ in Rev. 2). If Sunday keepers' lack of understanding on various points, including Sabbath obedience, is merely because *God has not given them this understanding* (see change 229), then God is denying most "Christians" His "best blessings." This would be gross injustice and respect of persons on God's part.

In a sermon video by Joseph W. Tkach played in all churches on Pentecost, 1994, it was stated that Christ didn't have to keep the Sabbath, and Mr. Tkach asked how we could have been so shallow to think so. For emphasis, he held up lesson 31 of the old Correspondence Course that said we had to keep the Sabbath.

232. CONTEXT OF ROMANS 14

Disputes Over Days of Fasting or Over Sabbath and Holy Days?

OLD TEACHING:

"Many people are confused over the meaning of Romans 14:5-6. At first glance it may seem as though this scripture says it makes no difference what day we keep holy unto God."

"It was merely a question of the days upon which many voluntarily abstained from certain foods. Paul was not even referring to God's Holy Days!"

"...Jews and Gentiles both practiced semi-fasts on particular days of each week or month...See *Hastings Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*."

"There is nothing here referring to the Sabbath or the Holy Days of God which Paul in other scriptures commanded to be observed by the Gentiles."

NEW TEACHING:

“Another part of spiritual strength is to take the attitude Paul admonishes us to have in Romans 14:1: ‘Accept him whose faith is weak, without passing judgment on disputable matters.’ This entire chapter tells us how we should think of others who have faith in Jesus, but disagree with us on matters of practice.”

“We have certain practices, like the Sabbath and the Holy Days, that are different from most other churches.”

“Jesus commands his disciples to love one another. Is he pleased with our condemnation of one another as we take it upon ourselves to ignore Paul’s warning: ‘Who are you to judge someone else’s servant? To his own master he stands or falls. And he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand’ (Romans 14:4).”

Joseph W. Tkach, Letter to Member, Feb. 9, 1994

“Romans 14:5-6 points out that all days belong to God, in the mind and actions of the worshipful Christian. Paul condemned the idea that works of any kind – including Sabbath keeping – earn us salvation, which comes only by God’s grace through faith in Jesus.”

Day of Renewal 1994, p. 7

“...we do not need to, and should not, judge one another with respect to the days we devote to God (Colossians 2:16; Romans 14:5).”

“Let’s also keep in mind what Paul instructed in Romans 14. We must allow for differences of understanding and practice within the Church, and we must not judge one another or be inconsiderate of one another over these things. Although these matters are often highly emotional issues, they are matters of personal choice and preference in worship, and therefore not the same as matters of law or command. They are, however, the general practice of our Church. In any case, whatever a person chooses to do in these matters, following Romans 14, he should do it ‘to the Lord.’”

*Joseph W. Tkach, Letter to Ministry,
PGR, Dec. 5, 1995*

“There is nothing in the new covenant that says we are required to keep the Sabbath according to the rules of the old covenant.”

“And Paul tells us in Romans 14 that we should not be involved in disputes over days.”

“Being Sabbath-keepers does not make us more righteous than other Christians.”

“...some, even most, Christians don’t keep the Sabbath. It’s true that the Sabbath is not commanded as part of the new covenant in the way it was under the old covenant. Not keeping it doesn’t make them any less Christian, as I’ve tried to make plain.”

*Joseph W. Tkach, Letter to Ministry,
PGR, Dec. 21, 1994*

233. FOLLOWING CHRIST'S LEAD

Means Holding to the Truth or Constantly Changing our Beliefs?

OLD TEACHING:

“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Do not be carried about with various and strange doctrines.”

Hebrews 13:8-9 (NKJV)

“But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. But as for you, continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them...”

II Timothy 3:13-14 (NKJV)

“Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless a falling away comes first...Therefore, brethren, stand fast and hold the traditions which you were taught, whether by word or our epistle.”

II Thessalonians 2:3, 15 (NKJV)

“REMEMBER the sabbath day, to keep it holy’ (Ex. 20:8). God said REMEMBER this day! So men have insisted on forgetting it – or trying to change it to a different day!”

“Christ said, in the sermon on the mount: ‘THINK NOT that I come to destroy the law,’ so professing Christians think He did come to destroy it!”

“Christ said, in the same sermon on the mount: ‘Swear not,’ so professing Christians universally hold up their right hands and swear.”

“Christ said: ‘LOVE your enemies,’ so professing Christians – *pretending to follow Him*, HATE their enemies and go to war to kill them.”

“Christ said: ‘Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect,’ so, professing Christians say, ‘It’s impossible to keep God’s Law, let alone to be perfect. Christ kept it in our stead, and then abolished it.’”

“Christ commands ‘DO!’ – and *His professed followers DON’T!*”

“Christ commands ‘DON’T’ and *His professed followers DO!*”

“Jesus Christ has not changed. He is the SAME, yesterday, today, and forever! (Heb. 13:8.)”

“You must choose between GOD’S ways, and MAN’S ways he falsely calls ‘Christian.’”

“My responsibility ends with TELLING you. I have cried aloud. I have lifted up my voice.”

“You must make your own decision, and what you sow you shall reap.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Which Day Is the Christian Sabbath?, pp. 44-46, 103, 107

“It is the duty of Christ’s true ministers (and how few today), to protect the begotten but yet unborn saints from false doctrines and from false ministers.”

“The parables show that the convert who does not grow in Spirit and character development will lose out. He represents one who ‘received Christ’ and considered that he was already ‘born again’ but did not think he needed to overcome, grow spiritually, or develop spiritual character. He thought he was ‘already saved.’ He said he didn’t believe in salvation by ‘works.’ What he didn’t realize is that while salvation is a free gift, we are rewarded according to our works (Matt. 16:27). But by doing nothing, he lost not only the reward, but he lost out on the free gift of eternal life.”

“Christ’s answer to such, when He returns with the Kingdom of God, is, ‘...cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ He failed utterly in God’s real purpose – reproducing in us the holy, righteous character that we may receive from God.”

“Satan’s ministers can quote Scripture – but they twist and distort it out of its intended contextual meaning.”

“The original twelve had been taught by Christ in person – and so also had Paul. Jesus Christ was the personal Word of God. The Bible is the written Word of God. It’s all the precise same truth and teaching, whether from Jesus in person, when on earth, or from the written Word of God. God’s apostle for our day was taught by the written Word of God – *the same identical teaching.*”

Herbert W. Armstrong, The Incredible Human Potential, pp. 83-84, 85, 113, 126

“And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write...I know your works. See I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, *have kept My word*, and *have not denied my name*. Indeed I will make those of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not, but lie – indeed I will make them come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you. Because you *kept my command to persevere*, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth. Behold, I come quickly! *HOLD FAST WHAT YOU HAVE*, that no one may take your crown.”

Revelation 3:7-11 (NKJV)

“God’s Word WARNS us that Satan is going about, today, as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour, KNOWING HE HAS BUT A SHORT TIME. The church is asleep (Matt. 25:5) but Satan, the adversary, is on the job! Jesus warned us of false doctrines that would appear in these last days, and that would DECEIVE many.”

“Beloved, BELIEVE NOT every spirit, but TRY the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world’ (I John 4:1).”

“Satan today is misleading, fooling, and cleverly deceiving thousands by giving ‘impressions,’ or dreams or ‘visions,’ until people say, ‘The Lord

told me' this or that, and call their impressions '*leadings of the Spirit*.' Remember, *Satan is a spirit who can lead, as well as God.*"

Herbert W. Armstrong, The "Tongues" Question, pp. 15, 16-17

"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."

"Satan has used and led, without their knowing it, even some of our ministers in past years."

"This very thing happened in the days of the apostle Paul and the original apostles."

"Brethren, do we think we are so superior to those of the first, second and third centuries that Satan could not have tried to pervert God's TRUTH today?"

"The END TIME has come! God has restored original TRUTH! HOW PRECIOUS IS IT TO YOU?"

"Apparently it is unhappily true that some willingly fall by the wayside and shall not continue on to enter into the KINGDOM OF GOD!"

Herbert W. Armstrong, "How Satan Injects False Doctrines,"
GN, Aug. 1979

NEW TEACHING:

Author's note: Where do "all these changes" leave you? After all, the WCG now teaches a gospel that makes it accursed (change 1), openly teaches the doctrine of antichrist (changes 20 and 21), and has formally and officially disfellowshipped the true God and set an unknown God before the Church (change 11). Does apostasy ever reverse itself? Will there be even more changes? You be the judge:

Snyder: "...As Dr. Tucker mentioned, shortly after the death of Herbert W. Armstrong, the present Pastor General of the Church, Joseph Tkach, put *everything* that we had, from a literature, doctrinal, and a publication stand-point, under review. And we are looking at all of those things right now... and there are *many* specific points that were previously made that the Church would not make in the same way today."

Question: "Ruth, what do you think as an outsider, looking at the WCG...? What doctrinal differences do you think will forever persist within the organization?"

Tucker: "...You know, Michael was on an interview some weeks ago, and a question was asked, 'Is nothing untouchable?' And he responded that, 'That is absolutely true. *There is nothing, there is no doctrinal issue that is not under review, that we won't potentially change.*'"

Question: "Michael, are you willing to reaffirm that? Is nothing untouchable?"

Snyder: "Well, yes, I am willing to reaffirm that...The doctrine is under review and we are trying to establish why we believe it. *Everything* is being looked at...we feel like *everything has to be on the table* to be honest..."

Michael Snyder, interview with WMUZ radio, Detroit, Michigan, Dec. 13, 1991

"The reason for my sermon being titled 'Unfinished Business...' is that this subject will be written upon again and again and as Roosevelt said, again."

"This is a booklet [*God Is...*] that represents all that the Church, for the present, wishes to say. In the same way, this material in *Statement of Beliefs* is all the Church for the present wish to state. The Church may officially believe a little more or it may not officially believe more..."

H.L. Hoeh, "Unfinished Business...," Sermon played in all churches, Mar. 5, 1994

"Some brethren feel that God's Church is always changing. You know, they are right."

"God has led me and many other headquarters ministers to examine our focus and approach to our understanding of God's Word."

"Brethren, we will continue to...change as Christ leads us."

"You should be able to understand that it isn't a case of 'there they go again, changing another doctrine,' but rather a matter of continuing to follow the lead of Jesus Christ."

"Personal from Joseph W. Tkach," WN, May 21, 1990

"Someone might say, 'I see the need to change when we're wrong, Mr. Tkach, but if we thought we were right before, but now see we were wrong, how can we be sure we are right this time?'"

"The answer to this question makes sense only if we walk in the humility of Jesus Christ. *Since we look to God to lead and guide us, we must at all times remain willing to undertake ever further change...*"

"Personal from Joseph W. Tkach," WN, June 24, 1991

"I have been accused of 'totally dismantling everything God gave the Church through Mr. Armstrong.'"

"Resistance to necessary change is exactly why the Pharisees, the Sadducees and the Zealots could not see what God had done in Jesus Christ."

"Let's continue to grow together...following in faith as God leads us into all truth through the Holy Spirit."

"Personal from Joseph W. Tkach," WN, July 22, 1991

"Jesus Christ has led the Church through some dramatic changes – a little more dramatic than some of us may have wanted. It would be simpler to take the path of least resistance and not make waves, but we are obligated to follow Christ as he leads us."

"Some have asked where we will go next?...Christ does not always reveal in advance where he will lead us..."

Joseph W. Tkach, PGR, May 10, 1994

234. UNITY

Based on True Doctrine or Blind Loyalty to Church Government?

OLD TEACHING:

“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. 113:1).”

“Did you ever stop to think how many things we believe and proclaim to the world that are contrary to the doctrines and teachings of all other churches calling themselves ‘Christian’?”

“NONE but God’s one and only TRUE CHURCH has the full knowledge God has revealed to His own Church.”

“And HOW has Christ provided that we all come to know, believe and speak ‘the same thing’? By psychological mind control? NEVER!”

“God put His TRUE DOCTRINES into His Church through His apostles BY THEIR WRITINGS.”

“Jesus brought me to see that what I had been taught in a Protestant church was false – the opposite of the Bible.”

“Personal by Herbert W. Armstrong,”
GN, Apr. 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!”

“They were...watering down the sacred and precious truths of Christ!”

“God, through this trial, is weeding out from our midst the liberals who did NOT believe or ‘speak the same thing.’”

“These deluded and misguided ‘scholars’ were in fact IGNORANT of the central truism: that *the ‘same thing’ we must all speak must be what CHRIST speaks...Not by compromising, watering down Christ’s teachings to satisfy rebellious liberals.*”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “...Christ Sets Church Back on Track Doctrinally,”
GN, Apr. 1979

“Satan has been striking at God’s Church *from within* and from without! And as...Paul said ‘...of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things...’”

“The one who primarily wrote the Systematic Theology Project later wrote, ‘My only goal in coordinating the project was to bring doctrinal consistency, stability and unity of the ministry’ – that is, *unity in watered-down doctrines that older loyal ministers did not and never would accept! THAT WAS NOT UNITY – IT WAS DIVISION!*”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “What Is a Liberal?”,
GN, Mar. 1979

“The thing is, whoever is the Apostle, whoever is guiding and putting the truth into the Church must be honest with the Word of God! Now, if you ever find me dishonest with the Word of God you reject me as God’s Apostle.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Bible Study on II Cor. 11, Tucson, Arizona, Dec. 6, 1980

NEW TEACHING:

“...there will be different perspectives in different administrations, different perspectives of an administration over time, but the Church is meant to be one, not to be divided in terms of competitive groups.”

“We have to realize that no human family, a husband and wife...always agree at every point on everything. But this does not mean...that those who may not have concurred necessarily must leave simply because they don’t agree. That simply makes no sense.”

“And the relationship of Christ to the Church is the relationship that is a husband/wife, you see? So we learn from experience what is very important, that we don’t make sudden emotional decisions and divorce ourselves from the leadership of Christ.”

“And if Christ is the head of the Church, then who are we to go somewhere else? It’s just that simple. And this is basic to problems of divorce in this world. Basic to the whole history of Christian division for centuries.”

Herman L. Hoeh, Sermon to be played in all WCG churches, Mar. 5, 1994

“You follow the current decisions, the current practices of the Church that Mr. Tkach is responsible for authorizing. If they’re wrong, Christ knows it perfectly. If they’re right, he still backs up the decision regardless of whether it’s right or wrong.”

“First of all, I’m going to play a tape, just an excerpt out of it, of the last sermon Mr. Armstrong gave, Feast of Trumpets, October the 19th, 1985, where he knew another pastor general would follow...‘Your faith must not be in me, it must be in Jesus Christ. He’s the Head of the Church – I’m not. And if I were not here it would be another who would become the Pastor General. And you will remain united and you will remain one. And your eternity depends on that. Everyone of you – don’t you forget it.’ Okay, you can turn that off. I wanted to give you that excerpt so you could hear Mr. Armstrong’s voice in the last sermon he gave, saying there would be another pastor general...you had better follow that pastor general...and, in fact, he said we must remain united and your eternity depends on it and don’t you forget it.”

“The one through who He backs up a decision is first the apostle and then those who remain loyal...If they will not support that...they’re not with it. And they have to learn to be unified, to be of one mind, to be of one purpose, so we have no division within the Church.”

Gerald Waterhouse, Sermon given at the Feast of Tabernacles, 1994

Author's note: It should be noted that the sentence Mr. Armstrong spoke immediately following the above quoted excerpt was this: "Because ten years ago this Church was very seriously, it's a matter of seven or eight years ago, still divided." Under "old teaching" above, we have Mr. Armstrong's definition of the false unity that was being pushed during this very time of the liberal 1970's that he was referring to: "...unity in watered-down doctrines that older loyal ministers did not and never would accept... *WAS NOT UNITY—IT WAS DIVISION!*" He also stated above that we should stay unified by not compromising with doctrine to satisfy rebellious liberals. Over 50 separate doctrines Mr. Armstrong discussed *in this same sermon* have been abandoned by the current administration! How outrageous that a church that has rejected Mr. Armstrong's teachings and posthumously branded him a heretic would try to keep members in their fold by quoting him out of context. Mr. Armstrong plainly intended that after his death, the true people of God would remain united in the true doctrines that he helped them learn!

235. BINDING AND LOOSING

Refers to Administrative Decisions or to Doctrine?

OLD TEACHING:

"Verse 19 of Matthew 16 states, 'Whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.' The Church was invested with certain powers and responsibilities."

"God's true ministers, however, have been given the authority to bind *only that which is in agreement with God's laws and which, in reality, would be bound by God.*"

"To guide His ministers in making the right decisions Christ gave them the 'keys' to the Kingdom of God. This is symbolic language, meaning that He gave them the knowledge of how to enter the Kingdom – the knowledge of *the way of life which leads to salvation*. Notice, in Luke 11:52, Christ reproved the lawyers of His day for suppressing the key of knowledge – hiding the way which leads to salvation and entrance into God's Kingdom."

WCG PCD Letter L228

"Why...do church leaders reject the authority of the Scriptures – yet attempt to ESTABLISH their authority on the authority they reject and deny – by quoting Matthew 16:18?"

Herbert W. Armstrong, Which Day Is the Christian Sabbath?, p. 12

“...even Christ’s apostle has no authority to SHUT OFF the authority above him. In God’s government, the one in lesser authority is still UNDER the authority of those over him. *Authority does not END at any point under God the Father.*”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “7 Proofs of God’s True Church,” PT, Sep. 1979

“The thing is, *whoever is the Apostle*, whoever is guiding and putting the truth into the Church *must be honest with the Word of God!* Now, if you ever find me dishonest with the Word of God *you reject me as God’s Apostle.*”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Bible study of II Cor. 11, given in Tucson, Arizona, Dec. 6, 1980

“What do most people do? Well...they’re just like little children that had funnels stuck in their head and the committee at the top of the church decides what the church is going to believe, and that’s their ready-made propaganda or their doctrine, and they go pouring it out a pitcher down the funnel into the brains of these people and they say, ‘Now, this is the way our church believes on this.’”

“Now the real people of God have forsaken all of that sort of thing and they look on God as the Supreme Authority. And how do you know what God says? Why, the Bible is His Word...and it is the authority over their lives and they obey it and they tremble before the Word of God.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “True Church,” WT Radio Broadcast, #9797

God’s instruction to ministers of local churches is this:

“I charge thee therefore before God...PREACH THE WORD; keep at it in season, out of season; REPROVE, REBUKE, EXHORT with all patience and doctrine” (II Tim. 4:1-2). He said the time would come when some in congregations ministered by GOD’S TRUE MINISTERS will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts heap to THEMSELVES teachers – turning away their ears from the TRUTH.”

“Brethren, do you realize what that means?”

“In God’s true Church, GOD has set His ministers in charge. He has given them AUTHORITY. *He has authorized them to bind and to loose.* He has told them to RULE – to preach the WORD which, like a sharp two-edged sword cuts both ways – is profitable for correction, reproof, instruction. But this shows the people would try to SELECT THEIR OWN pastor – ‘heap to THEMSELVES teachers.’ Not the teachers God set over them – those of THEIR choosing, who will show their kind of perverted ‘love’ by turning them away from the TRUTH, pleasing them with what they WANT to hear!”

“God’s true ministers WILL NEVER DO THAT!”

“God’s ministers will never allow local assemblies to become mere social clubs! Should the brethren HATE God’s minister when he properly uses God’s Word, and declares it boldly? If he does this, God will CHASTEN

many in the congregation through him. True, God says, 'Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous.'"

Herbert W. Armstrong, "Local Assemblies Are NOT Social Clubs!", GN, Oct., 1957

"How could this cult leader Jim Jones have induced so many hundreds, against the strongest human instinct, to rehearse, then at his word, calmly and obediently kill their children and themselves?"

"Is it possible that, with this man Jones dealing in magic or sorcery, as has been reported, he could have himself become demon possessed, and, under his influence, his followers could have opened their minds to demon possession? Jones himself is said to have undergone a total change in attitude and action in the last few years."

Herbert W. Armstrong, "Horrendous Mass Suicide," PT, Jan. 1979

NEW TEACHING:

"I've known [name] for many years...A lot of people don't disagree with authority as long as they're in charge."

"The keys are in the Church to open up the kingdom...but there has to be someone through whom Christ continues to lead in the use of these keys. So he said in the next breath: 'And whatsoever' (this is Matthew 16, verse 19) 'and whatsoever...' You know what 'so ever' means, that means 'whatsoever,' it means 'everything,' 'whatever you do.' 'Whatsoever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven. And whatsoever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.'"

"[God] binds and looses whatever the leader makes as a decision in the Church so we can all know what to follow. You follow the current decisions, the current practices of the Church that Mr. Tkach is responsible for authorizing. If they're wrong, Christ knows it perfectly; if they're right, he still backs up the decision regardless of whether it's right or wrong."

"The proof of the pudding is in what decision was made by Mr. Armstrong that's backed up in heaven in appointing the one to carry on."

"I've known [name] real well. I knew how much he understood government. I knew how loyal he was for a long time."

"Now if anyone leaves they have no evidence."

"Mr. Armstrong never appointed any of them."

"You'd better just follow every decision by the leader so when [Christ] comes to the leader you're with Him."

Gerald Waterhouse, Sermon given at the Feast of Tabernacles, 1994

Author's note: All of the changes to this point were PRIOR to the "New Covenant" understanding announced by Mr. Tkach in Atlanta in late December 1994. These last 45 changes are those that included and followed this point. It was not until this point that about 20,000 people left to form the largest "splinter" group. Of course,

many of these people, and their leaders, had long since unknowingly adopted many of the earlier heresies.

236. THE LAW

Still in Full Force and Effect or Done Away?

OLD TEACHING:

“There is just one thing, it seems, that all Satan’s ministers can agree upon. ‘God’s LAW,’ they chorus in unison, ‘is DONE AWAY!...They are BITTER against God’s law, and against the few who have courage today to proclaim the PLAIN TRUTH of God’s Word!’”

Herbert W. Armstrong “Why God Permits Suffering,” PT, May 1984

“And thus it is explained in James: ‘IF ye fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, ye do well’ (James 2:8).”

“The law is LOVE – and LOVE is the fulfilling of the law [Rom. 13:10]. Jesus fulfilled it, setting us an example that we, too, should fulfill the law. We fulfill it with LOVE – not any natural, carnal love in human nature, but ‘the love of GOD is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit’ (Rom. 5:5). The Holy Spirit in us is merely GOD’S LAW IN ACTION IN OUR LIVES!”

“Notice how like God it is! The Law is GOOD (Rom. 7:12). God is good.”

“The Law is HOLY (Rom. 7:12). GOD is holy!”

“The Law is JUST (Rom. 7:12). GOD is just!”

“The Law is SPIRITUAL (Rom. 7:14). GOD is spiritual!”

“The Law is PERFECT (Psalm 19:7). GOD is perfect!”

“The Law – including all His Commandments – is immutable, ETERNAL, stands fast FOREVER AND EVER (Psalm 111:7-8). And GOD is eternal!”

“Of course – for the Law is the very character, the very nature, of God! It is the WILL of God.”

*Herbert W. Armstrong, “How to Be Saved!”,
PT, July 1960*

“There is no mention of the abolition of God’s Law or His Holy Days. Nothing is done away in these verses. In fact, it is just the opposite. The very criticism the Colossians were receiving about their observance of these days proves they were keeping them. How could they be criticized ‘with regard to’ days they were not keeping?”

“And Paul is warning them not to return to or be influenced by their old pagan ways – the ways of those who hated God’s Law and His festivals.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Pagan Holidays—or God’s Holy Days—Which? (1976)

"After explaining that THE WAY of God's RIGHTEOUSNESS is THE WAY of God's Law, Paul was inspired to write: 'What then shall we say? That the Law is sin?'"

"When God inspired that question, He knew that multiple thousands of professing clergy of today's deceived 'Christianity' would be saying that God's Law is EVIL – it is BAD – it is a yoke of BONDAGE – that it is bad for us – that Jesus 'nailed it to His cross' – that that 'terrible LAW' is 'done away.' So God inspired the answer: 'By no means!'"

Herbert W. Armstrong, What do you mean—The Unpardonable Sin?, 1967, 1971, 1972

NEW TEACHING:

"What about old covenant practices like tithing, avoiding unclean meats, and keeping the Sabbaths and Holy Days?"

"...in each case, they have been *transformed* in the new covenant in the blood of Jesus Christ."

"Is the Sabbath an old covenant law? Certainly. It is part of the Ten Commandments, and the Ten Commandments formed the core of the old covenant."

Joseph W. Tkach, Letter to Ministry, PGR, Dec. 21, 1994

Author's note: It is worth noting that the system of the little horn (the Vatican or papacy) "shall think to change times and laws" (Dan. 7:25). It is fascinating that the Hebrew word translated as "change" really should be translated "transform."

"...the Sabbath and the Holy Days, along with the other ceremonial observances of the old covenant, are fulfilled in Christ and are not binding in their physical observances in the new covenant."

"Jesus is the fulfillment of the Sabbath and the Holy Days."

"...observance of the annual festivals is not a requirement for salvation. The Israelites were under the old covenant, before Christ came and fulfilled the law, and Christians are under the new covenant..."

Joseph W. Tkach, Letter to Ministry, PGR, Jan. 5, 1995

"Did Christ come to abolish the law or establish it?"

"Matthew 5:17 comes to mind, doesn't it?"

"In all of Jesus' words and deeds, in all of His acts and sayings, Jesus was not trying to abolish or establish the law. He showed through all of His words and deeds, that He was the Messiah and that He came to replace the law with Himself. Wrong question we had before. It's not about whether He came to establish or abolish it."

Earl Williams, Sermon #1 given in Atlanta, Georgia, Aug. 13, 1994

237. THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

Obedience is Required for Salvation or Not?

OLD TEACHING:

“Now as He was going out of the road, one came running, knelt before Him, and asked Him, ‘Good Teacher, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?’

“So Jesus said to him, ‘Why do you call Me good? No one is good but one, that is, God. You know the commandments: “Do not commit adultery,” “Do not murder,” “Do not steal,” “Do not bear false witness,” “Do not defraud,” “Honor your father and your mother.”’”

“And he answered and said to Him, ‘Teacher, all these I have observed from my youth.’”

“Then Jesus, looking at him, *LOVED HIM...(Mark 10:17-20, NKJV)*”

“Did you realize there is something **YOU MUST DO**, before God will give you the gift of **ETERNAL LIFE**? Listen to the answer of Jesus. When one came to Him asking: ‘Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?’ Jesus said: ‘Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is, God: **BUT IF THOU WILT ENTER INTO LIFE, KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS.**’ (Mat.19:16-17)”

“The Ten Commandments reveal God’s character.”

“God is now creating **RIGHTEOUS, HOLY CHARACTER** in those whom He is calling. Man, now only a clay model, is to be created in the **CHARACTERIMAGE** of God Almighty. Obedience is a test of that character. God will not grant eternal life to anyone He cannot rule.”

ACBCC, Lesson 34

“IS OBEDIENCE TO THE TEN COMMANDMENTS NECESSARY TODAY?”

“WOULD YOU like to be given eternal inheritance in the Kingdom of God? – and have **ETERNAL LIFE** so you could **CLAIM** this inheritance?”

“Yes, but what must I **DO**,” you might ask, to receive eternal life?”

“When the young rich man asked Jesus Christ: ‘Master, what good thing shall I **DO**, that I may have eternal life?’ – Jesus replied, ‘If thou wilt enter in life, **KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS**’ (Mat. 19:16-17).”

*Ambassador College Bible Correspondence Course,
Lesson 17, 1959, 1965, 1966*

“You know, now I’m being accused of dismantling everything Mr. Armstrong had established. That I’ve done away with the law and that *the Ten Commandments are no longer required to be kept or observed.*”

“You see, they’re spreading ugly rumors around and unfortunately some of our more gullible people will swallow hook, line and sinker when people are spreading around rumors and lies that, well, you see next year we’re going to be keeping Christmas and we’re going to be keeping Easter. We’re

going to do away with *the Sabbath* we're going to do away with *the Holy Days*. And we're going to do away with *unclean meats*. We're going to do away with this and that."

"You know, [WCG Evangelist], before he left, came up to my office and he asked me that question, you know, very facetiously. He said, '*Mr. Tkach, are Christians required to keep the law?*'"

"When he said, '*Are Christians required to keep the Law?*' I said I wasn't going to dignify that question with an answer. I said, 'However, I'll answer it with another question.' I says, 'You tell me what is the definition of the word *sin*?'"

"And he immediately answered, '*I John 3:4, "sin is the transgression of the law."*'"

"I says, 'Does that answer your question?' I says, 'By the way, by asking me that question were you implying that I am recommending that people *no longer keep the law*?' 'Oh, well, you know...no...no. 'But what was the reason for asking the question?' Could never get an answer."

"I said, 'What did the rich, young ruler there in Matthew 19 when he came to Christ and said, "Good Master, what good thing must I do to inherit eternal life?" What did Christ say? "Go jump over the moon"? No. He said *keep the Commandments!*"'

Joseph W. Tkach, "A Point of Light," Sermon to be played in all churches, Aug. 1993

NEW TEACHING:

"For years we have loosely slung terms like obedience, law keeping, requirements and so on around to the point where most brethren probably believe that keeping Sabbaths and all the other things are 'required for salvation'...Only one thing is *required for salvation* – real faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord."

David G. Hunsberger, WCG PCD Letter to Member, Dec. 26, 1994

"In Matthew 19, didn't Jesus tell the man to keep the Ten Commandments if he wanted eternal life?"

"No. You are reading the word 'Ten' into the text."

"First, he was answering the man according to his folly."

Joseph Tkach Jr., "Questions and Answers," PGR, June 14, 1995

"Matthew 19, verse 16."

"If Christ said, 'If you want to enter life obey the commandments.' Humph. But you don't read the context of it, do you? You don't read the whole thing. We run off with that scripture and say you gotta keep the commandments to be saved."

"See, Christ is following the proverb of answering a fool according to his folly...Christ quickly understood that this man did not understand salvation. He thought you had to do something to get it. So He answers this teacher (really a fool) according to his folly...Christ wasn't serious."

Earl Williams, Sermon #2 given in Atlanta, Georgia, Aug. 20, 1994

Author's note: Earl Williams' sermons were the impetus that stimulated the sudden disgorging of the new "the law is done away" teachings. Because some once viewed him as nothing more than a loose cannon on the WCG's deck, the following quotes are included. They amount to an endorsement of what he preached. Although Earl Williams resigned from the WCG for personal reasons after these endorsements were given, it was NOT due to incompatibility of his teachings on law and grace. Mr. Williams and his entire group now keep Sunday.

"If one says that the Commandments and the Holy Days are required for salvation, then one is saying that we must earn salvation by keeping the law...*Mr. Williams has been preaching the middle, scriptural position...*"

Joseph Tkach Jr., Letter to Member, Oct. 18, 1994

"I don't know what the percentage is. *Some of you seem to take exception with the sermon that Mr. Williams keeps giving on race*, and you all want him to speak more about the Ten Commandments, the law, the Holy Days...Now, if the other half want to leave maybe this is the time for you to do it, if that's what you think I'm going to do."

"I'm not saying that God doesn't give certain ministers the insight and the wisdom and discernment or new understanding or knowledge. Where does it say that God is going to reveal everything to me only? You find it in the Bible."

"As I mentioned earlier, there's a growing concern for many who are wanting to know, are we an old covenant church or a new covenant church? You know, it's almost to the point where it disgusts me."

"My question is, how long are we going to wander in the wilderness of ignorance and continue to nurse on the milk of the Word?"

"The old covenant as a package of laws regulating a relationship between God and His people is obsolete."

Joseph W. Tkach, Sermon given in Atlanta, Georgia, Dec. 17, 1994

"I would comment that I have not listened to all of Earl Williams' sermons that have been circulating. What I have heard had been accurate, although he does not use the clearest or best terminology. But then, neither have any of us been perfect in all our preaching either."

J. Tkach Jr., fax to WCG ministry concerning Sabbath questions and answers, Jan. 1995

"You mentioned that you were recently in Atlanta for a visit and heard a sermon on grace by Mr. Earl Williams. You wondered if he was giving his personal interpretations or if this is indeed the doctrine of the church."

"Mr. Tkach has been speaking on the subject here in Pasadena."

"In times past, we as a church have sometimes emphasized the law to the point that it seemed that one comes to Christ by keeping the law. We are correcting this wrong impression, and Mr. Williams is rather enthusiastic to emphasize Christ dramatically."

David G. Hunsberger, WCG PCD Letter to Member, Nov. 15, 1994

Author's note: Further, Joe Tkach Jr. traveled to Atlanta, Georgia, to speak to Mr. Williams' congregation on the Feast of Trumpets, September 6, 1994 (ten days after the last of Mr. Williams' three-part sermon series). He said nothing to refute the sermons, and lent credence to them by saying: "...Paul, this newcomer apostle preaching grace, had some ministers and members leave him—probably thought he was slowly turning Protestant. All Paul preached about was grace. Bothered some people, so they left him."

238. THE SABBATH AND OTHER COMMANDMENTS

In Effect Before Moses or Not?

OLD TEACHING:

"You've probably heard that the Ten Commandments were done away. You've been taught that the ten commandments either are the same as, or a part of, the ritualistic law of Moses, and that they didn't even EXIST until Moses, and that they lasted ONLY UNTIL CHRIST!"

"Strange as it may seem, the Ten Commandments have been in FULL FORCE and effect SINCE HUMAN LIFE HAS EXISTED ON THIS EARTH!"

"When did this thing that we call 'sin' start anyway? Did it start with Moses?"

"We read the answer in Romans 5:12, 'Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and DEATH BY SIN; so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.' And in verse fourteen, 'Death reigned FROM ADAM TO MOSES.'"

"'Sin is NOT imputed when there is NO law,' you read in the 13th verse. Yet sin was imputed because death did reign from Adam to Moses. There must then have been a law from Adam's time."

Herbert W. Armstrong, "Were the Ten Commandments in Force Before Moses?", PT, May 1956

"Then there are those who believe the Ten Commandments are either the SAME as, or PART of, the RITUALISTIC LAW of Moses. That the Ten Commandments didn't exist until Moses and that they lasted only UNTIL Christ."

"What MISUNDERSTANDING! What DISTORTION of the plain truth about God's law!"

“DO YOU realize that those who believe and teach these false concepts are actually worshipping God IN VAIN – worshipping Him WITHOUT any prospect of receiving eternal inheritance in the Kingdom of God?”

Ambassador College Bible Correspondence Course, Lesson 17, 1959, 1965, 1966

“Men evolve many arguments to evade the commandments of God – because the carnal mind is hostile to God, and is not subject to His LAW! (Rom. 8:7) When men reject the commandments of God, that they may hold to their traditions (see Mark 7:6-9) they must devise arguments to justify their rebellion. One of the arguments is that God’s Commandments did not exist until the children of Israel reached Mt. Sinai.”

“But Abraham kept God’s commandments 430 years before his descendants reached Sinai.”

“READ IT IN YOUR OWN BIBLE! ‘Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, MY COMMANDMENTS, MY STATUTES, AND MY LAWS’ (Gen. 26:5). GOD is speaking. He is explaining why He made the great promises to Abraham.”

“So ABRAHAM KEPT GOD’S SABBATH!”

“We read in the New Testament that to break any one of the commandments is SIN (James 2:10-11).”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Which Day Is the Christian Sabbath? (1962), 64, 68, 70, 71, 72, 76

“The patriarch Abraham, it is written, knew and kept God’s commandments, His statutes and laws (Gen. 26:5).”

“...God’s law [was in effect] hundreds of years before the Old Covenant started.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “Is Tithing...Under the New Testament?”, GN, May 1953

NEW TEACHING:

“There is no commandment regarding the Sabbath until after the Exodus. The Sabbath commandment is based on God’s rest in the creation account, but there is simply no biblical teaching that a Sabbath commandment existed before God formed a relationship with the Israelites, a relationship codified at Mt. Sinai.”

Joseph W. Tkach, Letter to Ministry, PGR, Jan. 5, 1995

“First of all, there’s been the concept that the law of Moses and even the Ten Commandments were in force before Sinai. Is that true? Some believe that. Let’s look what scripture says. (Deuteronomy 5:3). ‘It was not with our fathers that the Lord made this covenant.’ He says, ‘I didn’t do this with your fathers. I didn’t give this to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.’

“Now, everybody, we know from Romans 2, understood basic right from wrong as general revelation. But God didn’t give it this, to the fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.”

Earl Williams, Sermon #3 given in Atlanta, Georgia, Aug. 27, 1994

“We do not teach that it is a sin for Christians to do things that originated in paganism...Even the annual festivals God gave Israel ‘originated’ in paganism...”

*Joseph Tkach Jr., “Is It a Sin to Keep Christmas, Halloween and Easter?”,
cc:mail memo, (reply from WCG PCD, David Hunsberger, March 1995)*

239. LAW IN NEW TESTAMENT

Meaning Depends on Context or Refers to Entire Old Testament?

OLD TEACHING:

“But first, UNDERSTAND. The word ‘works’ translated from the Greek *ergon* means deeds, actions, business – without regard, except as indicated by use in the sentence, to whether physical work, action or labor, or spiritual acts of righteousness. The Bible uses this word primarily in two ways, and there is a vast difference.”

“When joined with ‘law,’ as, ‘the works of the law,’ primarily in Romans and Galatians, it refers to the RITUALS of the Law of Moses. These were physical WORK – labor! These laborious physical rituals – ‘the works of the law’ – were a SUBSTITUTE for Christ and the Holy Spirit, and were in force only until Christ. They were then ABOLISHED. There were certain other secular laws, such as statutes and judgments that were not abolished. Nor, of course, the great spiritual Law, the Ten Commandments, which define righteousness, the transgression of which is sin.”

“But where the word ‘works’ appears alone, unassociated in the context with the ‘works of the law,’ usually refers to acts of RIGHTEOUSNESS – that is, GOOD works. In some instances the context uses the word in the sense of evil works.”

“In this booklet we are concerned with ‘works’ in the sense of GOOD works – righteousness – not with ‘works of the law,’ rituals which were abolished.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, What Will You Be Doing in the Next Life?, 1967, 1969

NEW TEACHING:

“Scripture does not compartmentalize Moses’ writings into temporary and permanent, or core and periphery, or ethical and ritual; they are all equally part of the law of Moses, and Christians are not under obligation to that law.”

WCG, “Festivals Study Paper,” Feb. 14, 1995, (sent with PGR to all ministers)

“We have already seen Hebrews 8 that the old covenant is obsolete – kaput – finis – you know...The old package of laws has been taken apart, however, and some laws have been discarded, some laws have been changed, some have been continued, others have been added.”

“And I’ll clarify that. The new covenant is different. It not only adds *faith* and Holy Spirit, it also removes some of the laws.”

“We’re not just talking about Levitical and sacrificial laws that were added to the old covenant, we’re talking about the old covenant itself. The whole package was set aside by Christ.”

“Laws that were added at Sinai...became obsolete when Christ died and now there is a new package, which He described in Matthew 5, 6, and 7.”

Joseph W. Tkach, Sermon given in Atlanta, Georgia, Dec. 17, 1994

“...the old law has been changed. In fact, it is changed so much that it is set aside. It doesn’t apply any more.”

“This ‘setting aside’ is not just talking about Levitical and sacrificial laws that were added to the old covenant – it is talking about the old covenant itself. The whole package was set aside and replaced by Christ.”

Joseph W. Tkach, Letter to Ministry, PGR, Dec. 21, 1994

240. SLAVES IN BONDAGE

Those Who Disobey the Ten Commandments or Those Who Obey Them?

OLD TEACHING:

“The world has been completely and totally deceived by Satan (Rev. 12:9). As a result the world speaks of ‘liberty’ and ‘freedom,’ and yet the world is in slavery!”

“They promised them freedom, but they themselves are slaves of corruption; for whatever overcomes a man, to that he is enslaved’ (II Pet. 2:19, RSV).”

“Everywhere we hear of people wanting freedom. They do not want to be told what to do, or when to do it.”

“Each man wants freedom, and by seeking Satan’s pseudo freedom he becomes enslaved to sin.”

“He becomes enslaved since he disobeys the spiritual and physical laws of his Creator. By breaking the laws of our Creator, we bring upon ourselves death.”

“Satan has deceived the whole world into thinking it is free! Yet the whole world is in slavery, only free to do evil – to harm the self – to destroy the self. This same slavery to sin and to Satan is expressed by the Apostle Paul. ‘Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness’ (Rom. 6:16) ‘Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness’ (Rom. 6:18).”

“The way to become free from sin is to become the slave of righteousness.”

“We are either slaves of sin, or slaves to righteousness. Those who are slaves to sin are slaves to the Devil. Those who are slaves to righteousness are slaves of Jesus Christ.”

“In return He serves us in more and greater ways than we can serve Him.”

“Certainly our God is good and merciful. Our Master supplies all our needs. Thank God we have chosen the right Master.”

L. Leroy Neff “What Is True Liberty?”, GN, Oct. 1961

“Paul states in Galatians 2:4 that ‘false brethren’ came to spy out the spiritual liberty a true Christian has in Christ Jesus. They subtly seek to bring weaker brethren back into bondage of sin. They are also among us today, seeking to mislead weak brethren.”

“These wicked men with feigned words, smooth speeches, false pretenses, and hypocrisy make themselves appear as if they were very religious and holy. They are like the Pharisees of Christ’s time who appeared holy to some people but were like ‘whitewashed graves’ – ‘whitened sepulchers’ – full of spiritual ‘dead men’s bones.’”

“Jude also mentions wicked men who are blemishes on our love feasts and Holy Days [Jude 4, 12].”

“Now is the time to be on your guard – to beware, lest you follow false brethren into the lake of fire.”

L. Leroy Neff “Beware of False Brethren!”, GN, Jan. 1960

“Jude the apostle warned Christians shortly after A.D. 70 to earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints. For certain men had crept into God’s Church unawares... ‘Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam’ (Jude 11).”

“Balaam taught Balak how to cause Israel to sin and disobey God. He showed Balak how to deceive them into thinking that they had freedom or license to disobey God, that it was permissible to disobey God. That is the same sin that most of the ministers of our land are following today.”

“The ministers are telling the people that it is all right to... disobey God and His commands. They may not say so in these exact terms, possibly, but that is what it amounts to. They tell people that they may have freedom in disobeying God. They minister, for hire (just like Balaam), telling the people to break God’s commands and no harm will come.”

L. Leroy Neff “What Was Balaam’s Sin?”, GN, Feb. 1962

NEW TEACHING:

“We are the ones who have imposed restrictions and burdens and everything else and made the Sabbath and everything God stands for a yoke of bondage and a burdensome thing...”

Joseph W. Tkach, Sermon given in Atlanta, Georgia, Dec. 17, 1994

“Last night I got a very inspiring call...”

“He said, ‘Hello. My name is so-and-so and so-and-so. I understand you’ve been preaching the gospel. I understand you’ve been preaching grace. I heard it from one of your members.’”

““You know what? Satan doesn’t want what you’re preaching preached.’ And he said, ‘The reason why he doesn’t is because as long as people are

under the law they are in bondage...They are in bondage and under his control. He does not want them to be free to serve Christ.”

“That was an amazing revelation.”

“You can’t stop it. I don’t care if you don’t like it. You can’t stop it. And it’s happening all over. God is freein’ people and it’s a beautiful thing.”

Earl Williams, Sermon #1 given in Atlanta, Georgia, Aug. 13, 1994

“We are facing the Red Sea, as it were. The enemy of the gospel is threatening us from behind. Some people want to go back-ward into bondage, but our only real choice is to be strong and of good courage, and to see the salvation of the Lord.”

“Perhaps I should be angry, as Paul was, over preachers who lay old covenant burdens upon the people and use God’s name as the authority for doing so. But it’s hard to be angry when I myself used to do the very same things.”

Joseph W. Tkach, Letter to brothers and sisters, Feb. 16, 1995

“Enclosed are copies of three studies published by *Verdict, An International Journal of Theology*. They are written by Robert D. Brinsmead...”

“I believe you will find them helpful as you study to become better acquainted with the doctrinal change the Church has made.”

Joseph W. Tkach, Letter to Ministry, Jan. 26, 1995

Author’s note: The next quote is taken from the studies referred to above by Mr. Tkach.

“The God of the Christian religion overpowers and suffocated humanity. He is everything; man is nothing. In addition to this, he is totally righteous while man is totally sinful. The human will to dominate and enslave others is projected to God in so many ways.”

“In the final analysis, this God of the Christian religion does not make man free at all. What he requires is masochism – the loss of freedom, of genuine choice, of individuality and of personal identity – by a surrender which finds joy in total subordination.”

“This vision terrible of the celestial Tyrant is mitigated by the teaching that God is love. This removes the fierce face of the Despot because whatever he does is for the good of his people. He thus becomes a benevolent Despot, but a Despot just the same.”

“Religious systems deprive man of freedom of thought and action. They are therefore dehumanizing, demonic powers. They are enticing because people do not really want the terrifying freedom to make decisions and to be responsible for their own actions. People want God to make their decisions for them.”

Robert D. Brinsmead, “A Manifesto of Christian ‘Atheism’,” Verdict 1987

241. NEW COMMANDS OF CHRIST**Keeping the Law With Faith and Love or Just Faith and Love?****OLD TEACHING:**

“God’s love by which we fulfill His law comes by the FAITH of Christ. His faith in us TRUSTS God to give us the LOVE of the Holy Spirit which FULFILLS God’s law – thus enabling us to be righteous!”

“If WE were able to supply the faith which brings everything spiritual, then we, ourselves, would earn our own salvation by OUR WORKS! It would be the kind of righteousness that is as FILTHY RAGS to God!”

“The scripture speaks only of ‘THE FAITH OF CHRIST!’ Yes, CHRIST’S faith – not YOUR FAITH. Jesus had REAL FAITH – GOD’S FAITH! And Christ in us gives – imparts – HIS strong faith to you and me which TRUSTS GOD TO MAKE OUR SPIRITUAL OBEDIENCE AND OVERCOMING POSSIBLE.”

*Ambassador College Bible Correspondence Course,
Lesson 43, 1966*

“Sin is the transgression of the law.” But what law? This is explained in Romans 7. So next I read...”

“What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law...”

“In verses 12 and 14 of this same 7th chapter of Romans you will read that the Law is holy, just and good, and that it is a spiritual Law – a Law of spiritual principles of living!”

“Of course the whole spiritual Law may be summed up in the word LOVE. This may be divided into the two Great Commandments, love toward God, and love toward neighbor. The first four of the Ten Commandments tell us how to love God; the last six how to love neighbor. The whole Bible elaborates, showing the principles involved, until it includes the entire right way of life!”

Herbert W. Armstrong, What Do You Mean...Salvation?, 1961, 1973

“The one and only TRUE God is the EVERLIVING God who RULES by His spiritual Law of LOVE, summed up by the Ten Commandments – and who actually DOES THINGS FOR those who OBEY Him and RELY ON Him!”

“No church has the TRUE God unless that church OBEYS God’s Law – keeping ALL of His Commandments, living actually by EVERY WORD of the ENTIRE Bible (Luke 4:4), and unless it relies on Him, and Him alone for fighting its battles (against people or Satan), for healing, for guidance and direction, wisdom and understanding – for those things which are the prerogatives of GOD to do, and not man.”

*Herbert W. Armstrong, Personal from the Editor,
PT, Dec. 1964*

NEW TEACHING:

“Anyway, the commands of Jesus are the requirements of the new covenant which we will go into more detail. Faith is also required. We have to believe in Jesus Christ.”

“Salvation is a gift, and if you don’t believe it, it won’t be given to you. In the new covenant, faith was required.”

Joseph W. Tkach, Sermon given in Atlanta, Georgia, Dec. 17, 1994

“In Micah, the 6th chapter...What does God require? What does He want? What pleases God? And you could break this down and group this together: mercy and justice equals love. Walking humbly with your God is another way to say faith. Humble, dependent upon Him, and love is what He required – is what please Him. That’s what it is. He did not add anything else.”

“[I John 3:22.] ‘And we receive from Him anything we ask, because we obey His commands.’ Oh, there it is! The law, you said. There it is! You must obey the law – His commands! Huh. Read the whole thing. What is the command of Jesus?”

“‘And this is His command.’ Two things...‘To believe in the name of His Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another, as He commands us.’ That’s the Lord’s command.”

“We have missed the mark by putting an emphasis on the law and not on what God wants, and that’s faith and love.”

Earl Williams, Sermon #2 given in Atlanta, Georgia, Aug. 20, 1994

“Many have proof-texted from the book of John. ‘You see, John said if you love Christ, and if you will love Me, you will keep My commandments.’...Does that mean the Ten Commandments, Sabbath, Holy Days, and everything else? We’re going to see that it doesn’t.”

“This command [John 10:18] is not about something from Moses...It’s from the Father...To lay down one’s life.”

“You say, ‘But in the book of Revelation it says, “those who keep His commandments.”’”

“What are His commandments? He told you – that you love one another.”

Earl Williams, Sermon #3 given in Atlanta, Georgia, Aug. 27, 1994

242. SOURCE OF FAITH

The Holy Spirit or Human Imagination?

OLD TEACHING:

“Your feeling, your convictions, your impressions, have absolutely not one thing or the other to do with FAITH. FAITH HAS ONLY TO DO WITH GOD’S WORD! The one question is, *Has God promised it in the Bible?* If He has, then probabilities, possibilities, feelings, convictions, impressions, *have nothing whatsoever to do with it.*”

“So many think that everything else that comes from God is His gift, but the FAITH required to receive these things is something we ourselves must somehow work up, or strain and strive for. But we have to just relax and TRUST GOD, even for the FAITH by which we receive everything else! (Eph. 2:8.)”

Herbert W. Armstrong, What Is Faith?, p. 16

“So notice, briefly! Notice more CLOSELY than you did before! ‘For BY GRACE are ye saved through FAITH; and that (that FAITH) not of yourselves; it (this saving FAITH) is the gift of GOD!’ (Eph. 2:8). The faith that really saves is GIVEN TO US by GOD – it is a GIFT from HIM! YOU don’t supply it, or work it up.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “How to Be Saved!”, PT, July 1960

“Yes, even FAITH is a gift of God – one of the spiritual GIFTS (Ephesians 2:8, I Corinthians 12:9).”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “How to Be an Overcomer,” GN, Aug. 1985

NEW TEACHING:

“True faith requires not just *rational thinking*, but *imaginative ability* as well. That is because faith is not merely a matter of *logic*, but also of *emotion*.”

“That is why [C.S. Lewis’] definition of faith in *Mere Christianity* is ‘the *art* of holding on to things your reason has once accepted, in spite of your changing moods.’”

Bill Palmer, “No Mere Christian,” PT, July 1994

“God wants us to exercise faith in him.”

“Faith is believing that which has *no absolute proof* (Hebrews 11:1),” says Dr. Dobson.”

Paul Kroll, “Why Be Christian?”, PT, Nov.-Dec. 1994

243. THE FAITH THAT SAVES

Gift of the Holy Spirit or Work of the Flesh?

OLD TEACHING:

“We are taught, and rightly, that we cannot EARN our salvation – it is the GIFT of God. It is by GRACE – and ‘grace’ means undeserved pardon and free gift. Yet, notice how inconsistent people are! They argue there must be NO WORKS – no OBEDIENCE of the Commandments, or doing GOOD – no recognizing of God’s AUTHORITY over your daily living – because salvation comes by GRACE – God’s free GIFT. And yet they seem to believe that somehow WE must supply the FAITH that brings salvation! If WE work up, or if WE supply this FAITH by which we are saved, would not that, in fact, amount to our producing our own salvation by the very WORKS of supplying this FAITH?”

“So notice, briefly! Notice more CLOSELY than you did before! ‘For BY GRACE are ye saved through FAITH; and that (that FAITH) not of yourselves; it (this saving FAITH) is the gift of GOD!’ (Eph. 2:8). The faith that really saves is GIVEN TO US by GOD – it is a GIFT from HIM! YOU don’t supply it, or work it up.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “How to Be Saved!”, PT, July 1960

“Can’t we see that if WE were able to supply the faith that brings all else, that we, ourselves, would earn our own salvation by WORKS?”

“Yes, even FAITH is a gift of God – one of the spiritual GIFTS (Ephesians 2:8, I Corinthians 12:9).”

*Herbert W. Armstrong, “How to Be an Overcomer,”
GN, Aug. 1985*

NEW TEACHING:

“Anyway, the commands of Jesus are the *requirements* of the new covenant which we will go into more detail. Faith is also *required*. We have to believe in Jesus Christ.”

“*Salvation is a gift and if you don’t believe it, it won’t be given to you.* In the new covenant, faith was required.”

Joseph W. Tkach, Sermon given in Atlanta, Georgia, Dec. 17, 1994

“For years we have loosely slung terms like obedience, law keeping, requirements and so on around to the point where most brethren probably believe that keeping Sabbaths and all the other things are ‘required for salvation’ ... Only one thing is *required for salvation* – real faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.”

David G. Hunsberger, WCG PCD Letter to Member, Dec. 26, 1994

Author’s note: “Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith OF Jesus” (Rev. 14:12, NKJV). More than faith IN Jesus is needed. The actual faith OF Christ is the fruit of the Holy Spirit in us, not something we work up ourselves.

244. WHAT WAS NAILED TO THE CROSS

Our Sins or The Law Itself?

OLD TEACHING:

“Men evolve many arguments to evade the commandments of God – because the carnal mind is hostile to God, and is not subject to His LAW! (Rom. 8:7.) When men reject the commandments of God, that they may hold to their traditions (see Mark 7:6-9) they must devise arguments to justify their rebellion.”

“Consequently, many have used the argument...that...God abolished all ten of His commandments at the cross and then brought back nine of them in the New Testament, in order to get rid of the Sabbath...”

“HOW SIGNIFICANT! THE SABBATH COMMAND IS THE ONLY one of the ten which is a SIGN identifying WHO are the real and true Christians today! It is the real TEST Command! The people of the world are willing to acknowledge the other nine Commandments – but the Sabbath Command is the one they positively REBEL against!”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Which Day Is the Christian Sabbath?, pp. 28, 50, 57

“You’ve probably heard that obedience to the Ten Commandments is NOT NECESSARY today. That God’s law was ABOLISHED – ‘NAILED to the cross’ by Jesus Christ!”

“But is this assumption really true?...”

“The common FALSE teaching of modern Christianity holds that the old covenant WAS the Ten Commandment law. That Jesus Christ came to establish a NEW covenant containing only grace and promises – liberty to do WHATEVER YOU PLEASE, but certainly NO LAW! ‘Grace ALONE IS what saves you now,’ they say. ‘NO COMMANDMENT KEEPING IS necessary today.’”

“This diabolical teaching would lead you to believe that the law of God is harsh, CRUEL, ENSLAVING – that the fault of the old covenant was with the law, and since GOD gave the law, the fault must have been HIS!”

*Ambassador College Bible Correspondence Course,
Lesson 17, 1959, 1965, 1966*

“In other words, the pivotal point is the SIN question. Sin is the transgression of God’s spiritual law (I John 3:4).”

“Satan has deceived this world’s churches into the belief that God’s law was done away – that Jesus, rather than paying the price in human stead for transgressing the law, did away with it – ‘nailing it to his cross.’”

“The expression used by Protestants ‘nailing the law to his cross’ can mean only one thing. This is Satan’s teaching that by being nailed to the cross, Christ abolished the law, making it possible for humans to sin with impunity. What actually was nailed to the cross was Christ our sin bearer, who took on himself our sins, paying the death penalty in our stead, so that we are freed from the ultimate penalty of sinning, not made free to sin with impunity.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Mystery of the Ages, 1985 Hardbound Edition

NEW TEACHING:

Q. “Is the seventh day the Sabbath of the New Testament?”

A. “...the Sabbath of the new covenant is the rest we have in Christ, not a 24-hour period of time in a week.”

Q. “Is it correct to say that the laws of God were nailed to the cross according to Col. 2?”

A. "There is a sense in which this is correct...the fact is that some of the laws were expanded, some were changed, some were done away."

Joseph Tkach Jr., fax to WCG ministry concerning Sabbath questions and answers, Jan. 1995

245. WHO WAS LIBERAL

The Pharisees or Christ?

OLD TEACHING:

"Jesus Christ says a house divided against itself cannot stand! A few 'liberal' ministers have caused 'divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned.'"

"Let's understand what defines a liberal..."

"Like Mother Eve, [the liberals] use HUMAN REASON to justify straying partly away from the SPIRIT of God's LAW."

"The liberal is not hungering and thirsting after RIGHTEOUSNESS! He WANTS to ease off a little on God's Law."

Herbert W Armstrong, "What Is a Liberal?", GN, Mar. 1979

"The Matthew 5 passage is part of the so-called 'Sermon on the Mount.' Jesus had just corrected those who thought He came to abolish God's Law. He had firmly established God's Law."

"Then Jesus continued to 'magnify the law and make it honorable' (Isa. 42:21) – that is, enlarge upon it, make it more inclusive."

"So He continued, 'Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment...' *Thus He made the commandment even MORE binding.*"

"He continued: 'Ye have hear that it was said of them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart' (verses 27-28). *He was not relaxing God's Law – He was making it more binding, more inclusive. This was no 'liberal' teaching, but the strictest kind of teaching.*"

"Next He came to divorce and remarriage. Some think *He became more 'liberal' at this point. But He did not change His attitude here. Rather, He made the laws of UNBREAKABLE MARRIAGE even MORE BINDING.*"

"He said, 'It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorce...' But now see Him make it *MORE STRICT. not more liberal!* Continue: 'But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery' (verse 31-32)."

Herbert W Armstrong, Marriage and Divorce, pp. 31-32

"People assume that Judaism is the religion of Moses – that Jesus brought a message opposed to the Old Testament – that He came to nullify the teaching of Moses."

"History shows – and the Jews themselves admit – that their religion had drifted far away from the simple doctrines of Scripture – commonly called the 'Old Testament.' *The Jews had modified God's law and even instituted laws and commandments of their own* which were, in many instances, diametrically opposite to the precepts of Moses."

"It is important that we understand this if we are to comprehend the significance of events in the New Testament period. Christ, in effect, came to retrieve the Jews from their apostasy – from their *rejection of the laws of God.*"

"Is Judaism the Religion of Moses?", GN, Dec. 1960

"Judaism had its beginnings within the period of religious anarchy (301 B.C. - 165 B.C.). It represents a combination of certain Scripture truths with many ideas and customs of the heathen and the varied opinions of men (Mark 7:7). Judaism represents an abandonment of the original Law of Moses, the Law they called 'out-of-date,' so they could do as they pleased."

"Is Judaism the Law of Moses?", GN, Mar. 1962

Author's note: As the following quote demonstrates, it is astonishing to note the *liberal* teaching of the very first Pharisee...

"The first Pharisee we have record of who began to teach new commandments of his own, without any Scripture basis, was Joseph ben Joezer."

"In fact, what he commanded was not only independent of Scripture but was not even permitted by the Law of God."

"For making all these new laws, which permitted people to do what had been previously forbidden in the Law of God, he was named by his contemporaries '*Joseph the Permitter.*'"

"His commandments were a little reluctantly received at first, but the reluctance did not last long. From that time forward a flood of new commandments began to come forth from the Pharisees" (*Is Judaism the Religion of Moses?*", GN, Aug., 1961).

Now read Mark 7:4-13 (NKJV), which shows that Christ fully understood that to be a Pharisee was to be a liberal. Those who stand up for the truth and the true laws of God have been labeled "Pharisees," while Christ has been depicted as a liberal. This suited the administration's agenda to do away with the Law, but the true picture is really the reverse. Christ was a conservative, but a true Pharisee was a liberal who hypocritically hid behind ceremonies and rituals of men that denied God's Law. The next two final quotes demonstrate this point quite well and set up the one important quote from the new teaching that follows.

“LETS UNDERSTAND! The prohibition against ‘picking up sticks.’ Or ‘kindling a fire’ on the Sabbath was part of the added CIVIL and RITUALISTIC or CEREMONIAL law of Moses – no part of the Ten Commandments SPIRITUAL Law!”

“Because of transgressions – that is, because the spiritual Law was being broken – God added, 430 years after Abraham, through Moses, a material and physical law of rituals and ceremonies (Gal. 3:16-19). That law was a PHYSICAL law, including animal sacrifices. It was a SUBSTITUTE for Christ’s sacrifice and the Holy Spirit, which was not given to Old Testament Israelites. The Holy Spirit gives us, now, POWER to obey. These rituals and sacrifices consisted of physical labor – things to do morning, noon, and night – to instill in them the HABIT of OBEDIENCE.”

“The Pharisees of Jesus’ day observed some 65 stem regulations of ‘do’s and don’ts’ which the human rabbis had instituted to make Sabbath observance a ‘yoke of bondage.’ Jesus Christ swept those human regulations aside.”

“On one Sabbath He and His disciple were going through a cornfield. The disciples plucked ears of corn to eat. The Pharisees complained. But Jesus rebuked them – showed it is RIGHT to do minor work to gather or prepare food to eat on the Sabbath.”

*Herbert W. Armstrong, Which Day Is the Christian Sabbath?,
pp. 104-106*

NEW TEACHING:

“Compared to the Pharisees, Jesus was a liberal.”

“[In Matthew 2:23-26] Jesus did not deny that the disciples were working on the Sabbath. Instead, he pointed Out that David himself had broken one of God’s holiness laws, and it had been OK for him to do it. Taking care of hunger is more important than keeping such strict taboos. The letter of the law was broken, but that was OK because a more important principle of the law was being kept. There was an important human need.”

“Humanitarian needs are more important than sticking to a *strict interpretation of rules*.”

“But not everyone has a grasp of the broad principles as well as Jesus did. So, if they need rules, they are welcome to keep *their own rules* – as long as they do it to the glory of God, as long as their faith is in Christ and not in their rules. The main point is that one group shouldn’t criticize the other. The *conservatives* should not condemn the actions of others, and the *liberals* shouldn’t despise the rule keepers. We should welcome each other based on faith in Jesus Christ.”

*Joseph W. Tkach, Letter to Ministry,
PGR, Dec. 21, 1994*

246. ENEMY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH

The Religions of Men or God's Law?

OLD TEACHING:

“Jesus Christ...sent the Holy Spirit to empower His organized BODY, the Church of God...It was a phenomenon. It multiplied and grew...But persecution multiplied also.”

“First, there was the persecution of unbelieving Jews. The opposition, those first 19 years, was primarily against the NAME of Jesus Christ.”

“Then came the opposition of believing Jews, who entered the Church. They clung to and taught Judaism...The Apostle Paul fought this, preaching that only the sacrifice of CHRIST could justify past sins, and reconcile the guilty to God.”

“This Judaizing opposition demanded not abolished law, but more law; the arduous works of the physical, laborious rituals originally given to teach them the habit of obedience. They had been merely a physical substitute until Christ and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit should come.”

“But as the second 19-year time-cycle wore along, a new and totally different opposition entered...False apostles – ‘wolves in sheep’s clothing’ – entered in from without.”

“They knew the carnal mind is hostile to the spiritual LAW OF GOD. They wanted to gain possession of THE NAME of this HERO, but they wanted none of His WAY of life or of His Message.”

“The Jewish opposition died out by the end of two 19-year time-cycles. But the ‘NO-LAW,’ ‘NO WORKS’ opposition from fifth-column pagans grew. It remains today.”

“The pagan counterfeit, injected by the fifth-column priests of the Babylonian Mysteries, had entered under false pretenses to embrace THE NAME of Jesus Christ. Then they went out, with CHRIST’S NAME tacked onto their pagan Mystery religion, branding the true Christians as heretics. In order to set up a public prejudice against the true Christian WAY OF LIFE, taught by Christ and the Apostle Paul, they introduced anti-Semitism, calling true Christian ways ‘Jewish.’”

Herbert W Armstrong, “Autobiography,” PT, Dec. 1962

NEW TEACHING:

“Now everybody, we know from Romans 2, understood basic right from wrong as general revelation.”

“In Galatians 2, we have the classic setting of not only how to reason from the gospel, but of the classic battle and tension that went on in the early New Testament church, and goes on here today. And that is the tension between law and grace. That is the tension between those who wanted to live by the law and force it on others.”

Earl Williams, Sermon #3 given in Atlanta, Georgia, Aug. 27, 1994

247. WORKING ON THE SABBATH AND HOLY DAYS

Sin or Your Personal Decision?

OLD TEACHING:

“The SABBATH command...forbids our regular weekday work or labor by which we earn a living – our JOB, or BUSINESS.”

“Many, having read this far, will say – ‘But I can’t keep the Sabbath. I’d lose my JOB.’”

“Let me tell you something! I have known of hundreds of such cases! It takes living FAITH to OBEY GOD! Can you TRUST HIM, even with your job? Unless you can, I wouldn’t give you a counterfeit penny for your chances of escaping the Lake of FIRE!”

“Out of HUNDREDS of experiences, I have found that nine in ten DO NOT LOSE THEIR JOBS!”

“And the one in ten who did? Nearly always, the few who did lose their jobs SOON FOUND BETTER ONES.”

“My responsibility ends with TELLING you. I have cried aloud. I have lifted my voice. I have TOLD YOU YOUR SIN in this regard.”

Herbert W Armstrong, Which Day Is the Christian Sabbath?, 1976

NEW TEACHING:

“...to say that the Sabbath is a binding command on Christians in the New Testament, and to forbid employment as a requirement for membership, is to misunderstand and misapply the Scriptures.”

“Will we continue to observe the annual festivals? Even though these are major highlights of the year for us, a person must make his or her own decision regarding taking time from work.”

Joseph W. Tkach, Letter to Ministry, PGR, Jan. 5, 1995

“The way we usually observed the Sabbath in the past has been to apply old covenant rules to the new covenant Sabbath, and thereby bind unnecessary burdens.”

“...it is not correct to say that God demands that a breadwinner lose his job over the Sabbath. For the Church to demand that a person under all circumstances not work on the Sabbath is to miss the point of it, and to apply old covenant rules to what is now a part of the new covenant.”

“In the new covenant, we need to take a more flexible approach with work and humanitarian needs.”

“If the choice is between working on the Sabbath and providing food for the family, it is not a sin to work on the Sabbath.”

“Therefore, we will not disfellowship a person who works to feed his family.”

“We are under the new covenant, you see, and the new covenant simply doesn’t require the Sabbath in the same-way that the old covenant did.”

“...it is not a yoke of bondage around our necks. And God does not expect Christians to go into a poverty cycle to keep it.”

Joseph W. Tkach, Letter to Ministry, PGR, Dec. 21, 1994

“In the past we have been too strict with this. Sometimes we wouldn’t even allow people to work on the Sabbath or for a couple of hours on Friday evening. They had to give up their jobs if they wanted to be members of our Church. That, my brethren, is too strict, and is not what Jesus Christ reveals to us. Absolutely not.”

“[God] knows your physical needs, and He doesn’t expect you to get fired.”

Joseph W. Tkach, Sermon given in Atlanta, Georgia, Dec. 17, 1994

“For years we have loosely slung terms like obedience, law keeping, requirements and so on around to the point where most brethren probably believe that keeping Sabbaths and all the other things are ‘*required for salvation*.’ Yet, Mr. Armstrong did not believe that. He is on record in correspondence early in his ministry stating unequivocally that he did not consider Sabbath keeping a matter of salvation. Only one thing is required for salvation – real faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.”

David G. Hunsberger, PCD Letter to Member, Dec. 26, 1994

Author’s note: Approximately seventeen months after he was converted, and before he was ordained, Mr. Armstrong, in his spiritual infancy (Aug. 1928), wrote to his relatives that if they were not yet convicted about Sabbath-keeping that this should not keep them from being baptized. He obviously grew to see this matter much differently later in his ministry.

“The issue of Sabbath-keeping is one that can easily lead to factions and being judgmental.”

“Some work past sundown on Friday evening, and others don’t. The only time there is conflict over these issues is when people start to judge each other over what they do.”

“Some work on the Sabbath because they feel they have an ox in the ditch, while others wouldn’t.”

“We should not withhold baptism from people who are working on the Sabbath. How they observe the Sabbath is between them and God.”

Joseph Tkach Jr., “Church Administration,” PGR, Jan. 5, 1995

“Question: Is it okay to work on the Sabbath day, not for emergency sake but because, say, a person would like to earn money to build an addition on to his house?”

“Answer: This is a personal decision, people should not judge each other with respect to the Sabbath and each individual is free to worship at the level of piety he or she feels responsible.”

Joseph Tkach Jr., fax to WCG ministry concerning Sabbath questions and answers, Jan. 1995

“...we cannot make [the holy days] requirements and say that people ought to risk their jobs in order to keep them.”

“Members may decide whether to keep the festivals without their decision having any bearing on their membership status...we cannot call it sin if people have to work instead of assembling with us.”

The Worldwide Church of God, “Festivals,” Study Paper, Feb. 14, 1995

248. HOLY DAY OBSERVANCE

Still Required or No Longer Mandatory?

OLD TEACHING:

“Most people have supposed that all the annual Sabbaths and Feast Days of Israel were done away. And yet Church History shows that the early true Church did, for more than four hundred long years at least – perhaps much longer – after Christ’s resurrection, continue to keep and observe these annual holy days given by God!”

“For the annual Sabbaths were not part of the law of Moses, but were observed before the ritualistic ordinances contained in the law of Moses were given [i.e., Ex. 12:16-17].”

“God’s feasts, or holy days, or sabbaths, were commanded to be kept year after year, and forever!”

Herbert W Armstrong, Which Days Should We Keep?, pp. 7, 8

NEW TEACHING:

“We plan to conduct worship services...on...the first and seventh days of Unleavened Bread, Pentecost, Trumpets, Atonement, each day of Tabernacles and the Last Great Day. Attendance on these days is not mandatory, but we hope that most members will want to worship with us...”

“Members are free to deleaven their homes for Unleavened Bread, fast on Atonement and live in temporary shelters during Tabernacles, but these old covenant details are not required in the Church today...”

“...can we be saved whether we keep these days or not? Yes.”

“...if some people do not keep these festivals, we will not condemn them for it. Nothing in the New Testament says they are required.”

“For those who are under the new covenant blood of Christ, frequency and the date of commemoration [of the Lord’s Supper] are policy decisions, not biblical commands. *The Church may make policy decisions about when...we assemble on other festivals as celebrations of our new life in Christ.*”

“The old covenant festivals are not commanded in the new covenant.”

“[Paul] told the Colossians to ignore what others might say regarding Jewish festivals. They were symbolic shadows, so they did not matter.”

The Worldwide Church of God, “Festivals” Study Paper, Feb. 14, 1995

Author’s note: What are the “other festivals” referred to above? See the next change.

249. CHRISTMAS, EASTER, HALLOWEEN

Pagan and Evil or Perfectly Fine to Keep Them?

OLD TEACHING:

“Ancient Rome’s pagan holidays have been chained upon a heedless and deceived world. These include certain annual holidays – Christmas, New Year’s, Easter, as well as many more, every one a pagan day...”

“Are not ancient Rome’s annual holidays mere counterfeits of God’s true holy days, exactly as Sunday is a counterfeit of the true Sabbath?”

“Let us forsake the pagan holidays of this world...”

Herbert W Armstrong, Pagan Holidays—or God’s Holy Days—Which?, pp. 6-7, 56

“Halloween is the strangest holiday of the entire year.”

“It was a pagan belief that on one night of the year the souls of the dead returned to their original homes, there to be entertained with food. If food and shelter were not provided, these spirits, it was believed, would cast spells and cause havoc toward those failing to fulfill their requests. It was spiritual trick or treat.”

“What about you and your children? What comes to your mind when thinking about Halloween?”

“The testimony of history stamps Halloween as a festival with a pagan foundation.”

Why the Strange Customs of Halloween?, pp. 1, 4

NEW TEACHING:

Author’s note: The inevitable happened, and the heresy of pagan holiday keeping began to be taught, as changes 175 through 180 predicted. A review of these changes is recommended.

“Christmas, Easter and Sunday can be legitimate forms of Christian worship, acceptable to God, depending on what people do on these days. They can worship God on these days. It is not Christian to get drunk, overeat or commit adultery on these days.”

WCG Regional Pastor, ‘Required Teachings WCG Ministers,’ Mar. 1995

“First Baptist Church would like to welcome you to our 4th annual ‘Merry Christmas, Gladewater.’ Many wonderful people put a great deal of time and money into this endeavor so that tonight we could present our Christmas gift to you!”

“Instrumentalists: Organ/Synthesizer – Ross Jutsum.”

“Merry Christmas Gladewater 1994,” First Baptist Church program schedule, Dec. 11, 1994

“You asked if we teach that it is a sin for Christians to observe non-biblical holidays which have origins in paganism, specifically Christmas, Halloween, and Easter?”

“We do not teach that it is a sin for Christians to do things that originated in paganism...Even the annual festivals God gave Israel ‘originated’ in paganism...”

“Christmas can focus entirely on parties, booze, and presents as a secular holiday, or it can focus on the coming of Christ. Much Christmas music is worshipful and inspiring in every right sense. Easter can focus entirely on eggs and bunnies, or it can focus on the death and resurrection of Christ. It depends on the person and what they do with it. Contrary to some of our former or traditional teaching, Christians who celebrate Easter are not ‘worshipping the sun.’”

“There is no sin in celebrating the coming of Jesus into the world...It is one thing to bow down and worship a Christmas tree. It is another to rehearse the birth narratives in Scripture...”

“Halloween...has become for most people a merely secular holiday. We don’t police what our members choose to do in regard to trick-or-treat with their children.”

Joseph Tkach Jr., “Is It a Sin to Keep Christmas, Halloween and Easter?”, cc:mail memo, (reply from WCG PCD) David Hunsberger, March 1995

250. PARTAKING OF THE PASSOVER

Once a Year or Of Undetermined Frequency?

OLD TEACHING:

“Paul gives directions regarding the Lord’s supper in the 11th chapter of I Corinthians. Some have misunderstood verse 26, which says: ‘As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup,’ and interpret it to say ‘take it as often as you please.’ But it does not say that!”

“It says ‘as often’ as we observe it, ‘ye do show the Lord’s death till he come.’ And Jesus commanded, ‘This do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me’ (verse 25). We do it in remembrance of THE LORD’S DEATH – a memorial of His death. And memorials of momentous occasions always are observed annually, once a year, on the anniversary of the even they commemorate.”

“Jesus instituted this New Testament ordinance on the eve of His death. It was the 14th Abib, Hebrew calendar. He was our Passover, sacrificed for

us – and He was sacrificed on the same exact day of the year that the Passover lambs always had been slain.”

“The first century Church of God, under the original apostles, continued to observe this solemn ordinance once a year at the set time.”

“Let us return to the faith once delivered. Let us humbly and obediently observe this solemn, sacred ordinance as we are commanded, and at the time set apart in the Bible...”

Herbert W. Armstrong, How Often Should We Partake of the Lord's Supper, pp. 9, 10, 12

NEW TEACHING:

“...we have no biblical reason to criticize people who observe [the Lord's Supper] more frequently...Jesus did not specify how often we should do it...”

“There is no command about how often we should commemorate the Lord's death, just as there is no command about how often we should fast.”

“The observance of the Lord's Supper is not mandated by the old covenant or the Hebrew calendar. It is mandated by Jesus Christ...”

“...frequency and the date of commemoration are policy decisions, not biblical commands. The Church may make policy decisions about when we partake of the bread and wine...”

The Worldwide Church of God, “Festivals” Study Paper, Feb. 14, 1995

251. THE SACRED CALENDAR

For Christians Today or For Ancient Israel Only?

OLD TEACHING:

“Here is the true calendar for all mankind. Its principles go back to the very first chapter of the Bible where the sun and the moon were appointed to be for signs, seasons, days and years (Gen. 1:14).”

“Holy days for several years in advance have been calculated to aid you in your plans to attend services and in your employment schedule.”

God's Sacred Calendar 1982-1983, pp. 1, 2

“[In Daniel 7:25] it is stated that this hierarchy [the “little horn” or last religious hierarchy of the Roman Empire] shall ‘think to change times and laws.’”

“In every possible manner, this power has changed TIME!”

“God begins the months with the new moons, but this [hierarchy] has induced the world to begin the months according to a clumsy man-made calendar of heathen origin.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Pagan Holidays—or God's Holy Days—Which?, pp. 1-2

NEW TEACHING:

“Our fast days and worship days are not determined by the Hebrew calendar, which was given to Israel alone as part of the old covenant.”

The Worldwide Church of God, “Festivals” Study Paper, Feb. 14, 1995

252. KEEPING THE SABBATH

Commanded in the New Testament or Not?

OLD TEACHING:

“The Book of Hebrews is LIVING Christ, TODAY!”
“I want you to see, now, theologians have never SEEN!”

“(Hebrews 3:7): ‘Wherefore, as the Holy Spirit saith, Today if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness...’”

“The marginal references render the word provocation as ‘at Meribah,’ and ‘temptation’ as *Massah*.’”

“This 95th Psalm, on which virtually the entire 3rd and 4th chapters of Hebrews is based, is a SABBATH PSALM. It records what David said, or preached, to the Congregation on a SABBATH day.”

“As David preached to the Congregation of Israel, so God inspires the WARNING to His Church, ‘Harden not your hearts, as at Meribah, as on the day at Massah in the wilderness.’”

“This REBELLION was rebellion AGAINST GOD’S SABBATH (Exodus 16)!”

“Under Joshua [the] people were reminded – on entering the Promised Land – type of OUR entering God’s Kingdom – NOT to ‘harden their hearts,’ as their forefathers had done, profaning God’s Sabbath; which prevented that generation from ENTERING this ‘REST,’ the Promised Land!”

“[The Adam Clarke *Commentary* explains Hebrews 4:9]:

“There remaineth, therefore, a REST [Greek: keeping of the 7th-day Sabbath] to the people of God.” Here the word “rest” is translated from an altogether different Greek word, originally inspired, as Paul wrote it, in GREEK: “Sabbatismos,” which means, NOT the same as “katapausis” [translated as *rest* in other places in Hebrews] – but “The keeping of a 7th-day SABBATH!”

“This is a plain, direct New Testament COMMAND for God’s Church to keep God’s SABBATH!”

“(Hebrews 4:11): ‘Let us LABOR therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief.’ Labor six days to enter the Sabbath Day rest, as a TYPE of laboring AGAINST SIN, to ENTER GOD’S KINGDOM.”

Herbert W Armstrong, “Have We, of All People, Been Neglecting God’s Sabbath?”, GN, May 1967

NEW TEACHING:

“Now that Christ has led us to understand and believe that the new covenant in his shed blood has made the old covenant obsolete...there are certain procedural matters that need clarification.”

"It is not easy to admit we have been wrong about our understanding and application of the Sabbath and the Holy Days, as well as other old covenant forms of worship, but we have."

"We can take great comfort in the fact that we no longer have to explain away (which is what it amounted to) some clear and plain words of the Bible."

"The Church must not teach what it has come to see is not true. The Sabbath does not appear in any of the 'sin lists' in the New Testament. Nor does it appear in any of the commands or lists of virtues in the New Testament."

"...the physical keeping of the Sabbath is not part of our new covenant obligation (Galatians 4:1-31)."

"To think that [the Sabbath], as an old covenant command, is still a requirement for the people of God, is to miss the point of it, to minimize the coming of the Messiah, and is no better than going back into animal sacrifices and circumcision."

"If we made [the Sabbath] a requirement for salvation or for membership, we are misusing it and imposing it in an inappropriate way upon the new covenant in the blood of Jesus Christ."

"...we will not continue to teach what we now realize the Bible teaches against – imposing old covenant observance of the Sabbath and the Holy Days as binding commandments under the new covenant."

*Joseph W. Tkach, Letter to Ministry,
PGR, Jan. 5, 1995*

253. WHY CHRIST KEPT THE SABBATH AND HOLY DAYS

To Obey God or Because He Was Jewish?

OLD TEACHING:

"Jesus Christ says, 'The Sabbath was made for MAN' – for all mankind! Remember? It was made WHEN man was made – at the time of Adam! There were no Jewish people then!"

"You cannot find any such term as 'the Jewish Sabbath' anywhere in the Bible! That is a derisive, scornful, contemptuous epithet. It came from non-Christians 'wolves in sheep's clothing' as Christ labeled them. They intended to deceive by creating prejudice against the Truth of God. It is the slurring, discrediting, misleading language and terminology employed by DECEIVERS, false prophets, and upholders of pagan doctrines and customs contrary to God's Word."

"YOU can have no salvation, unless you become, spiritually, a JEW! (Rom. 1:16)."

"So the true Christian will put out of his heart that prejudice and hatred against Jews."

"The Fourth Commandment of [God's] Law commands you to REMEMBER the Sabbath day, to keep it HOLY!"

“Jesus Christ KEPT THE SABBATH while He lived as a human on earth.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Which Day Is the Christian Sabbath?, pp. 100, 102, 103, 104, 105

NEW TEACHING:

“Jesus kept the Sabbath. He was born under the law, and he kept the law...When Jesus lived, the old covenant was still in force, so he lived by the terms of the old covenant.”

“In other words, he was perfect in all the laws of the old covenant – even the laws that the apostles came to see were no longer binding after Jesus was crucified and resurrected.”

Joseph W. Tkach, Letter to Ministry, PGR, Dec. 21, 1994

“Jesus observed the Holy Days because he was born under the law, while the old covenant was still in force (Galatians 4:4)...By comparison, Christians should be careful about using his example in cultural, time-bound circumstances.”

The Worldwide Church of God, “Festivals” Study Paper, Feb. 14, 1995

254. NEW TESTAMENT SABBATH

One Day a Week or Every Day All the Time?

OLD TEACHING:

“Some believe the keeping of God’s Ten Commandments is unnecessary for salvation. Many professing Christians believe they should keep nine of the commandments, the exception being the Sabbath command.”

“False teachers, with cunning deceptions, would become so diabolically effective, said Christ, that ‘if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect’ (Matt. 24:24). Already, some of the ‘very elect’ have listened to ‘false teachers’ and have been caught off balance.”

“[Some] Christian-professing teachers attempt to spiritualize away the fourth commandment. They claim to keep the Sabbath every day of the week...They vainly assume you can ‘keep’ the other six days ‘holy’ when God has not made them holy...man doesn’t have the power to make anything holy!”

R.F. McNair, “May a Christian Break the Letter of God’s Law?”, PT, Sep. 1979

NEW TEACHING:

“The spiritual keeping of the Sabbath – the entire new life lived through faith in Christ – is what is commanded.”

“No longer is only one day set aside for worship of God – we ourselves, as the people of God formed through faith in our Savior and Lord, are set aside for worship of God, every day, all the time.”

“We have, through faith in Christ, entered the spiritual reality of the Sabbath. We experience that freedom, that rest, in part in this age and will experience it fully in the age to come.”

Joseph Tkach Jr., Letter to Ministry, PGR, Dec. 5, 1995

“There is nothing in the new covenant that says we are required to keep the Sabbath according to the rules of the old covenant.”

“...the Sabbath rest for Christians in Hebrews 4 is the new life in Christ, not just a day of the week.”

“The new life in Christ is the true Sabbath rest. The observance of the day itself is a shadow of the reality.”

Joseph W. Tkach, Letter to Ministry, PGR, Dec. 21, 1994

“Question: Is the seventh day the Sabbath of the New Testament?”

“Answer: ...the Sabbath of the new covenant is the rest we have in Christ, not a 24-hour period of time in a week.”

“Question: Is Sunday, in any way the Sabbath of the New Testament?”

“Answer: No. There is no commanded ‘Sabbath of the New Testament.’ The Sabbath is fulfilled in Christ...If we are converted, then all day, every day should be lived in what the Sabbath pointed to: the ‘rest’ in Christ.”

Joseph Tkach Jr., E-mail to WCG ministry concerning Sabbath questions and answers, Jan. 1995

“The Christian Sabbath is the regenerated life of faith in Jesus Christ, in whom every believer finds true rest...physical Sabbath keeping is not required for Christians...”

Statement of Beliefs of the Worldwide Church of God, p. 8

255. HOLY TIME

Made by God or Made by People?

OLD TEACHING:

“[God] ‘HALLOWED’ the seventh day of every week (Ex. 20:11). He made it HOLY...”

“God has never made any other weekly day HOLY! Man has no authority to make a day HOLY. You cannot KEEP a day HOLY, unless God has first made it holy, any more than you can keep cold water hot – unless it has first been made hot! God made this space of time HOLY – He commands you to keep it that way!”

Herbert W Armstrong, Which Day Is the Christian Sabbath?, pp. 25, 27

“It is God’s character, His MIND – as summarized in the Ten Commandments – that makes Him Holy. *It is by our keeping these commandments with the power of God’s Spirit that we too are to become holy* and worthy of being called ‘holy ones’ or ‘saints.’ This is the exact definition

given in Revelation 14:12: 'Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.'"

"The Bible Answers," P.T. Jan. 1962

NEW TEACHING:

"The Sabbath and the Holy Days become holy time for us as we devote them to God, but they are not holy time in the sense that the old covenant is still in force. When the people of God, who are made holy through faith in Jesus Christ, devote time to the worship of God, that becomes holy time. It becomes holy time because it is devoted to God, who is holy, not because that particular time is itself holy."

*Joseph W. Tkach, Letter to Ministry,
PGR, Jan. 5, 1995*

Q. "When we talk about keeping the Sabbath according to the new covenant are we speaking of a specific period of time (the 7th day)?"

A. "...there is no holy place or holy time on earth under the new covenant, except for the time we devote in worship, prayer, and doing things that advance God's work...We also, by implication, mean not binding on Christians the weekly Sabbath as a criterion for being an authentic Christian."

*Joseph Tkach Jr., E-mail to WCG ministry concerning
Sabbath questions and answers, Jan. 1995*

"Nothing has been taken away from the level of devotion any member desires to give God on the Sabbath day. It is the time that we spend in devotion to him and in doing good works that is holy."

Joseph Tkach Jr., "Church Administration," PGR, Jan. 5, 1995

Q. "Since the Bible does not call the annual festivals Holy Days, and the New Testament does not call any day holy, why do you still refer to the festivals as Holy Days?"

A. "Since we have designated these days for worship meetings...we can legitimately call them Holy Days – days set apart for holy use. Even though some members may have to use the day for secular needs, we can still call the days holy because they are days designated for church-wide worship."

Joseph Tkach Jr., "Questions and Answers," PGR, June 14, 1995

Author's note: By this new definition of what makes time holy, Sunday just became the holiest day. This is because the vast majority of those that are now considered to be true Christians by the WCG meet on this day. When you combine this with the new teaching on Romans 14—that any day can be made acceptable to God by devoting it to Him—inductive reasoning trumpets that Christmas,

Easter and any other false Christian holidays are now made holy. You can now understand another reason why the WCG came to feel it is acceptable to observe these days.

256. “THE LORD’S DAY”

Day of God’s Intervention or Sunday?

OLD TEACHING:

“Right here, let’s put an end to the rebellious ARGUMENTS about Sunday being the ‘Lord’s Day.’ I will make to any reader this challenge: Produce any passage in the Bible identifying Sunday – or the first day of the week – as ‘the Lord’s Day,’ and I will proclaim the truth of that passage to the millions of people who hear *The WORLD TOMORROW* program on the air in every inhabited continent on earth, and publish it prominently in *The PLAIN TRUTH*, which now has a reading audience of about seven million people around the world.”

“But before anyone sends in Revelation 1:10, let me call to your attention the fact that 1) This verse is not referring to any day of the week, but to the general period of prophecy mentioned in more than 30 prophecies, as ‘the day of the Lord.’ ...The ‘day of the Lord’ is the era of time when God is going to intervene directly and supernaturally in world affairs, and begin the take-over of the governments of all nations. And, 2) This verse and its context make no reference to any day of the week, nor do they in any manner mention Sunday or ‘the first day of the week.’ Those who have associated it with Sunday have done so without Scriptural authority, and have thus deceived millions of people.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Which Day Is the Christian Sabbath?, pp. 46-47

NEW TEACHING:

“I’m afraid that I can’t be of too much help with your second question at this time because no conclusions have been announced from studies into the time of Christ’s crucifixion. These would be of a historical rather than a doctrinal nature primarily. We would tone down the rhetoric such as the exact length of time in the tomb being a ‘sign’ of Christ’s messiahship. The resurrection is the sign of that, not the length of time in the tomb.”

“We also know that [Christ’s] first appearances to the disciples were on Sunday. Thus, one could argue that regardless of the moment of the resurrection, Sunday was the first day they saw him alive again, and this is why the day came to be called by some the Lord’s Day.”

“Revelation 1:10 speaks of John being in the spirit on the Lord’s day. It is not entirely clear from the expression alone whether he refers to Sunday, which was often called the Lord’s Day or whether he refers to the ‘Day of the Lord,’ a time in prophecy when Christ returns to rule on earth.”

David G. Hunsberger, WCG PCD Letter to Member, May 23, 1994

Author's note: Now that Sunday was again seen as the "Lord's Day," the WCG decided, as the next quote will show, to pretend that the WCG under Mr. Armstrong occasionally held services on Sunday. With the exception of Pentecost services, this is utterly false.

"The Worldwide Church of God does not *normally* hold services on Sunday. *There have been exceptions such as evangelistic campaigns, areas where a minister has so many congregations that not all can meet on the Sabbath, or some other unusual circumstance.*"

David G. Hunsberger, WCG PCD, Apr. 29, 1994

257. TITHING

Required Under the New Covenant or Not Part of It?

OLD TEACHING:

"It does not say the law was abolished. The change in priesthoods makes necessary a CHANGE in the law. What law was thus changed? The very law this chapter is instructing New Testament Christians about – the TITHING Law! The sons of Levi have a commandment to take TITHES... according to the law" (verse 5).

"So tithing, far from being abolished, is NEW TESTAMENT Law! But, the priesthood being changed to that of Jesus Christ – the Melchisedec Priesthood restored – that tithing law is also changed of necessity, so as to become God's system for financing the ministry of Jesus Christ!"

"Actually, the law is merely restored as it was from the beginning!"

Herbert W. Armstrong, Ending Your Financial Worries, 1959

"The first tenth of every person's income belongs to God, not to the individual, and is to be paid to God's minister."

"...in Deut. 14:22-27, is written instruction for a second tithe, that is, a second tenth of income, to provide expense money for God's true people to attend God's festivals..."

"Then there is yet a third tithe, once every three years, to be given to the widows and orphans as God's insurance program."

Herbert W. Armstrong, "Why America Is Cursed!", GN, Nov. 1957

NEW TEACHING:

"Under the new covenant the tithe is voluntary..."

"What about saving second tithe?...it is only necessary to save enough for the Feast. Second tithe is not commanded and not a matter of obedience or sin under the new covenant."

“Should we continue to pay third tithe?...the three tithing system is not part of the new covenant.”

Joseph W. Tkach, Letter to Ministry, PGR, Jan. 5, 1995

“Giving tithes and offerings was commanded under the old covenant, but is a voluntary expression of worship and stewardship under the new covenant.”

Statement of the Worldwide Church of God, pp. 8-9

258. LIZARDS, SNAKES, SPIDERS AND SKUNKS

Not Suitable For Food or Perfectly Clean?

OLD TEACHING:

“Not that which enters into a man’s mouth, but the evil that comes out of his heart, defiles the man spiritually. What defiles the man – and [Christ] is speaking of defiling the man, not injuring the body – is transgression of the Ten Commandments – evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, blasphemy (Mark 7:14-23). These things have to do with physical laws of health. Specifically He was referring to a possible particle of dirt which might get on the food from dirty and unwashed hands – He was not here speaking of clean and unclean meats.”

“...if one deliberately [eats unclean food] out of lust of appetite, that breaks the tenth command and becomes sin.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “Is All Animal Flesh Good Food?”, WCG Reprint , 1973

NEW TEACHING:

“Is it a sin to eat unclean meat?”

“Read what Mark said in Mark 7:18-19: ‘Are you so dull?’ he asked.”

“Don’t you see that nothing that enters a man from the outside can make him “unclean”? For it doesn’t go into his heart but into his stomach, and then out of his body.’ (In saying this, Jesus declared all foods ‘clean.’)”

“...there is no scriptural requirement for Christians to abstain from unclean meat. We are not going to put people out of the Church or refuse to baptize them because they eat unclean meat.”

Joseph W. Tkach, Letter to Ministry, PGR, Jan. 5, 1995

Author’s note: Notice the following series of quotes that were found in four consecutive paragraphs of the same letter. They demonstrate the willingness to offend law-*keepers* in the name of not offending law-*breakers*. The real spirit behind avoiding offense is to not flaunt our freedom within God’s Law in front of, for instance, non-alcohol drinkers, vegetarians, etc. The following quote from a Bible study on Romans 14 given by Mr. Armstrong captures the spirit of what Paul really meant when he said we should not offend others: “We give up some things that it’s alright to do rather than let it cause offense to someone else who

doesn't understand as well as we do. *I don't mean that it's alright for us to do wrong, I'm talking about something that it is right for us to do.*"

"Do not cause anyone to stumble, Paul says, even as I try to please everybody in every way..."

"...Avoid offense, Paul says, even as I do..."

"Brethren, do not cause offense."

"We want to welcome pork-eaters in our fellowship. I know that some people will be offended that the Church would actually invite pork-eaters to attend our services. If that offends you, I am sorry."

Joseph Tkach, Jr., "Church Administration," PGR, June 14, 1995

259. SIN

Transgression of the Law or Rebellion Against General Morality?

OLD TEACHING:

"No one will say that Christians today are to continue in sin. But how can sin be avoided, unless defined? **WHAT IS SIN?**"

"Turn to I John 3:4, and you will read that 'SIN IS THE TRANSGRESSION OF THE LAW.'"

"(Romans 7:7) 'Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.'"

"Here Paul makes clear WHICH law defines sin. It is the Ten Commandments – the Law which includes 'Thou shalt not covet.'"

Herbert W. Armstrong, "Were the...Commandments Nailed to...Cross?", PT, Nov. 1956

"Do most so-called Christians really repent of sin? How can they, when today's religion teaches God's law is done away – teaches sin is merely the transgression of human conscience! One's conscience troubles him only when he does what he believes is wrong! As long as he believes God's law is harsh, unjust, and abolished in Christ – as long as he believes the way that seems right is right – as long as he believes the world's definition of sin, **HOW CAN HE REPENT OF REAL SIN – THE TRANSGRESSION OF GOD'S LAW?** How can he repent of what looks **RIGHT** to him – of that which appears attractive, alluring?"

Herbert W. Armstrong, "Two Definitions of Sin," PT, Apr. 1950

NEW TEACHING:

"One of the worst things that happened to me at Ambassador College was learning scripture cards it was all kinds of verses like I John 3:4, that I was to use when I went out in the field to put down 'the Protestant heresy.' And I've come to understand that it was the heresy."

"And we built doctrines on scriptures pulled here and there. We just have to face the truth, folks."

"You say, 'What about I John 3:4 – sin is the transgression of the law?'"

"Let's define sin. Now you say, 'But doesn't it say...in I John 3:4 that sin is the transgression of the law?' Let's see how sin is defined in the new story. 'Cause every Christian should live, we've been freed from the law, but not free to go into sin. But what is sin if we're to live not by the law?'"

"Notice what [Paul] uses as the gauge of sin – serving one another in love – of relationships. Now notice he says, 'The entire law is summed up in a single command.' Notice he does not use law in terms of the obligation of the Christian, but the command, 'love your neighbor as yourself.' 'If you keep on biting and devouring each other, watch out, you'll be destroyed.' That's sin."

"Rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions, envy, drunkenness. Notice that all of these things have to do with human behavior that is moral. Notice the outward observances aren't mentioned."

"1 John 3:4. 'Everyone who sins breaks the law.' But what is the law? Is he speaking of the Ten Commandments? In fact, sin – what is it? 'Is lawlessness.' Now your King James says that sin is the transgression of the law. That is a poor translation. In fact, that's an incorrect translation. Just like every modern translation, whether you speak of the NIV, which I'm reading from, the New American Standard Bible, even the New King James, translates *anomian* incorrectly. *A-n-o-m-i-a-n* does not refer to the Ten Commandments. *Anomian* refers to lawlessness, and in specific here, it refers to rebellion. *Lawlessness* here means rebellion."

"[John] defines sin as rebellion and as hating your brother...And he talks about Satan and this anomian attitude of hating one's brother, and he defines that as sin, because it breaks that one command – to love your brother the way Christ has loved us. You check it out for yourself. You get your Bible dictionaries out. I don't have time to spend here all day. Let us move on."

Earl Williams, Sermon #3 given in Atlanta, Georgia, Aug. 27, 1994

"Sin is lawlessness, that is, a state or condition of rebellion against God."

Statement of Beliefs of the Worldwide Church of God, p. 4

260. PERFECTION

Refers to Perfect Obedience or to a Pronouncement by God?

OLD TEACHING:

"Christ said: 'Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect,' so, professing Christians say, 'It's impossible to keep God's Law, let alone to be perfect. Christ kept it in our stead, and then abolished it.'"

Herbert W. Armstrong, Which Day Is the Christian Sabbath?, p. 45

NEW TEACHING:

"Perfection does not have degrees – either we are or we aren't perfect. 'We cannot attain godly perfection of our own by carefully following regula-

tions. Instead, we must be granted this perfection by what is called justification.”

“Justification occurs when God pronounces a believer righteous in his sight. Rather than being earned through obedience, justification is granted as a gift when Christians repent and believe in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.”

“Questions,” PT, Sep. 1994

261. FEAST OF TABERNACLES

Held in Geographical Locations or in Each Christian’s Heart?

OLD TEACHING:

“Now we come to the festival of Tabernacles – Feast of Booths – the sixth festival. Let us notice the instruction concerning this occasion:

“Thou shalt observe the feast of tabernacles seven days, after that thou hast gathered in thy corn and thy wine. And thou shalt rejoice in thy feast, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter...seven days shalt thou keep a solemn feast unto the Eternal thy God *in the place which the Eternal shall choose...*” (Deut. 16:13-15). ”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Pagan Holidays—or God’s Holy Days—Which?, p. 50

NEW TEACHING:

“The fact is, the Feast of Tabernacles...recalls the central purpose of human life. Jesus is to live or tabernacle within us now through the Holy Spirit...”

“The coming of Jesus Christ changed both the meaning and the way to observe all the festivals of the Old Testament.”

“God is no longer believed to be limited to a specific center or place. Christians do not necessarily need to go to one specific ‘place’ to be in God’s presence – nor do they need to build temporary huts.”

“Jesus Christ was God, and he was tabernacling, tenting or camping with humanity. There was no longer a need for a geographical place or religious site to represent this reality.”

“Christians are God’s temple (2 Corinthians 6:16). Thus, his people are always in the presence of God, no matter their geographical location.”

Paul Kroll, “In His Presence Forever,” PT, Sep. 1994

262. THE MILLENNIUM

A Literal Future Hope or Just a Metaphor for the Present?

OLD TEACHING:

“YOU DON’T HAVE TO BELIEVE IT! It will happen, regardless. It is sure – the world’s only sure hope. This advance good news of tomorrow is as certain as the rising of tomorrow’s sun.”

“Think of it. The glorified Christ – coming in all the splendor, the supernatural power and the glory of God Almighty – coming to save mankind alive – coming to stop escalating wars, nuclear mass destruction, human pain and suffering – coming to usher in peace, abundant well-being, happiness and joy for all mankind.”

“Yes, Jesus Christ very soon is going to return to this earth. He is coming in power and glory. He is coming to rule all nations!”

“...God marked out six millennial days to allow man to indulge in the spiritual labor of sin, followed by a millennium of spiritual rest, under the enforced Government of God.”

*Herbert W. Armstrong, The Wonderful World Tomorrow, 1979,
pp. 1, 34, 45, 48*

NEW TEACHING:

“God continually inspired Isaiah and the other Hebrew prophets with visions of a new age when righteousness and justice would triumph over sin and iniquity.”

“The Hebrew prophets did not intend to provide an exact physical description of what a reconciled world would be like.”

“References to topography, ethnic origins, gender, age, geography – all physical descriptors and limitations – need not be limited to a literal understanding.”

“For many centuries, students of the Bible have debated whether the prophet’s intent was literal or symbolic.”

“One major difficulty in assuming that Isaiah 11:6 [the wolf and the lamb, and the young lion and the fatling] has only a literal fulfillment is that physical changes alone do not solve spiritual inequities.”

“We should not view this scene as exclusively literal and we should avoid the temptation to allegorize it.”

“If we try to visualize God’s coming kingdom as merely a second physical Eden, we are confronted with questions that cannot be answered.”

[Author’s note: It’s not precisely literal, but it’s not a metaphor either.]

“For example, how might technology fit into a millennial Eden?”

“The kingdom of God results only when Jesus Christ is Lord, and for Christians that event happens when they accept Christ as their Lord and Savior. The kingdom of God is not defined physically.”

“The Jews...anticipated the inauguration of the kingdom pictured by Isaiah’s vision of reconciliation – the lion, lamb and other animals dwelling together in peace.”

“But Jesus did not fulfill their messianic expectations. He was not a war waging conqueror. His mission was as different from their expectations as a lion is from a lamb.”

“As Savior and Lord, Jesus not only enables redemption and reconciliation, he perfectly represents and fulfills the symbolic Lion and Lamb.”

*Greg Albrecht, “The Lion and the Lamb,”
PT, Oct. 1994*

“...when you read things in the prophets about the world tomorrow and great abundance and doing this and that, all of that’s talking about Christ primarily – physical blessings secondarily. The glorious abundance of the land – that’s about Christ and His salvation. When it talks about the gatherin’ together of days, that’s Christ and His salvation who fulfilled those days.”

Earl Williams, Sermon #2 given in Atlanta, Georgia, Aug. 20, 1994

263. KINGS AND PRIESTS OF GOD

Will Rule in the Millennium or Are Already Ruling Now?

OLD TEACHING:

“To the CHURCH...Jesus says, ‘He that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron...’ (Rev. 2:26-27).”

“In that passage of Scripture Jesus showed plainly why some are called out of this world into the Church at this present time. Not because he is trying to save the world, and we are part of the world. Not just that we may be saved and make it into his kingdom, but, as Jesus also said in Revelation 5:10, to be kings and priests and reign with and under Christ when he sets his hand to bring salvation to the world.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, Mystery of the Ages, pp. 236-237

NEW TEACHING:

“We are called to be a Kingdom of priests doing God’s work in this world.”

Joseph W. Tkach, Sermon given in Atlanta, Georgia, Dec. 17, 1994

“The gospel...is the good news that the kingdom of God has been inaugurated by the saving work of Jesus Christ.”

Statement of Beliefs of the Worldwide Church of God, p. 7

264. OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECIES

For Our time or Only for Ancient Israel and Judah?

OLD TEACHING:

“In the Bible alone you will find the advance news of what is now certain to occur – and occur it will before mankind blasts itself Out of existence.”

“But [an] objector might ask, are not most of the prophecies outdated Old Testament writings, addressed only to the ancient nation Israel, of no concern to us in our time? And the answer is an emphatic no! These scintillating, dynamic prophecies were, most of them, never given to ancient Israel.”

“The plain truth is, these prophecies were written for our people of our time, and for no previous people or time.”

"At the very close of his book, Daniel wrote: 'And I heard, but I understood not: then said I, O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things? And he said, Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end...and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand' (Dan. 12:8-10)."

*Herbert W. Armstrong, The United States and Britain in Prophecy,
1980, p. 7*

"But what, then, did Jesus mean by the statement, 'The law and the prophets were until John'? When Jesus spoke of the 'law and the prophets (Luke 16:16),' He was referring to the Old Testament."

"Jesus, therefore, meant that the Old Testament scriptures alone were preached until the coming of John the Baptist. That was all they had. The New Testament had not yet been written!"

"Christ preached the same Gospel as John! This is why He said that from the time of John the Baptist, the Gospel or good news of God's coming Kingdom was proclaimed."

"Questions & Answers," GN, Jan. 1981

Author's note: The second of the "New Teaching" quotes below explains why the above quote has been cited here.

NEW TEACHING:

"Though the Old Testament prophets unanimously attested that God was in charge of the future, the future they spoke about involved ancient Israel and Judah much more than specific and exact events of the late 20th century."

Neil Earle, "Amos: Upholding the Covenants," PT, Jan. 1995

"The End-Time Gospel overemphasizes Bible prophecy or singles out modern individuals or nations to fit private interpretations (2 Peter 1:20). In this view, preachers often see themselves in the role of Old Testament prophets delivering stern threats."

"They forget Luke 16:16: 'The Law and the Prophets were proclaimed until John [the Baptist].'"

Neil Earle, "A Gallery of Gospels," PT, Nov.-Dec. 1994

265. DAY OF THE LORD

Time of Christ's Return or God's Intervention at Any Time?

OLD TEACHING:

"The theme [of Revelation] is THE DAY OF THE LORD. Let us read it: 'I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice as of a trumpet' (Rev. 1:10)."

“It does not refer to any day of the week – but to that prophetic period referred to in more than 30 prophecies as ‘The great and terrible DAY OF THE LORD.’”

“The ‘Day of the Lord’ is described by the Prophet Joel as a time when God will send DESTRUCTION upon the unrighteous and sinning nations of the world. It is described by Zephaniah as the day of GOD’S WRATH. It is described all through the Revelation as the time when God Almighty will soon, now, step in and supernaturally INTERVENE in this hellish strife and friction and destruction among men, and send PLAGUES upon the sinners of the earth! It is the time which FOLLOWS the Great Tribulation, and leads up to and CLIMAXES in the glorious SECOND COMING OF CHRIST!”

Herbert W. Armstrong, The Book of Revelation Unveiled at Last, p. 9

NEW TEACHING:

“God inspired Amos to use the phrase ‘the day of the Lord’ (Amos 5:18-20).”

“‘The day of the Lord’ was a broader, more fluid concept than is usually thought.”

“Among the Hebrews,’ summarizes George R. Beasley-Murray, ‘the day of the Lord connoted above all the overthrow of the enemies of the Lord...This tradition of the holy wars of the Lord gave Israel a picture of a Lord who had power at all times to intervene in history to subdue those who had set themselves against him...Accordingly...whenever and wherever great political complications were to be seen on the horizon, especially when hostile armies approached, a prophet could speak of the coming day of Yahweh’ (Jesus and the Kingdom of God... pages 12-13).”

“Other prophets used this device: ‘The Day of the Lord is thus the occasion when Yahweh actively intervenes to punish sin that has come to a climax...’”

*Neil Earle, “Amos: Upholding the Covenant,”
PT, Jan. 1995*

266. THE KEY OF DAVID

Knowledge of Identity of Modern-Day Israel or Christ?

OLD TEACHING:

“I want you now to plant firmly in mind the specific nature and character of the covenant the Almighty made with David. For it is a vital link in the purpose and mission of Christ – an important KEY to Bible understanding!”

“Almighty God made an absolutely binding...covenant with David, unconditionally guaranteeing that there should never be a single generation from that time forward when there would not be a descendant of David, in UNBROKEN DYNASTY sitting on David’s throne, ruling over children of Israel! (II Sam. 7:4-5,12-16.)”

"Some will say, however, that this throne is established today in Christ. But Christ has not yet taken over this throne!...Jesus Christ will not sit upon the throne of David until His second coming to earth, yet in the future."

"[Under the] old coronation chair...in Westminster Abbey, London...lies a stone, said to have been brought to Ireland by Jeremiah the prophet and upon which many kings of Scotland and England have been coronated."

"The peoples of the United States, the British Commonwealth nations, and the nations of northwestern Europe are, in fact, the peoples of the TEN TRIBES of the HOUSE OF ISRAEL."

*Herbert W. Armstrong, The United States and Britain in Prophecy,
pp. 61, 63, 65, 12, 176*

NEW TEACHING:

"John wrote that Christ is the One 'who holds the key of David. What he opens no one can shut, and what he shuts no one can open'..."

"What was this key that unlocked a door that could not be shut?"

"...Christ has the key of David. He opens the door for the Church – his royal household – and allows it to come into the presence of God."

"In short, Christ has granted Christians access to God. No one can deprive them of that access, which really means God's bestowal on them of the gift of salvation."

Paul Kroll, "A Vision of Victory," PT, Mar. 1995

Author's note: The second- and third-largest "splinters" now teach that the Key of David is *government* in order to strengthen each leader's power to push through the man's *other* false doctrinal ideas.

267. ISRAEL AND JUDAH AS SEPARATE ENTITIES

Plain Fact or Difficult Idea to Sustain?

OLD TEACHING:

"...the ten-tribed people called Israel...are not Jews and never were Jews! Remember that the term 'Jew' is merely a nickname for 'Judah.' Hence, it applies to the one nation, or house of Judah only – never to the house of Israel."

"Jews are Israelites, just as Californians are Americans. But most Israelites are not Jews, just as most Americans are not Californians."

"For many generations Israel and Judah remained as separate nations, in adjoining territories, having their own separate kings. Why should ministers and professed Bible students be in ignorance of this, when four whole books of the Bible, I and II Kings and I and H Chronicles, are devoted to explaining it and recording the history of these separate, rival kingdoms? Look at the maps in the back of your Bible. There you will see the territories of each nation plainly shown."

“Yet many who come to see this distinction between Israel and Judah – between Jews and the other tribes – after having seen it as a great new light, will, by force of years of habit, fall right back into the old rut and apply texts referring to Israel to the Jews!”

*Herbert W. Armstrong, The United States and Britain in Prophecy,
pp. 78-79, 81-82, 84*

NEW TEACHING:

“Before Ezekiel’s time the Bible emphasized a sharp distinction between ‘House of Israel’ and ‘House of Judah.’...[However,] it is extremely difficult to sustain such a radical separation throughout the book [of Ezekiel]...”

“Ezekiel often interchanges *Israel, Judah and Jerusalem.*”

*N. Earle, “Keeping Hope Alive: Ezekiel’s Message and Commission,”
WN, Apr. 5, 1994*

268. OPEN DOOR BEFORE PHILADELPHIA

Opportunity to Preach Gospel or Access to Salvation?

OLD TEACHING:

“Of the ‘Philadelphia’ Church, Christ says, ‘I know that you have but little power.’ It is probably the WEAKEST in numerical and physical strength and power... Yet... THIS is the Church Christ uses as HIS INSTRUMENT in proclaiming His GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM – the GOVERNMENT of God – to the world. He sets before this Church an ‘OPEN DOOR,’ for the proclaiming of this Gospel to ALL THE WORLD (Rev. 3). The meaning of this ‘DOOR’ is explained in II Cor. 2:12-13 (see also I Cor. 16:9 and Col. 4:3). Paul said: ‘I came to Troas to preach Christ’s gospel, and a DOOR was opened to me of the Lord.’ This was a means to preach the Gospel in EUROPE.”

“But SOME of those in the Church today will grow weary with well-doing. They will brag about being the true Church – thinking they are spiritually rich, when they are, in fact, almost spiritually destitute. Because they are indifferent to the real WORK OF GOD, lukewarm, lacking in zeal, Christ will spew them out of His mouth. THEY cannot be used in His work! THEY shall lose the very salvation they boast of having unless they repent!”

*Herbert W. Armstrong, “Must Ministers Be Ordained by the Hand of Man?”,
GN, Oct. 1962*

NEW TEACHING:

“[One] interpretation of the open door and key statements is that the open door set before the Church was a wide-open opportunity to engage in evangelistic activity and preach the gospel.”

“However, the Old Testament background of the key and door metaphor works against this idea. The prophet Isaiah (Isaiah 22:22) was speaking of access, not evangelism.”

"In short, Christ has granted Christians access to God. No one can deprive them of that access, which really means God's bestowal on them of the gift of salvation."

"There is no evidence to justify interpreting these passages as an explanation of the Church's missionary activity."

Paul Kroll, "A Vision of Victory," PT, Mar, 1995

269. MEANING OF PENTECOST

The First of Two Harvests or The Complete Harvest Now?

OLD TEACHING:

"Pentecost is to remind us every year that we (the Church) are only the FIRST small harvest of God's calling people for salvation OUT OF A WORLD THAT IS WHOLLY, except for us, CUT OFF FROM GOD, AND THAT HAS BEEN SINCE ADAM!"

"On the 15th day of the seventh month begins the FEAST OF TABERNACLES – the MILLENNIUM – the time of the physical fall harvest in Jerusalem and environs and the time when ALL THEN LIVING SHALL BE CALLED and given the chance to repent, believe and receive salvation."

*Herbert W. Armstrong, "Why Many Don't Understand Pentecost,"
GN, May 1981*

NEW TEACHING:

"The Holy Spirit was given to the apostles on Pentecost so they would be bold witnesses for Jesus Christ..."

"Pentecost was originally a harvest festival. Today this festival pictures a spiritual harvest – the fruit or result of the Church's commission to evangelize."

"Luke paints a picture for us of thousands of Christian men and women fleeing from Jerusalem...As they traveled, no doubt they would be asked why they were moving away from Jerusalem. No doubt they told all who asked. This is the fruit of the Holy Spirit! This is the spiritual harvest pictured by Pentecost! These people were ready to give an answer."

Joseph W. Tkach, Letter to Ministry, PGR, Mar. 23, 1994

Q. "What significance does the Day of Pentecost have for Christians?"

A. "...observing the Day of Pentecost focuses our attention on Jesus Christ's and the Holy Spirit's work of sanctification in the lives of individual Christians as well as on Christ's and the Spirit's work of leading and inspiring the Church to preach the gospel."

"Questions," PT, May-June 1994

"On the first Christian Pentecost, God empowered the Church, through the Holy Spirit, to start the work of the great commission – to make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:19-20)."

“The Day of Pentecost focuses our attention on God’s work of sanctification in us individually, and on the Church’s collective work of preaching the gospel.”

*George Hague, “A Brief History of Salvation,”
PT, Sep. 1994*

“[The annual festivals] are commemorations and celebrations of his plan of salvation through Jesus Christ – from the cross to Pentecost to the second coming.”

*Joseph W. Tkach, “A Framework for Christian Celebration,”
PT, Oct. 1994*

Author’s note: The plan of God goes well beyond Christ’s Second Coming. What happened to the Second Resurrection? This is another doctrine that was conveniently left out of the 1995 *Statement of Beliefs*. See “The Millennium” statement.

“The Millennium is the time span described in the book of Revelation during which the resurrected saints reign with Jesus Christ for a thousand years. After the Millennium, when all enemies will have been put under his feet, and all things made subject to him, Christ will deliver the kingdom to God the Father, and both heaven and earth will be made new.”

Statement of Beliefs of the Worldwide Church of God, p. 9

Author’s note: As previous points in this book demonstrate, we should not confuse references here to the Millennium as a literal belief in the one-thousand-year reign of Christ over the earth, as we all once understood it.

270. NAME OF TRUE CHURCH

One Proof of Its Identity or Not Important?

OLD TEACHING:

“In addition to being a small persecuted Church kept completely separate from the pagan doctrines, religious holidays, and heathen philosophies fostered by ‘mother’ Rome, and in addition also to the fact that it keeps all ten of the Ten Commandments of God, and that it has the right spiritual attitude and willingness to repent, to change, to grow – the true Church should also have the name God intended His Church to bear as one of its identifying signs.”

“God’s true Church was NEVER named after some religious leader, or some particular doctrine, or some type of church government or method of doing things! The Scriptural teaching shows that it was always named after

God Himself...Therefore, in twelve places in the New Testament it is called 'The Church of God.'"

*R.C. Meredith, "The Reason Behind Today's Religious Confusion,"
PT, June 1959*

NEW TEACHING:

"Let's understand something important. *Titles, labels, lineage, or even a set of doctrines, are not what make us God's people.* God makes us his people."

"What we become as a result of the grace of God working in us is the real issue – not whether we belong to the right organization."

Joseph W. Tkach, Co-worker Letter, Feb. 25, 1992

271. MILITARY SERVICE

Wrong for Christians to Participate in or Opportunity for Service?

OLD TEACHING:

"It is the conviction and firm belief of this Church and its membership that Christian disciples of Christ are forbidden by Him and the Commandments of God to kill, or in any manner directly or indirectly to take human life, by whatsoever means; and we believe that bearing arms is directly contrary to this fundamental doctrine of our belief; and we *therefore conscientiously refuse to bear arms or to come under the military authority.*"

Constitution and By-Laws of the Radio COG Article X, Section 2, Oct. 24, 1948

"You were bought with a price; do not become slaves of men' (Verse 23). This one verse alone, coupled with the fact that a soldier is not a free man, PROHIBITS A CHRISTIAN FROM ENTERING INTO MILITARY SERVICE IN ANY CAPACITY, COMBATANT OR NONCOMBATANT!"

"Noncombatant status is that of a serviceman who will not engage in actual shooting or killing. Such a person may be in the medical corps. He may help the wounded, but he does not carry or use weapons."

"Some people reason that such a position is not wrong since it does not require active participation in killing others."

"[An] important principle about noncombatant service concerns the possibility of being partakers (and therefore guilty) of other men's sins."

"A person who participates in a military organization...becomes a partaker of the evil deeds of men and machines that take life."

L. Leroy Neff "Should You Be a Military Slave?", GN, Dec. 1963

NEW TEACHING:

"[An] option for conscientious objectors in some countries is to enter the military service as a noncombatant."

"Noncombatant status in military service does not involve shooting or killing. Such a person may be in the military corps and may help the wound-

ed, but he or she does not carry or use weapons. A Christian may assist and help the wounded following the example of the good Samaritan.”

Military Service and War, p. 5

272. MIRACULOUS HEALING IN THE WCG

Working of the Holy Spirit or Witchcraft?

OLD TEACHING:

“Then one was brought to Him who was demon-possessed, blind and mute; and He healed him, so that the blind and mute man both spoke and saw. And all the multitudes were amazed and said, ‘Could this be the Son of David?’ But when the Pharisees heard it they said, ‘This fellow does not cast out demons except by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons.’”

Matthew 12:22-24, NKJV

“...the scoffing Pharisees accused Jesus of being a false prophet – they denied that this was actually GOD’S WORK – they said Jesus did not cast out demons by any power except that of Beelzebub, or Satan.”

“Any person could be forgiven for speaking against the Son of MAN – that is, the human Jesus. Speaking against a human man can be forgiven. But when they spoke against THE WORK OF GOD being done thru that man, they were speaking against the HOLY SPIRIT!”

“The FRUITS of this work are these: For the first time in more than 1850 years the same Gospel Jesus preached, THE KINGDOM OF GOD, is being preached and published into all the world as a witness. It is offending many in this world. The religious leaders of today – the *modern Pharisees* – *attack it as the work of the Devil* – they call us false prophets, as they did Jesus...New churches are being raised up around the world...*The sick are being healed, the demons cast out.*”

“This work has grown too great and powerful to be the work of a human man, apart from either God or the devil. If this is not the very WORK OF GOD, then it must be that of SATAN. And to accuse it – to condemn it – I ask you, brethren, IS IT NOT MORE THAN POSSIBLE THAT THIS IS SPEAKING AGAINST THE HOLY SPIRIT, and therefore is the UNPARDONABLE SIN?”

*Herbert W. Armstrong, “How You Could Commit the Unpardonable Sin!”,
GN, Mar. 1960*

NEW TEACHING:

“Just because something works doesn’t mean that it is right. Witchcraft works. You can consort with evil spirits and it works, but it’s wrong to do – it’s not right.”

“It’s witchcraft to think that God has to give you a miracle. The essence of witchcraft is that you know the secret words or the secret sayings or the secret acts to do to compel the gods to obey you. That’s the essence of witchcraft.”

"And, unfortunately, that's what some people practice in their notion of healing. 'I'm not going to a doctor. I'm not going to do anything. I'm just getting anointed.' In thinking they were relying on God, they were actually practicing witchcraft..."

"The Bible is very complete in portraying to us a picture of God's character, but it's not complete in portraying the picture of God's nature. The spirit world is not completely explained in the Scripture. It's because God doesn't want us dabbling in the spirit world."

*Joseph Tkach Jr., "Truth and Change,"
Sermon given in Pasadena, Aug. 3, 1991*

273. THE APOSTLES' CREED

Fraudulent or Not Objectionable?

OLD TEACHING:

"The Apostles' Creed was not written by the apostles and is not part of the Bible. It is a mixture of truth and error and is absolutely uninspired."

"[Bishop Joseph] Bingham also tells us [in his book *Antiquities of the Christian Church*] that it was originally called the 'Roman Creed' as evidenced by the phrase, 'I believe in the Holy Ghost, THE HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH.' It was drawn up by the members of that Church after the pagan doctrines and customs of the Western Roman Empire – Easter, Christmas, Sunday – had been accepted as 'Christian' traditions. It, therefore, became necessary to imply apostolic approval to the new doctrine of the church! This creed was fraudulently written and entitled the 'Apostles' Creed' for such a purpose."

WCG PCD Letter 917, 1959

NEW TEACHING:

"The Apostles' and Nicene Creeds are universally accepted in Christendom and we have no objection to their statements."

David G. Hunsberger, Personal Letter to Member, PCD, Nov. 1993

274. RELIGIOUS TITLES

Inappropriate for All or Only for WCG Ministers?

OLD TEACHING:

"Then Jesus spoke to the multitudes and to His disciples, saying: The scribes and the Pharisees...love the best places at feasts, the best seats in the synagogues, greetings in the marketplaces, and to be called by men, 'Rabbi, Rabbi.' But you, do not be called 'Rabbi'; for One is your Teacher, the Christ and you are all brethren. Do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven."

Matthew 23:1-2, 6-9, NKJV

“True Christian disciples are warned not to assume these exalted titles of ‘Rabbi,’ ‘Father’ or ‘Master’ such high, eminent titles of respect are deserved only by God. He is Master and Lord. He is the spiritual Father of the faithful. The Pharisees had no right to arrogate to themselves such titles, and neither does any minister. Today, however, the majority of Christian ministers are appropriating as a designation the very names that God says not to use. How many priests today are called ‘Father’? How many ministers use the title of ‘Reverend’ which, in the Scripture, is used only as a designation of God? (Psa. 111:9).”

“Is Judaism the Law of Moses?”, GN, Dec. 1961

NEW TEACHING:

“...reverend is a customary title for pastors in some denomination(s)... We do not want to use ‘reverend’ for pastors in the Worldwide Church of God, but we do not prohibit its use for others.”

“The November/December *Plain Truth* calls a Catholic priest ‘Father Tom.’ Does this violate Matthew 23:9?”

“Jesus taught his followers not to give anyone adoration that would exalt a person to near-divine status and to avoid titles that suggested adoration.”

“But the title itself is not wrong. In the *Plain Truth* article, for example, the word ‘Father’ indicates a man’s role in the community. He is a priest, and the community knows him by the name ‘Father Tom.’...We respect the man’s work, which is done in association with his title...”

Joseph Tkach Jr., “Questions and Answers,” PGR, Oct. 18, 1994

275. ATTENDING A CHURCH

A Matter of Free Moral Agency or Nonsensical Intimidation?

OLD TEACHING:

“God commands you to convoke or meet with other true believers whenever *this is possible* on the Sabbath.”

“However, this does not mean that you are to meet on that day or any other day with those who are blinded to God’s truth and refuse to keep *all* His commandments.”

“Christian fellowship should be with other people ONLY through God and His Spirit. God give the Holy Spirit to them that OBEY Him (Acts 5:32). So remember that you cannot have true fellowship through Satan, or his ministers, or his churches who refuse to obey God’s commandments.”

Roderick C. Meredith, “Rejoice In God’s Sabbath!”, GN, Dec. 1962

NEW TEACHING:

“You mentioned people who have come to the WCG from other churches. You asked why they needed to do so. Let me put it this way. If any of us had actually had faith in Jesus, if we had actually believed the gospel, if we had actually been living Christian lives and being nurtured in the faith in those

churches, then we would not have left them. God brought us here because he was bringing us to him as it pleased him, putting us in the Body of Christ as it pleased him (even though some of us undoubtedly made the decision to come to this church for the wrong reasons). Until we came here, we had not yet come to the place in the Body of Christ where God wanted us to be."

"Those who came here from other churches came because they either did not yet have faith in Jesus where they were, or because they had no place they could, in clear conscience, work out that faith."

"The question you posed: 'Why didn't I just stay where I was?' is easy to answer when we understand that God calls us to faith in Christ, not to membership in a human organization. If you had been converted and in fellowship with other converted people where you were, you would have stayed there... You came here in search of something, and found a church that was focused on many things, some of which have now been found not to be valid."

Joseph W. Tkach, Letter to Member, Feb. 9, 1994

"Although we recognize that there are Christians who are not members of the Worldwide Church of God, this does not give us an excuse to leave the Church where God has placed us."

"It is here that God has placed us in the Body, and it is here that he expects us to work together in the gospel."

"To leave the very fellowship through which God has brought us to this point of spiritual growth is to take what God has given and refuse to use it for the mutual strengthening of the whole Body."

"To leave the Church is to bail out on the God of grace and love, who is at work in his Church."

"What can they expect to find in some other fellowship? Either they will continue to hide from the gospel in some rebellious and self-righteous splinter group, or they will eventually submit to God's loving pressure and believe the gospel."

"They may offer emotional comfort by teaching things you already agree with, but at what price?... Will they lead you toward faith in Christ, love for one another and being led by the Holy Spirit?"

"To summarize again: We should stay in the Church, but we should not be preoccupied with our group identity."

"Personal from Joseph W. Tkach," WN, Dec. 13, 1994

276. BRIDE OF CHRIST

To Marry Christ at His Return or
Married Now to a Church Government?

OLD TEACHING:

"Oh, that you would bear with me in a little folly – and indeed you do bear with me. For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed

you to *one* husband, that I may present you as a chaste *virgin* to Christ. But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he who comes preaches *another Jesus* whom we have not preached, or if you receive a *different spirit* which you have not received, or a *different gospel* which you have not accepted, you may well put up with it...For *such are false apostles*, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works."

II Corinthians 11:1-4, 13-15, NKJV

"And as soon as the Work began to expand and I was taken to Hollywood and New York and Chicago and different places in order to get the Word of God going on radio stations coast to coast and all over the nation, I only needed to be gone about 40 days and the people say, 'Oh, as for this Herbert W. Armstrong, we want not what is become of him. Let's go off into some other doctrines and let's get off into other...let's throw away this truth. I have seen it happen. What kind of human beings are we anyhow? And I found *they'd only been looking to a man in the first place. My friends. I'm not trying to get you to look at me. I'm trying to get you to look at Jesus Christ – He's your Saviour...*"

Herbert W. Armstrong, Taped Bible study on Hebrews

NEW TEACHING:

"There will be different perspectives in different administrations...but the Church is meant to be one, not to be divided..."

"We have to realize that no human family, a husband and a wife or parents and children, always agree at every point on everything. But this does not mean that if the decision has been made as the direction of the family should go as to that direction that those who may not have concurred necessarily must leave simply because they don't agree. That simply makes no sense...The government of God in the Church should be like that as also in the home."

"Any person, anywhere who says I would not be here if I didn't agree 100% might just as well leave today, because that's impossible. Has any husband ever found a wife who will agree with him 100%?"

"And this is basic to problems of divorce in the world – basic to the whole history of Christian division for centuries."

Dr. Herman Hoeh, "Unfinished Business" Taped Sermon, Mar. 5, 1994

"Although we recognize that there are Christians who are not members of the Worldwide Church of God, this does not give us an excuse to leave the Church where God has placed us."

"Even though we have been baptized into Christ rather than into any denomination, we still have obligations to the denomination into which God

called us. We pledge to work within the group, that part of the Body of Christ that God used to lead us to an unconditional surrender to Christ. We agree to work together, to provide mutual support, to love each other, to help each other, to support each other's burdens."

"There are numerous parallels we could draw with marriage and divorce."

"Personal from Joseph W. Tkach," WN, Dec. 13, 1994

277-280. CONCLUDING

Author's note: The next four changes conclude the book and must be studied as a package. They address what the fundamental issue is, and what God expects each person to do about it. The first two changes show what the real issue has always been, which is whether we believe that the Bible is the Word of God and must be obeyed, or whether the ideas of men have final authority in our lives. The last two changes expound the responsibility that God has placed on the shoulders of parents and ministers in teaching and guiding those He has placed under them, when confronted by deceivers. Change number 280 will tell you as much about how I think as a minister of Christ, with a clear responsibility from God, as any other part of this book.

277. BIBLE SCHOLARSHIP

Based on the Holy Spirit or
A Simple Matter of Listening to Others?

OLD TEACHING:

"One reason more professing Christians aren't able to GROW constantly in grace and knowledge and understanding of prophecy is that they are not EMPOWERED by God's Holy Spirit to grasp and understand the Bible and to overcome themselves in living it."

"This involves a grasp of the laws and principles of the Bible – a real KNOWING of God's will and purpose. This is something that many men have sought after their whole lifetime without ever finding it! But it can come through surrender to God and the receiving of His Holy Spirit."

Roderick C. Meredith, "What the Holy Spirit Can Do for You!", PT, Nov. 1961

NEW TEACHING:

"An old saying around Bible colleges goes, 'When you realize that a story has a beginning, a middle and an end, you're then called a Bible scholar.'

"Overly simple? Maybe not."

“Gundry said: ‘We are a community of faith, so we need to ask others what they think the Bible has to say. We need to learn from one another.’”

Paul Kroll, “A Vision of Victory,” PT, Mar. 1995

Author's note: The above quoted article made no mention whatsoever of the Holy Spirit or the need for God's guidance in understanding the Bible.

278. THE BIBLE

**Follow It as the Inspired Word of God or
Follow a Spirit That Rejects It?**

OLD TEACHING:

“The Pharisees came to the place of believing that God did not reveal Himself in the Scriptures alone – ‘speaking not alone in the words of an ancient text’ – but that He was actively revealing His present truth to the Pharisees through influencing their hearts and consciences! You can imagine what unlimited authority this gave the Pharisees among those who accepted their beliefs.”

“They did not believe they had to be shackled to the teaching of the Scriptures!”

“The ideas and beliefs of the Pharisees originated in their own minds!”

“The Pharisees claimed that the Holy Scriptures alone were not sufficient to give the complete truth of God – especially since environmental conditions change.”

“With the ‘feeling’ that they had the spirit of God guiding them, the Pharisees began to make more laws and commandments of their own, without appealing to the Scriptures.”

“They maintained that many of their new teachings, which were clearly contrary to the written Word of God, were actually the present will of God. This is one of the reasons the Pharisees taught new commandments without Scripture proof!”

“This is the very same philosophy that is pervading our modern Christianity! How many times do we meet with statements from the learned theologians of the various Christians' sects saying the same thing today? Almost everyone feels that the Bible is out of date – is old-fashioned. Millions assume it is impossible to keep God's laws and commandments in this ‘modern’ age. Let us clearly understand that the Bible is not out of date. It can be obeyed, and in fact, it had better be obeyed! Let us not be like the Pharisees who rejected the Scripture. They received the stern rebuke of Christ. Let us, on the other hand, obey – live by – every word of God (Matt. 4:4).”

*“Is Judaism the Law of Moses?”,
GN, Aug. 1961*

"Next, I determined not to accept the Bible unless PROVED to be the inspired revelation from God. And patient study and research brought the PROOF ABSOLUTE! I found it PROVED to be the Maker's INSTRUCTION BOOK regarding the product He had made – the human family. I found it to be the very FOUNDATION of all knowledge – the basic REVELATION of knowledge otherwise utterly inaccessible to man! The basic FOUNDATION of knowledge is the answer to the question: WHAT is man? WHY is he here?"

"Science has no answer to these questions. The BIBLE has ALL THE ANSWERS! The Bible, I found, NEEDS NO INTERPRETING. It interprets itself! But men, I discovered, jumped the track of TRUTH by interpreting the Bible."

*Herbert W. Armstrong, Dear Friend and Plain Truth Subscriber letter,
Nov. 18, 1965*

"Most fundamentalist believers assume, on sheer faith, never having seen proof, that the Holy Bible is the very Word of God. Very few people have stopped to prove whether or not the Bible is really the inspired Word of God. Very few people TREMBLE before what it says or regard it as having REAL AUTHORITY."

"Some people will say answered prayer is the proof of inspiration. But the skeptic has had no prayers answered. He doesn't believe that anybody ELSE has. There is, however, one source of irrefutable PROOF!"

"The Bible itself..."

Herbert W. Armstrong, The Bible – Superstition or Authority?, 1985

"Do you know what Jesus Himself said of these people who want to worship Him without obedience to God's Commandments?"

"Listen to His words: 'Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men...Full well do ye reject the Commandments of God, that ye may keep your own tradition' (Mark 7:6-9)."

"But what does GOD tell you in His Word?"

"Through Jude, God says: 'Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. For there are certain men crept in unawares... ungodly men, turning the GRACE of God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ' (Jude 3-4)."

"Yes, even before the New Testament was completely written, ungodly men had crept inside the Church to corrupt it – turning GRACE into LASCIVIOUSNESS."

"And what is 'lasciviousness'? It means 'license' – unrestrained liberty – abuse of privilege. In other words, license to do that which seems right in human eyes – according to human conscience – though it disobeys God's LAW!"

Herbert W. Armstrong, "How to Be Saved!", PT, July 1960

NEW TEACHING:

“We need to learn to read the [Bible] from its own point of view...The biblical authors did not write with the later history of the Christian church in mind. They wrote...to address the religious needs of particular communities at particular points in time.”

“*Cornerstones*,” *Quote from Richard A. Muller, PT, Jan. 1995*

“...a book we know as Revelation or the Apocalypse was written to encourage the Church and to restore its faith.”

“...Revelation does not offer – nor has it ever offered – a blueprint of future events.”

“Revelation was originally written to help the first-century Church with its spiritual concerns.”

Paul Kroll, “A Vision of Victory,” PT, Mar. 1995

Author's note: The above quote is an absolutely astonishing statement! This false view of Revelation could have been its own important separate change. Some of the “splinters” allow teachings like this to condition them into avoiding prophecy and the book of Revelation in their groups.

“The belief that the Christian should be feasting physically on the Passover, or eating the Lord’s Supper, is a *neo-Corinthian* blunder.”

“It is often noted that the early church was ‘zealous for the law’ (Acts 21:20), and that there are indications that the early Christians did not suddenly break ties with earlier tradition.”

“As the growing household of faith, *the church had to learn how to put away childish things* (*I Corinthians 13:11*). Today, the Christian is not called to rediscover the practices of the earliest Christian church and follow them. ‘Christ’s call was to a life guided by the Holy Spirit. The Spirit was to guide the church “into all truth” (*John 16:13*).’”

K.J. Stavrinides, “Christ and the Passover,” Reviews You Can Use May-June 1990

“And then you find that Paul at the first ministerial conference that was around 49 AD that you can read about in *Acts 15*, that the apostles together said that people should abstain from pollutions of idols, from things strangled, from blood – that you just don’t eat those things. And that was the final decision – to abstain from eating meats offered to idols.”

“But then years later around 60 AD in the early 60’s you find in the book of *I Corinthians* Paul says, ‘Don’t...’ he doesn’t say that you must abstain, he says, ‘Well, for conscience sake if it’s going to offend somebody then don’t eat it.’”

“He’s changing something that all the apostles had agreed upon earlier. Because God’s Spirit leads us into new truth. The idea that there is no new truth is patently ridiculous.”

Joseph Tkach Jr., “Born from Above,” sermon played in all churches, Sep. 1992

“Some ask, ‘But if we’re just looking to Christ then, but don’t we have to have some principle to live by?’”

“But again, the point is that it is not a principle or a code.”

“For example, just to give you what I mean, if you were to take even the New Testament and get locked into everything that is there, is that enough? Nope. You could not arrive at the conclusion that slavery was wrong by reading the New Testament. In fact, when Onesimus ran away from Philemon, Paul didn’t send him on the underground railroad to north to freedom. He sent him back to his master and he said, ‘Slave be obedient to your masters.’”

“But Christ is alive. And in the 18th century God inspired a man...who reasoned not from a principle, but reasoned from the resurrection of Jesus Christ and the gospel that slavery was immoral. Paul didn’t even see that.”

Earl Williams, Sermon #1 given in Atlanta, Georgia, Aug. 13, 1994

“Jesus observed the Holy Days because he was born under the law, while the old covenant was still in force...By comparison, Christians should be careful about using his example in cultural, time-bound circumstances.”

“The early Church also observed the festivals, since the first Christians were Jewish...Their example isn’t authoritative. Our standard must be the Bible, particularly the new covenant.”

The Worldwide Church of God, “Festivals” Study Paper, Feb. 14, 1995

“Some theologians see the several ambiguities of the received text and the lack of any original autographs as God’s way of keeping us on our toes and of keeping us from making Scripture an idol!”

“Letters,” PT, July 1994, p. 24

“Each person will want to obey God not because of some list of rules written down somewhere, but because he or she has an obedient attitude...”

Joseph W. Tkach, Letter to Ministry, PGR, Dec. 21, 1994

“Through His words and deeds [Christ] was failing to tell the people, ‘I have come now. Look to Me, not to the Book of the Law’”

“Jews have the writings of the Old Testament – of Moses and Ezekiel and Isaiah. But all them good old boys are dead!”

“All other religions, even Judaism, have to look to a dead man Moses and his writings. We have a living Savior. That’s Christianity. Unless we choose not to follow Him, but rules and laws.”

“Some feel a loss, and I can understand that. When your whole belief system has been based upon codes and laws for all these years...you do feel

loss. You say, 'Now what?' And Christ says, 'Here I am.' The law is replaced by Christ – transformed into Him"

"Don't we need,' some will say, 'but don't we need the law to point out sin?' Yes, but which law? The law of Moses or the law of Christ which is Himself?...Don't you think that Christ can do a much better job in pointing out sin than a written code?"

"Others will say, 'But don't we need the law as a guide for the right way? Otherwise, we'll get off into the wrong way and sin.' To the Christian, Jesus says, 'I am the life of the world. Whoever follows Me will never walk in darkness.' That's your guarantee about immorality, for a true Christian."

"And people who are not Christians, I thank God that we have written codes...The law is made for unconverted people. For converted people we have Christ."

Earl Williams, Sermon #1 given in Atlanta, Georgia, Aug. 13, 1994

"Do you realize all of scripture is written to support that Christ is the Messiah? Christ didn't come to confirm the scriptures or the law."

"See, the Bible, I hope this doesn't sound sacrilegious to you, but the Bible, you might as well read some other book. Now it's got some good things in it. You see, even in the Koran it says to love your neighbor. I don't know if you realize that."

"In the writings of many philosophers and religions they all talk about loving your neighbor."

Earl Williams, Sermon #3 given in Atlanta, Georgia, Aug. 27, 1994

Author's note: Was the above teaching just the opinion of Earl Williams? The next quotes reveal that the idea of totally rejecting the Bible was accepted even by the top administration of the WCG.

"Enclosed are copies of three studies published by *Verdict, An International Journal of Theology*. They are written by Robert D. Brinsmead..."

"I believe you will find them helpful as you study to become better acquainted with the doctrinal change the Church has made."

Joseph W. Tkach, Letter to Ministry, Jan. 26, 1995

Author's note: The next quote is taken from the studies referred to by Mr. Tkach above.

"...[Paul] echoes Jesus' critique of the Pharisaic religion of Scripture. 'You search the Scriptures,' Jesus said, 'because you think that in them you have eternal life' (John 5:39). Paul said there was no life in the Law just as Jesus had said there was no life in the book."

“Scripture itself is not the Word of God but a witness to the Word of God. The Word of God is ‘living and active’ (Heb. 4:12); it is ‘spirit and life’ (John 6:63). Jesus said that there is no life in a book (John 5:39).”

“If today we try to use the Bible as an elaborate rule book for conduct and theology, it becomes a Christian version of Judaism – a religion of the book...”

“If the Bible, especially the New Testament, were meant to be an all-sufficient rule book for Christian living, it would not be so unsystematically written in bits and pieces and have so little to say on so many perplexing social, moral and theological questions.”

“...it is Christ alone who is the Word of God. Scripture can never have this position of preeminence. Scripture, Old and New Testaments, can faithfully witness to God’s Word but it is never in itself God’s Word in the primary sense of the term. To assert that is not only bad theology, it is also idolatrous.”

R. D. Brinsmead, “A Manifesto of Christian ‘Atheism’,” Verdict Essay 31, 1987

279. TEACHING CHILDREN LIES

Condemned by God or Commanded by God?

OLD TEACHING:

“How does Satan keep his world brainwashed into his false beliefs and ways?”

“Satan begins his work of deception WITH LITTLE CHILDREN!”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “Your Children — Future Gods?”, GN, Sep. 1979

“Why should God seem UNREAL – like an almost invisible filmy wisp – or a phantom – or something shapeless and ethereal?”

“...the true God does reveal Himself, to those who are willing to comprehend and to obey. And He says these people, conscious of the around, who formulate their own ideas...are without excuse for denying the true God and putting in His place some fanciful conjecture of their own making through distorted human reasoning.”

“(Romans 1:18) says the world’s leaders have known the truth, but have held it back from the people – prevented them from receiving a clear understanding: ‘But God’s anger is revealed from heaven against all the impiety and wickedness of those who hinder [hold back] the Truth by their wickedness’ (Moffatt). So what is usually told to a growing child about God usually is a very distorted picture, indeed!”

“So, what do people, on the average, know about God? They started out, from youngest childhood, knowing whatever they had heard or been told by parents or others. And since those leaders who once did know God (Romans 1:21) held back the truth and, becoming fools (verse 22), gave a distorted and untrue teaching, most of what has been told growing children in our time has been a perversion of the truth.”

Herbert W Armstrong, “Why God Is Not Real to Most People,” GN, Jan. 1985

NEW TEACHING:

“The YES lessons were written more than a decade ago, however, and they do not reflect the additional truth and understanding God has been giving His Church over the last few years.”

“I encourage parents and YES evaluators, therefore, to diligently read our latest booklets and *Plain Truth* articles and to incorporate this updated understanding when assisting children in the completion of their lessons and in the evaluation sessions.”

J. Tkach Jr., “Parents and Evaluators Should Update YES Children,”
WN, Jan. 1993

Author’s note: The next and final change connects the responsibility of true ministers with the principle we have just seen explained. After all, the Apostle John called God’s people “little children” in I John 2:1, 12, 18, 28, 3:7, 18, 4:4, 5:21, and “children” in II John 1, 4, 13, and III John 4. What a grave responsibility (James 3:1) lies upon the shoulders of those to whom God has entrusted His children. Paul wrote to Timothy, “Take heed unto yourself and unto the doctrine; continue in them; for in doing this you shall both save yourself AND THEM THAT HEAR YOU.” It is on this final vital understanding that this long list of heresies properly ends. It is my deepest hope that all true, faithful elders will carefully and thoroughly read this last point and begin to warn as many of God’s sheep (His little children) of the tremendous importance of holding fast fully—not just partially!

280. MINISTER’S DUTY

To Preach What God Wants or To Preach What a Man Wants?

OLD TEACHING:

“A certain Church found itself suddenly in need of a new pastor, due to the accidental death of the man who had filled the pastorate for many years.”

“The board of trustees met to consider two written applications just received. I wonder, if you were a member of this board, which of these applications you would be in favor of considering further, and which you would reject?”

“Opening the first application, the chairman read to the board as follows:

“Gentlemen:...Feeling that this regrettable vacancy in your pulpit offers opportunities of much greater scope for my talents, I hereby present to you my application for your consideration...My preaching has been quite liberal, and...I know that you good people are hostile to ‘the Law,’ and I know every argument against it.”

“It is true that we here are a different denomination...that presents no problem at all. I feel that there are many different denominational roads, but

they all lead to the same place. I shall be perfectly willing to preach whatever doctrines you may instruct."

"Then the chairman opened and read the second application:

"Gentlemen:...This is my record: I have never preached what congregations want to hear...I have without fear or favor shown them their sins, and instructed them in the TRUE doctrine of Christ, as it was once delivered to the saints."

"What I propose to do in your pulpit: First of all, I shall expose you gentlemen on the Board as the modern 'Pharisees' and hypocrites that you are...I shall open [your congregation's] eyes to the false beliefs and fables they have embraced."

"Since I shall not serve you hypocritical modern 'Pharisees' or do your bidding, I shall not, of course, be able to look to you for my salary. I shall look to the God whom I shall serve..."

"The trustees were speechless with indignation – hot with resentment!"

"WHO WAS this man, anyway?"

"The chairman of the board looked for the signature. It said: 'The Apostle Paul!'"

Herbert W. Armstrong, "Heart to Heart Talk with the Editor," PT, Jan. 1957

"Finally, brethren, though I have mentioned it in the Autobiography, many may not realize that I personally was fully ORDAINED by the laying on of hands after fasting and prayer of those in authority in GOD'S CHURCH...In the summer of 1931 those in authority in this Church of God asked me to enter the full time ministry, starting with a tent campaign in Eugene, Oregon. And for this ministry I was ORDAINED, by fasting and prayer and laying on of hands of the presbytery – those in authority in God's Church. This Church is now clearly identified, in the light of carefully documented historical research, as the 'Sardis' era of the Church described prophetically by Jesus in Revelation 3:1-6."

"An abbreviated account of those early years in the ministry – of being UNDER authority – of preaching where and when I was sent by those over me in authority...was published in the *Good News*...Herman L. Hoeh's article 'God Demands Teamwork.'"

Herbert W. Armstrong, "Must God's Ministers Be Ordained by the Hand of Man?", GN, Jan. 1960 (First published in Good News May 1954.)

"When Mr. Armstrong first started preaching, he was under the authority of the Oregon Conference of the Church of God, now clearly identified in the light of carefully documented historical research as the 'Sardis' church described prophetically by Jesus in Revelation 3:1-6. That church was not properly organized according to the New Testament pattern of God. Nevertheless Mr. Armstrong was under the authority of those holding offices of authority in that Conference. He was ordained by that Church – God's Church for that period – in the year 1931. He received salary from them, was sent by them..."

“...the Church Board demanded that Mr. Armstrong *preach and act unscripturally*. Two human ‘wolves in sheeps’ clothing,’ seeking to devour the flock, had come in from the outside and managed to charm and deceive the layman board officials. So far as carrying out the divinely commissioned PURPOSE of the Church – to proclaim Christ’s Gospel to the world – the Sardis Church died at that point. Mr. and Mrs. Armstrong voluntarily relinquished the small salary, and solemnly placed themselves in GOD’S HANDS, relying solely and altogether upon GOD for guidance, for financial support and every need from that time on.”

*H.L. Hoeh, “God Demands Teamwork!”,
GN, Dec. 1959 (First in Dec. 1953)*

“Through those years when the Work of God was being started, in Oregon, I tried to work with the remnant of the Sardis church...In the words of Revelation 3:2, they refused to be watchful and strengthen the things which remain, that were ready to die. They did allow those things (truths) to die. They did not repent. Their church is dead.”

“In searching old files for information for this article, I ran across an article by C. O. Dodd...This article was written in 1938, after Mr. Dodd had fallen out with Mr. Dugger’s movement. It is captioned ‘My Apology.’ In part, Mr. Dodd wrote:

“I wish to make this apology to the members and ministers of...[the] Church of God...I saw favoritism and respect of persons shown in the ruling clique, saw old time politics played as aforetime, members allowed to live as before, and ministers forbidden to teach new truths, and told that, “We have a saving message. What we have is enough.” *I thought God could overrule this*, and so remained silent until this time, but now I wish to apologize and ask for pardon.”

“I was one of the men to whom Mr. Dodd referred, forbidden to teach new truths. *Of course I continued very vigorously to preach these new truths.* That led to final and complete severance of cooperation between the Sardis and Philadelphia eras of God’s Church.”

“For years I had tried working with ministers of this Sardis church. But they only worked against the true Work of God. They plotted to kill the broadcast. They resorted to lies – which they well knew to be deliberate lies – to discredit me personally.”

Herbert W. Armstrong, “New Good News,” GN, Feb. 1963

“Ft. Benning, Georgia, 1969. Lt. William Calley claimed he was just following orders’ after his company wiped out over 100 defenseless women, children, and elderly citizens of My Lai, South Vietnam. Those under Lt. Galley also claimed they just followed orders,’ putting obedience to authority over their personal standards of morality.”

“Similar examples could be listed indefinitely, but the one common denominator in all these conflicts is the eternal war between...loyalty and ethics. ‘Loyalty’ here means an unswerving devotion to a man, an organiza-

tion, or a cause. 'Ethics,' in its proper Christian definition, means loyalty to God, His laws and His morality."

"After countless hundreds of such moral conflicts – from Adam to Watergate – you would think mankind might learn the lesson that it doesn't pay to be so 'sincere' in the *wrong* cause. There is always a day of reckoning."

"Jesus Christ foretold the time when professing Christians would kill true Christians. 'Yes, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service' (John 16:2). In other words, righteous men will be slain for being 'disloyal' to their church or nation."

"God's prophets have always suffered persecution and privation for not being 'loyal' to a nation's or church's corrupt leadership."

"Is your loyalty directed toward God and the Bible? Or will you stand accused of being loyal to the wrong cause?"

Gary Alexander, "I'm Just Following Orders," GN, Dec. 1973

"No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other."

Matthew 6:24, KJV

"In 1931, I was ordained as a minister of Jesus Christ. In 1933 I was receiving a very small salary, holding an evangelistic campaign. Those who paid the salary demanded I preach and act contrary to this Word I had PROVED to be the authoritative Word of God. I learned that when whoever pays one demands that the one paid serves the one who pays! I learned I could not work for, and serve GOD, and receive my salary from MEN. If I was to serve GOD – work for Him – I would have to look to HIM ALONE to supply financial needs. I realized this would require utter FAITH."

"I was well aware of the fact many – if not just about all others in the ministry – had faced this same problem. I was aware of the usual reasoning: 'Well, if these MEN – or this denomination – or this group backing – will not allow me complete freedom to preach all I see in the Bible, it is better to preach as much of the Truth as they allow than to defy them and not be able to preach anything.' It seems that it seldom occurs to those who have chosen the ministry as a profession to TRUST GOD for financial support. It seems to be customarily taken for granted that ministers must look to MEN or religious ORGANIZATIONS of men, for sustenance."

"I was fully aware, too, that if I relied on GOD for salary, I would have to serve Him faithfully, NEVER COMPROMISING WITH HIS WORD, or HE would 'fire' me! My wife and I made the decision to trust GOD."

Herbert W. Armstrong, PT Subscriber Letter, Nov. 18, 1965

"In 1933, I gave up a salary of \$3 per week, when the MEN who paid me that salary demanded that I preach and act contrary to plain BIBLE teaching...I learned that if MEN paid me, I had to preach what MEN demanded. If I was to preach what CHRIST commanded, I also had to let HIM be my employer, and look to HIM, in faith, for every need."

“NO MAN OR ORGANIZATION OF MEN HAS, THEREFORE, EVER MUZZLED ME!”

Herbert W. Armstrong, PT Subscriber Letter, Nov. 24, 1959

“It is the duty of Christ’s true ministers (and how few today), to protect the begotten but yet unborn saints from false doctrines and from false ministers.”

Herbert W Armstrong, Mystery of the Ages, 1985, p. 262

“‘When he [Joseph be Joezer or *Joseph the Permitter*] used new methods for the first time, his colleagues hesitated to follow him...’ (Rabbinic Essays, p. 228).

“The Pharisees knew full well that it was wrong...Even though they had all accepted the customs of the heathen, by using this form, some of them balked at making further laws without any Scripture backing at all. However, this reluctance did not last long!”

“And today there are many church denominations claiming to be Christian who feel they do not have to keep the Words of the Bible but rather must obey the words of their religious leaders who teach many doctrines completely contrary to the Bible.”

“There are millions of people in the world today who are no better than the Pharisees. Many church denominations today use the same Mishnah-form of interpretation (not using the Scripture for their doctrines), just like the Pharisees did before and during the days of Christ. Christ condemned the Pharisees for teaching as true doctrines the commandments of men (Mark 7:7).”

“Is Judaism the Law of Moses?”, GN, Nov. 1961

“It may be painful to admit – especially in the face of growing ‘modernism’ and moral laxity – but people follow their leaders! If the ministers of Britain and America were thundering to their congregations the message of the Bible, if they were reading, explaining and expounding the very word of God in the church services, their flocks would automatically come to understand the reality of God and the importance of His will and way.”

“There is a REASON for the appalling ignorance and spiritual lethargy existing even among those who attend church regularly!”

“God revealed to the apostle Paul the spiritual degeneracy that would dominate in these last days. Under inspiration, Paul warned Timothy: ‘Preach the WORD; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.’ How FEW are the ministers who preach this way today!”

“Paul continued: ‘For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables’ (II Timothy 4:2-4).”

“Paul’s prophetic warning has become a sad REALITY!”

“Now let’s get this straight once and for all!”

“God’s true ministers are NOT called by men. They are called and inspired by Him. They are NOT responsible to men – but to GOD!

“They are to serve the people by preaching God’s message whether the people like it or not!”

“God’s ministers...must preach the TRUTH – regardless of whom it offends.”

R.C. Meredith, “Why Ministers Say: ‘You Don’t Need to Understand the Bible’!”, PT, Mar. 1958

“In chapter three, Micah lays the blame for our sins squarely on the shoulders of the preachers or ‘prophets’ ‘who will lead my folk astray, who cry “all’s well” if they get food to eat, and open war on any who deny them -- it shall be night for you, devoid of vision’...”

“Micah proceeds to show that our national calamity will come because today preachers ‘teach for hire’ and mislead the people! This same theme is repeated in Jeremiah 23, Ezekiel 34, and many other places in your Bible. GOD LAYS THE BLAME FOR NATIONAL TRAGEDY AND INDIVIDUAL MISERY SQUARELY ON THE SHOULDERS OF THOSE MINISTERS WHO HAVE FAILED TO SHOW THE PEOPLE THEIR SINS, AND TO TEACH THEM GOD’S LAW.”

“It is the battle of truth against error, of light against darkness, of the forces of good against the forces of evil.”

“This, then, is the Christian Battle. It is to contend for God’s truth which was ‘once delivered unto the saints.’”

“We who know God’s truth have THE MOST IMPORTANT JOB ON EARTH TO PERFORM!”

“We have to fight against and subvert our own human nature which inclines us to disobey God. Then we must go out to help others – must expose, battle, and overcome the false teachings which cause all of this world’s misery.”

Roderick C. Meredith, “Man’s Greatest Battle,” PT, June 1953

Author’s note: I must briefly note that it was quotes like these last two that helped me choose to depart from following the man who once believed them.

NEW TEACHING:

“In my last letter in the PGR, I pointed out that ministers cannot simply be silent about the Church’s new doctrine...”

“All ministers believe, and are able to state with conviction, that we are in the Church of God, that Christ is the Head of the Church, and that Christ wants us to stay in the Church.”

“When we state these kinds of things to our congregations, we show that we are not afraid of ‘what is happening’ in the Church. Instead, we show that we have confidence in Christ’s ability to lead those he has chosen.”

“...to remain silent is, in reality, to trumpet your disagreement and consequently to foster division.”

Joseph W. Tkach, Letter to Ministry, PGR, June 21, 1994

Author's note: 80% of the ministers who left the WCG waited nearly one year after this declaration. And they left after having said virtually nothing for several years to warn God's sheep of the huge spiritual iceberg that lay dead ahead of the ship on which the entire flock were passengers.

“The whole point revolves around our attitude, whether it’s positive or negative. A positive attitude and spirit among us – not going around and saying, ‘I don’t agree with Mr. Tkach,’ and they like to boast it verbally. That’s causing division. When I hear it again, I tell ya, I’ll take care of it. You can believe that all you want, but when you verbalize it and start sowing discord and breeding division, well, God have mercy on you...Like I said, I’m not going to apologize. I love you...”

Joseph W. Tkach, Sermon played in all churches, Big Sandy, Texas, Jan. 1994

“There cannot be room in the church...nor can there be room in the ministry for ministers who won’t or cannot teach the doctrines of the church.”

Joseph W. Tkach, Letter to U.S. field minister, Mar. 29, 1994

Author's note: In addition, numerous other doctrinal changes have been announced in WCG question-and-answer sessions that are not yet in print, such as: 13-year-olds and up may be baptized, police work is appropriate employment for members, the “three days and three nights” length of time can’t be proven and doesn’t matter anyway, the Lord’s Supper can be taken anytime by anyone, mid-week chapel services at Ambassador College were held and Sabbath chapel services are optional, the leader of the Worldwide Church of God is no more a true leader of God than any other leader of any other church, hell is not just a moment when people burn up (length and severity of punishment could vary from sinner to sinner), there is no biblical reason not to observe Sunday, the end time has been here since Christ’s first coming, Satan can be destroyed by God, the millennium may not be literal because it’s only found in the symbolic book of Revelation, the last four Holy Days have nothing to do with the plan of God, and there is no prohibition of any kind in the Church against Christmas and Easter observance.

PREVIOUSLY AVAILABLE LITERATURE OF MR. ARMSTRONG

Author's note: The following list of old and new literature reflects the banning of Mr. Armstrong's life's work in the WCG. Carefully note the new literature section. It speaks volumes. Immediately following is a list of literature offered during the last few years of Mr. Armstrong's life, most still available in 1985, the year before his death. He wrote the first 78 titles (plus a few of the others):

OLD LITERATURE:

1. Mystery of the Ages
2. The Incredible Human Potential
3. The Wonderful World Tomorrow
4. All About Water Baptism
5. Your Awesome Future—How Religion Deceives You
6. A World Held Captive
7. Did God Create A Devil?
8. Just What Do You Mean—Born Again?
9. What Do You Mean...Salvation?
10. Just What Do You Mean...Kingdom of God?
11. Just What Do You Mean...Conversion?
12. What Do You Mean—"The Unpardonable Sin"?
13. Why Where You Born?
14. What Is the True Gospel?
15. What Is Man?
16. What Is the Reward of the Saved?
17. What Will You Be Doing in the Next Life?
18. What Will You Be Like in the Resurrection?
19. What Science Can't Discover About the Human Mind
20. Predestination—Does the Bible Teach It?
21. Life After Death?
22. Never Before Understood – Why Humanity Cannot Solve Its Evils

23. Lazarus and the Rich Man
24. Where Are Enoch and Elijah?
25. Should You Try to Convert Others?
26. Is There a Real Hell Fire?
27. Human Nature—Did God Create It?
28. The Mystery of Melchizedek Solved!
29. What Was Jesus Christ Like As a Human?
30. Did Jesus Christ Have Long Hair?
31. Is Jesus God?
32. Millions Do Not Know What Jesus Christ Was
33. What Is the Holy Spirit?
34. What Is Faith?
35. Does God Exist?
36. The Proof of the Bible
37. The Bible – Superstition or Authority?
38. The Plain Truth About Fasting
39. Why God Is Not Real to Most People
40. Where Is the True Church?
41. What Is the True Church?
42. Why the Church?
43. God's Sacred Calendar
44. Which Day Is the Christian Sabbath?
45. Has Time Been Lost?
46. Pagan Holidays—or God's Holy Days—Which?
47. The Plain Truth About Easter
48. The Plain Truth About Christmas
49. The Resurrection Was Not on Sunday
50. How Often Should We Partake of the Lord's Supper?
51. Autobiography of Herbert W. Armstrong, Vol. 1
52. Autobiography of Herbert W. Armstrong, Vol. 2
53. The Autobiography of Herbert W. Armstrong—The Early Years
54. The Seven Laws of Success
55. How to Be an Overcomer
56. This Is the Life!—Real Abundant Living
57. Were The Ten Commandments in Force Before Moses?
58. Why Must Men Suffer?
59. The Plain Truth About Healing
60. The Tongues Question
61. Truth About Earthquakes
62. Is All Animal Flesh Good Food?
63. Why Management / Labor Strike?
64. Why Does God Allow Wars?

65. Truth About Make-up
66. Ending Your Financial Worries
67. The Missing Dimension in Sex
68. Why Marriage!—Soon Obsolete?
69. The United States and Britain in Prophecy
70. Who or What Is the Prophetic Beast?
71. The Book of Revelation Unveiled at Last!
72. Are We in the Last Days?
73. Russia and China in Prophecy
74. Why Russia Will Not Attack America
75. The Middle East in Prophecy
76. Where Are We Now in Prophecy?
77. What Lies Ahead in Prophecy?
78. World Peace—How it Will Come
79. Bible Story Vol. I
80. Bible Story Vol. II
81. Bible Story Vol. III
82. The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse
83. Herbert W. Armstrong—Ambassador for World Peace
84. Managing Your Personal Finances
85. Principles of Healthful Living
86. Proclaiming the Gospel by Last Will and Testament
87. The Ten Commandments
88. Conquer Discouragement
89. Why God Permits Christians to Suffer Serious Problems
90. What Is Your Foundation?
91. Spiritual Marathon
92. Christian Art of Meditation
93. What Is Your Image of God?
94. Nostalgia Challenge for Today
95. How I Learned What Pure Religion Means
96. Beware of the Leaven of the Pharisees
97. God's Interest in Young People
98. Does God Have a Master Plan?
99. Care and Feeding of a Happy Marriage
100. Checklist for Christian Growth
101. True Christian Fellowship
102. Hidden Treasure You Can Claim
103. The “Secret Rapture”: Fact...or Fiction?
104. Growing Old Before Our Time
105. The Answer to Unanswered Prayer
106. Thanksgiving

107. Which Bible Translations Are Best?
108. What Is Our Savior's Name?
109. The Silent Epidemic (VD)
110. Is This the Only Day of Salvation?
111. If You Die...Will You Live Again?
112. How You Can Be Imbued with the Power of God!
113. What Is "Worldliness"?
114. Did Christ Die of a Broken Heart?
115. How Long Were the "Days" of Creation?
116. New Testament Teaching on Tongues
117. Is Drinking A Sin?
118. Do We Have the Complete Bible?
119. Be a Positive Christian
120. How to Win Friends and Influence People
121. How to Reckon the Day of Pentecost
122. Just What do You Mean—Christian?
123. Acts 2:38—Repentance, Baptism, Forgiveness, Holy Spirit
124. Watch the Middle East
125. What About Baptism?
126. One Man's Blood
127. Q. and A. About the Church
128. Angels—Servants of God
129. Christmas—2,000 Years Before Christ
130. But by Prayer and Fasting
131. Why Did God Let Johnny Die?
132. What Is Real Christianity?
133. This Is Real Repentance
134. Why the Christian Life?
135. Just What Do You Mean Armageddon
136. The Church They Couldn't Destroy
137. To Hell and Back
138. Just What Do You Mean Antichrist?
139. Smoking, More Than Just a Habit
140. Just What do You Mean—Immortal Soul?
141. You Can Conquer Your Fears
142. The Crucifixion Was Not on Friday
143. What You Should Know About Tithing
144. Has God Eternally Existed?
145. Living Lessons from the Bible
146. In the Beginning—Answers to Questions From Genesis
147. Mixed Fabrics
148. One Day Above Another

149. Sunday Observance
150. Music in Church
151. Saints Resurrected in Christ's Day
152. Christians Swear by Oath
153. Was Jesus a Jew?
154. Herbert W. Armstrong Never Was a J.W., or Mormon
155. Fasting
156. Two Witnesses
157. Is Michael Christ?
158. Cremation
159. Women's Clothing, Biblical Guidelines
160. Christ's Youth
161. Circumcision Today
162. Genealogy of Christ
163. Curse of Canaan
164. Prayer for the Dead
165. Christ Nailed to Stake or Cross?
166. Transfiguration

NEW LITERATURE:

Author's note: All of Mr. Armstrong's literature was discontinued by the current WCG administration. All remaining copies of *Mystery of the Ages* were destroyed. For a while, literature retained some of Mr. Armstrong's titles, but the contents were shortened, gutted, and became softer in tone. All were completely rewritten. Many subjects were omitted entirely, resulting in many changes by omission. Did not the rejection of all of Mr. Armstrong's writings amount to his posthumous disfellowship?

Of interest—in 1987, the number one most requested booklet was *The Book of Revelation Unveiled at Last*—in 1991, the number one most requested booklet was *Staying Sane in a World of Uncertainty*.

Consider Mr. Armstrong's quote: "Those 'intellectuals' surrounding my son...were conspiring to liberalize Church doctrines, to destroy and remove from circulation the articles, booklets, etc., I had written on **BASIC TRUTHS**. The Church of God was being molded more and more like a liberal Protestant denomination" (GN, Apr. 1980).

The only literature now available from the WCG are the typical shallow tracts produced by the many churches all of us left when God called us.

THE NEW WCG VIEW OF HERBERT W. ARMSTRONG

Author's note: The following 15 points represent direct comments by the apostates, at the indicated change numbers, toward Mr. Armstrong's beliefs, practices, and thinking, without having mentioned his name. This was further proof of his posthumous disfellowshipment:

1. Mr. Armstrong used religious mind control to stir up fear in unsuspecting people to influence them to send him money. (See change 140.)
2. Mr. Armstrong used religious-sounding false promises of health and wealth to attract people to join his church. (See change 104.)
3. Mr. Armstrong was a self-righteous stench in the nostrils of God when he pointed out the doctrinal deception of this world. (See change 5.)
4. Mr. Armstrong was a scripturally confused dissident who preached sheer nonsense about the kingdom of God. (See change 1.)
5. Mr. Armstrong deceived people into believing the end of the age was imminent. (See change 9.)
6. Mr. Armstrong used clever arguments to keep the Church in bondage to an impossible salvation by works. (See change 43.)
7. Mr. Armstrong was just another Bible student. (See change 12.)
8. Mr. Armstrong's most basic message was a make-believe unscriptural false hope. (See change 21.)
9. Mr. Armstrong was a gainsayer of the one and only fundamental Christian reference point. (See change 23.)
10. Mr. Armstrong used a "10-nation/save-your-skin" gospel to hook people. (See change 29.)
11. Mr. Armstrong made up excuses to justify doing nothing to relieve the suffering of this world. (See change 35.)

12. Mr. Armstrong taught hogwash and garbage concerning church growth. (See change 103.)
13. Mr. Armstrong was a child of the devil on the high horse of self-righteousness who unwittingly organized a group of dysfunctional zealots who were no part of the true community of believers. (See change 103 and WN, 4/27/93.)
14. Mr. Armstrong used uncomplimentary labels that must now be apologized for. (See change 150.)
15. Mr. Armstrong had a pharisaical attitude of pompous spiritual superiority that made him a partaker of the devil's attitude. (See change 34.)

Author's note: The WCG administration feels that saying these things did not run down Mr. Armstrong, and that anyone who thinks it did just had a "slight misunderstanding":

"And please don't condemn me for bringing up things in the past. We have to look at them because of, however you want to put it, spiritual immaturity."

"You know, I have a letter here – it's anonymous. And I mean no harm and I'm only concerned. But apparently this individual has taken certain things out of context and purpose and meaning and have attributed them to me as Armstrong bashing."

"Well, what did the Apostle Paul do to the Apostle Peter? He went to him and confronted him face-to-face and practically called him a hypocrite – two-faced – because he acted one way among the Israelites, his people, but when he was with the so-called pagans he was another way."

"[The letter writer said:] 'If we're not going to be responsible, then more and more people will leave.' I think they're going to leave anyway, because if that's all it takes for them to leave, due to *a slight misunderstanding*, I wonder when the real trials take place, you know. Makes me wonder."

"I don't run down Mr. Armstrong – I love and respect him with all of my heart – but I have to explain previous error or if you want to put it, course adjustments, or corrections if too strong."

*Joseph W. Tkach, "A Point of Light,"
sermon played in all churches, Aug. 1993*

POLICY CHANGE OVERVIEW

1. *The Good News* was killed.
2. The Newsstand Program was killed.
3. The toll-free phone number was killed.
4. The 32-lesson Correspondence Course was killed.
5. Mr. Armstrong's literature was *all removed* along with his by-line.
6. Many of the most doctrinally sound evangelists and senior ministers were demoted, retired, fired, transferred away, or "pooh-poohed" as old fogies.
7. The telecast was killed.
8. All or nearly all international financial support was shut off.
9. Outside speakers began to appear at the Feast of Tabernacles
10. Local Church bible studies were canceled at any local pastor's discretion.
11. The WCG advertised local Church addresses on the telecast and websites with a complete open door policy.
12. Quoting Protestant ministerial journals and secular experts filled all WCG literature and telecasts.
13. Minister's wives were allowed to work full-time.
14. All publications reflect sexual and political correctness. Terms such as man, mankind, manhood, spokesman, chairman, forefathers, etc., are now to be humanity, people, human beings, humankind, adulthood, spokesperson, chair person, forerunner, ancestors, etc., etc., (U.S. Reg. Conf. handout, Greg Albrecht, 8/92).
15. Brethren were told they could "believe anything, just stay in the Church and don't talk about it to others."
16. The blessing of children was to be done privately or not at all (PGR, 92).
17. Baptisms were to be done privately (PGR, Fall 92).
18. Sermonettes were to be directed to youth.

19. A new Passover ceremony was sent in 1993 (using NIV). A further revision came in 1994. This was changed several more times.
20. A new baptism ceremony was sent (PGR announcement, 2/17/93).
21. A new funeral ceremony (syrupy, maudlin, sentimental – Protestant) was released.
22. A new hymnal was sent out and included many “old favorites.”
23. Both Ambassador Colleges were closed.
24. Before Ambassador College closed, Intercollegiate sports were reinstated after Mr. Armstrong had permanently banned them as participating with the world.
25. Money, no longer faith, determined which doors the Church walked through – could this be why the open door set before Philadelphia was closed?
26. A new retirement policy and terms denied nearly all rights to retirees.
27. Local sermon tapes were not to leave their pastorate or be kept longer than 1 year.
28. All doctrine was openly put on the table (Michael Snyder Detroit radio interview).
29. Mr. Armstrong personally wrote almost all of everything that appeared under his signature. His successor wrote almost none. His chief assistant ghostwrote nearly everything for him.
30. 90-minute services were initiated in all congregations replacing the traditional 2-hour service.
31. Plans were announced to build local church buildings in the U.S. (PGR, 2/93).
32. Prayer meetings were added and held weekly with both men and women leading the prayer.
33. Anyone who taught that Sabbath-keeping is commanded for Christians was to be disfellowshipped, while, ironically, *all* previous baptisms of new WCG attendees are to be accepted as valid without question.
34. Much more music and prayer were added to church services.
35. Sermonette time was instructed to be used for everything *but* sermonettes, including testimonials, youth dramas, prayer, special music, extended announcements, films, etc.
36. Most festival sites were canceled and the entire format and substance of the Feast altered to fit mainstream Protestantism.
37. Pregnant girls were prohibited from Y.O.U. sports participation for safety reasons, but were still considered to be Y.O.U. members in good standing.

38. The old Y.E.S. Bible curriculum was replaced with a Protestant course containing teachings on Sunday observance, Christmas, and Easter.
39. Y.E.S. classes were permitted during the regular Sabbath service time, and parents were discouraged from attending with their children.

Other Splinter Explanation Packet Literature

THE TRUE CHURCH – One Organization, or Many?

Jesus Christ built His Church nearly 2,000 years ago—and promised it would never be destroyed (Matt. 16:18)! Is this Church and Christ’s Body still a *single* unified organization? Or, after the death of Herbert W. Armstrong in 1986, and the prophesied “falling away” (II Thes. 2:3), did it split into *multiple* organizations, groups and scattered individuals? Christ is not divided, but can circumstances divide His Church and Body? Do—or can—the actions of men make this possible? The Catholics, the Protestants, the WCG apostates and the splinter leaders all have clear teachings on this subject. What did Mr. Armstrong teach—and does it align with the Bible? This book presents facts, history and the proof of Scripture. It brings PLAIN ANSWERS!

“ANOINT YOUR EYES” – Christ’s Warning to His People

Christ warns Laodiceans to “anoint your eyes”—WHY? What did He mean? WHO did He mean—and how can you know? This all-important instruction, to *all* Christians living in the last days, *must* be understood. This extensive book—the most crucial written to the WCG splinters—thoroughly covers things never before explained, and in extraordinary detail. For those hoping to escape the Great Tribulation, it reveals *exactly* what Christ meant and how to apply this most critical warning!

THE GOVERNMENT OF GOD – Understanding Offices and Duties

The Church of God—the biblical Body of Christ—is not divided, and is the only place where the GOVERNMENT OF GOD is present, the only organization Christ leads. He has placed *offices* and assigned special *duties* within His Church. All of the splinters have rejected God’s government! This has led to mass confusion about these God-ordained offices and duties. What *exactly* is a deacon?—a local elder?—a preaching elder?—a pastor?—an evangelist?—a prophet?—an apostle? What about “teachers”? Who are the “messengers” to the seven Churches in Revelation 2 and 3? What do they do? Where will the Two Witnesses come from? How does the “watchman” of Ezekiel 33:7 function in *this age*? How do all these work and serve, and in **UNITY**? Who holds AUTHORITY to ordain today? Are splinter ordinations valid? Which office(s) can “bind and loose”? Can anyone add truth or traditions to the Church? Who is authorized to make Church-wide administrative judgments? Who supervises all congregations? This vital book answers all of these questions—and many more!

THE WORK OF GOD – Its Final Chapter!

Herbert W. Armstrong ANNOUNCED the kingdom of God to the world and proclaimed the special warning to the modern nations of Israel for 52 years! Did he teach that his death would end this commission, believing both duties to be his own “private work”? How did he instruct his successor? Does “the kingdom shall be preached in all the world” (Matt. 24:14) before the “end come” still apply? What of “go...and TEACH all nations...ALL THINGS whatsoever I have commanded you” (Matt. 28:19-20)? What about “prophesy again” in Revelation 10:11? What is the gospel? Is Christ part of it? Did Mr. Armstrong teach—or does the Bible—that God’s people should give to relief organizations and disaster victims? What did Jesus say? Also, what about “local” or “personal evangelism”? Why has The Restored Church of God rewritten *all* the literature of the Worldwide Church of God? What was our STRATEGIC PLAN? What are our two OPERATIONAL PLANS? What does prophecy say about the final Work of God?

WHY THE RESTORED CHURCH OF GOD? – Should You Join?

There are over 300 offshoots of the Worldwide Church of God. Most believe there are much too many groups—and already “something for everyone.” Was another really necessary, particularly when many are trying to “get the groups together”? The answer is a resounding “Yes!” This short book introduces The Restored Church of God by answering the most basic, commonly asked questions about us. We have carefully produced this material for all who want to understand the Worldwide Church of God apostasy—and what to do about it!

SHOULD ACCUSERS BE ANSWERED?

Christ described our time as the age of hatred, betrayal, offense and lawlessness (Matt. 24:10-12). Many today use and promote innuendo, rumors, outright lies and other forms of deception to confuse and divide God’s people, and defeat their confidence in Christ’s ability to govern His Church. When presented with such information, what do—what will—you do? Christ said, “If they have persecuted Me, they *will* persecute YOU!” This means attacks, sometimes vicious, are a fact of life for God’s people. The true Church and especially its leaders stand squarely in Satan’s crosshairs. It will receive the brunt of persecution *prior* to the Tribulation, when Satan will turn on the “remnant” of Laodicea (Rev. 12:17). Certain questions arise: Should accusers be answered? What spirit motivates them? Did Jesus answer His accusers? Mr. Armstrong was attacked throughout his ministry. Did he answer accusers? Should I? What did Mr. Armstrong teach about this? What does God’s Word say? This book reveals the answers—and is the policy statement of The Restored Church of God about persecution and accusation, and our response to them.

SURVIVING “PERILOUS TIMES”

Civilization has entered the “last days”—II Timothy 3:1. The context through chapter 4, verse 4, reveals that “perilous times” have come upon both the world *and* the Church. There are now many kinds of deception and “sleight of men” (Eph. 4:14) being foisted on unsuspecting and gullible brethren. This volume addresses some of the worst of those deceptions, and assists in helping you survive them all!

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