

The Good News

International Magazine of
THE CHURCH OF GOD

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Come to the TABERNACLE

You should all see our new Tabernacle being built near Gladewater, Texas. Here's the RIGHT way to do it!

by Roderick C. Meredith

GOD'S CHURCH is building a large new tabernacle on our own spacious grounds near Gladewater, Texas. It is a BIG project!

Most of you have read and heard about this inspiring undertaking. You may be anxious to see it.

When should you come? How can you afford to make the trip? Why should you come?

The answer to these questions are *far more important* than you may realize!

Purpose of the New Tabernacle

The purpose of this large new Tabernacle is to enable God's people to assemble at the annual religious festivals HE HAS COMMANDED. *Several thousand* new brethren have seen the eye-opening PROOF of God's annual Holy Days—and are beginning to *obey* God's command. Therefore, we have now *outgrown* our first Tabernacle—which will now be utilized as a dining and recreation area. We are building the large new Tabernacle so that we may have a proper place to *assemble and worship* Almighty God at the special times HE has commanded.

If you have not already read the startling FACTS on this subject, then write us *immediately* for Mr. Armstrong's helpful, free booklet, "*Pagan Holidays or God's Holy Days—Which?*"

You need to know the TRUTH on this vital subject. And to gain eternal life, you must *obey* God!

This world's churches have their man-devised "camp meetings" at a *time* and in a *way* that seems right to man. But we have proved in past articles—and

will continue to do so—that the annual sabbaths or feast days God gave His people were commanded *and intended* to be kept *forever* (Lev. 23:21, 31, 41). Christ set us a perfect example in keeping them, and the apostles *continued* keeping them and even commanding Gentile converts to keep these days of God (1 Cor. 5:8).

The world is busy observing the *pagan* holidays of Christmas and Easter. Its camp meetings are organized and directed as *man reasons*—not as *God commands*. Then it sneers at the days God has *made holy*—at the festivals the Creator instituted to keep men in remembrance of His *true plan*. Carnal men scoffingly, sneeringly call these days "Jewish" and they ridicule them as the invention of a harsh, inconsiderate "God of the Old Testament." They seem to forget that Christ and the apostles kept these days in the *New Testament*. They ignore the fact that God calls these days "MY sabbaths"—*holy unto the Lord!*

These days are never referred to as being "holy to the Jews." But they are holy to the Eternal Creator who gives you every breath of air you breathe. You are *defying Him* if you refuse to keep them! In so doing, you will lose knowledge of the true God and of His *plan* which is pictured by these days.

In their disobedience, the churches of this world have *lost* knowledge of God's plan of salvation. They preach many *different* gospels. They are in *confusion*—"Babylon" (Rev. 17)—and we are commanded to "come out" of this mixed-up, deceived churchianity (Rev. 18:4).

Many of you brethren have come out of this world, and then have found yourselves *unable* to have fellowship with any of God's people. It is often impossible to meet with other true brethren on the weekly Sabbath. You must simply worship God alone "in Spirit and in truth." BUT God's *annual* Sabbaths or holy days provide an opportunity to travel even some distance and have that needed fellowship with other members of the true church of God.

This Is God's Way

These festive occasions are commanded to be kept in the place that God should *choose*. Deuteronomy 16:16 shows particularly that the days of Unleavened Bread (with the Passover, verse 6), the day of Pentecost, and the Feast of Tabernacles were all to be kept *where God would choose*.

When God first revealed the truth about His Holy Days to Mr. Armstrong, He soon caused Belknap Springs, Oregon, to become available for holding the Feast of Tabernacles. This happened in a most unusual way, and we were permitted the use of this resort only as long as it was suitable—*exactly seven years*. Then God directed His servant, Mr. Armstrong, to choose Seigler Springs, California, as the ideal place for the Feast. But we all knew that Seigler Springs was only a stopover location until God led us to a place better adapted in *every way* for use in holding these annual festivals.

And GOD DID SO! That place is near Gladewater, Texas.

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**The
Good News**

International magazine of
THE CHURCH OF GOD
*ministering to its members
scattered abroad*

VOL. VII NUMBER 6

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Heart to Heart Talk with the Editor

Here is GOOD NEWS! With this issue, we wish to welcome over 2000 more readers of *The Good News*.

Hundreds have already been baptized this summer. Over a thousand, whom we have not been able to visit personally, have also expressed that they have repented and surrendered unconditionally to God and His laws, have accepted Jesus Christ as personal Savior, are endeavoring to live by the Bible, and wish to regard this body of baptized co-workers with Christ as their *sole* Church membership. They, too, should be receiving *The Good News*!

The Good News is exclusively the official publication of God's True Church in these closing days of this world.

In other words, you whose lives God has changed, will hereafter receive BOTH *The Plain Truth* and *The Good News* every month, instead of only one. But radio listeners are told only about *The Plain Truth*, and ONLY *The Plain Truth* will be mailed to them, unless we have evidence that God has added them to that consecrated, obedient, faithful inner circle who have been baptized by the Holy Spirit into the one body of Christ, the true Church of God.

We ask you to help us keep *The Good News* exclusively a paper for real members only. Do not give or loan a copy to anybody, whether friends or relatives. If they have been made members of the true begotten family of God, they will be on the list and receive their own copy each month. If not, we ask you not to pass it on to them. *The Plain Truth* is the magazine we send freely,

and without charge, to all who request it.

But in *The Good News* we wish to be free to say things to you, as our inner family of God's children, which we cannot say to the world. We wish to be free to feed you, thru the columns of *The Good News*, the truly "strong meat" of spiritual food which might choke the carnal-minded or prove a stumbling block to the unconverted, and those not wholly yielded to OBEDIENCE to God.

The Good News is the medium in print thru which God's truly called ministers FEED THE FLOCK. *The Plain Truth* is the medium thru which God's called ministers publish the Gospel of the Kingdom of God TO ALL THE WORLD.

Let us be glad and rejoice in the fact that there are so many who are being brought to God's Church this summer!

Come to the TABERNACLE

(Continued from page 1)

As Mr. Armstrong has reported in detail, we are building a new Tabernacle in which to hold services at these annual convocations. This property is in the very center of our heaviest listening area for the broadcast. It has much natural beauty, a warm climate similar to that in Palestine, and is *ideal in every way* for holding God's annual festivals!

To one who knows the facts, *this is God's selection—God's way!*

A Duty and Privilege

We have been blessed with a place owned by God, deeded in His name through the Radio Church of God. It is the location that is *closest* to the *greatest number* of you brethren. God has brought this about so that all of us may worship and rejoice together in the annual festivals He has ordained.

The three great feasts of the year are the Passover with the Days of Unleavened Bread, Pentecost, and the Feast of Tabernacles. God *commands* the converted men to attend these three feasts (Deut. 16:16). As the heads and representatives of the households, the men's presence is absolutely commanded. And God's word shows in Deut. 12:5-7 and other places that the *entire family* should attend these festivals—especially the Feast of Tabernacles.

These occasions are not man-made. They are *holy convocations*—COMMANDED ASSEMBLIES! (Lev. 23:7, 21, 35.) God does not say "if" you want to come. He *orders* you to attend. Do you think your Creator has the authority to order you to do something? Apparently some of you brethren have not fully

realized the seriousness of this command. May God help you to be *zealous* in obeying Him!

Besides being the command of a loving God, attending these festivals is a great joy and privilege. God gave these days *for our good*—that we might come to know Him better, to know and love the brethren, and that the true church of God might be bound together.

Many of you whom we have met on baptizing tours say that you would give anything to experience the joy and thrill of meeting with more of God's own children—the type of humble, sincere, God-fearing people with whom you can freely discuss God's word in love and harmony.

Attending God's annual festivals is His solution—the Bible solution—the *right way* to solve this problem! You will have to *experience* the Feast of Tabernacles before you can fully realize the joy, peace, happiness and the spiritual "life" one feels at this festival.

For every true Christian, it is both a duty and a priceless blessing and privilege to attend these spiritual "feasts."

How to Afford It

God has not only provided, but also *commanded* a way to make it financially possible for everyone to keep His Holy Days!

It is a way which requires continual EFFORT and determination from true Christians. But if we are to be OVERCOMERS—and *they only* will be priests and kings in the Kingdom of God—then we will have to exercise enough strength of character and will to obey this command of God. Actually it works no real hardship, but brings a great blessing to ourselves and others. It is a way that builds faith, hope, and patient love.

What does God command?

God commands us in Deuteronomy 14:22-27 to save a special or *second* tithe, *to go* to the place God selects for each of His festivals, and *to rejoice* in them. This second tithe is for expense money to enable us to keep God's annual Holy Days. In ancient Israel most of the money was spent for food there, as the expense for traveling was almost nothing. Today, however, our greatest expense is often transportation rather than food. As the purpose of this *second tithe* is to enable us to attend the festivals, we will often spend a good portion in transportation.

This second or *special* tithe should be saved out of each pay check or bit of income. It should be set aside regularly and *saved* as expense money to enable you and the converted members of your family to attend God's feasts.

Remember, however, only the children and *converted* adult members of the
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GOVERNMENT in Our Church

When Jesus founded our Church—God's Church—did He permit us to decide how the church should be run? Who heads the Church and directs its work—the congregation, Mr. Armstrong, or Jesus Christ? Are we free to establish any kind of church government—or no government at all, if it pleases us? Let's learn the TRUTH on this vital question!

by Herman L. Hoeb

JESUS gave his disciples the true form of government for His church—our Church.

The true gospel is the good news of the kingdom—the *government* of God. God is Supreme Ruler. From Him proceeds ALL authority and power.

The true Church—our Church—is *subject* to God. The authority of God must be carried out in our Church to which the gospel of the kingdom or *government* of God is committed.

What Kind of Government?

This world's society is organized in hundreds of forms of human government—man ruling man. Even the churches are organized with different types of *human* government—the congregational, the presbyterian, or the episcopal forms. Some are controlled by boards of men, others are run by one-man dictatorships.

Naturally, some have *assumed* that if they are to come out of the world and be separated from it, as Jesus commanded, they must reject *all* authority or rule. It seems many take for granted that there should be no government in the Church.

What some have failed to grasp is not that *all* government is wrong, but that *human* government—of man ruling man—is wrong. When we repented of breaking God's laws and surrendered to obey Him, *we were putting ourselves under God's government*, His power and authority, whether or not we realized it!

The whole issue confronting the world at this very crucial moment in history is whether it will obey God's government or man's government.

The very fact that there IS human government in the churches proves that there is also *DIVINE* government—theocracy. If there were no *divine* authority, there would have been no need for numerous forms of counterfeit human administrations.

The gospel of the kingdom is the good news of God's government. The Church is composed of the *advance agents*, the emissaries, of that govern-

ment. To inherit and rule in that kingdom we must come under the authority of the rule of God now, in this lifetime.

Source of Common Error

It has become the accepted teaching that authority is established to be flaunted and disobeyed. Children are allowed to disobey their parents. We probably grew up seeing our friends and neighbors laugh and joke about anyone bearing authority—from the President or the Prime Minister to the teachers in grade schools.

To do as we please and to despise authority have become the accepted philosophy. Even after conversion, some have carried this same philosophy into the Church. That's why we sometimes misunderstand the teachings of Jesus on Church government. It's time we expelled this false philosophy from our thinking!

Notice Jesus' own words in Luke 22:25-26. He is contrasting the government in the Church with the *wrong* kind of human administration.

"And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors."

Isn't this a perfect description of Gentile dictatorships today? Dictators exercising lordship, claiming to be benefactors!

"But you shall *not* be so," said Jesus to the disciples. Here Jesus is giving the principle of *divine government*—God's government for our Church.

Notice it! There is to be no exercising of lordship by *human* will and *human* desire. But does Jesus say there is to be no government, no difference in authority? Let's read what He continues to say—what most people have overlooked!

Right Principle of Government

"But HE THAT IS GREATEST AMONG YOU, let him be as the younger; and HE THAT IS CHIEF, as he that doth serve. For," said Jesus, "I am among you as he that serveth"—yet he was their Lord and Master!

So there *are* differences in authority in God's government; some are *greater* than others; some are *chief*. But they act as *servants of God*, not as lords over God's heritage.

Do we grasp the all-important significance of this teaching? Do we really understand the great meaning of it? Among God's people, in His Church—our Church—there are some who carry greater responsibility and authority. But they exercise their power as the servants of God for the other members of the Church.

Far from prohibiting all authority, Jesus sanctioned the right kind of government—God's rule, theocracy—for our Church!

WHY Church Government?

God's government in His Church is merely His rule over our lives. It is the means by which *He* guides the work of the Church and perfects its members.

Notice how clearly Paul explained the need of God's authority in the Church.

What is the purpose of the ministry? "For the perfecting of the saints"—to make us complete in understanding the will of God; "for the work of the ministry"—to carry out the gospel to the whole world; "for the edifying of the body of Christ"—to correct, to instruct and to improve the whole Church "till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man."

God's rule in our Church is to direct the work of the gospel, to keep us from being "carried about with every wind of doctrine" through the craftiness of cunning men who are already trying to enter in among us to deceive the unstable (Eph. 4:12-14).

Now let's understand exactly what kind of authority Jesus established for our Church today.

New Testament Instruction

Our knowledge of church government must come from the New Testament; for, after the historic book of Acts closes, there is a gap of more than

fifty years after which we find changed doctrines, changed customs and a changed form of government—human rule instead of divine—in the churches of this world.

In the New Testament there are two sources through which we learn the form of God's administration: 1) instruction, and 2) example.

Let us notice first the *instruction* from Jesus Christ about *church officers* and administration as found in I Corinthians 12:28.

"And God"—not man, but *God*—"has set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues."

The most complete list of the gifts of spiritual administration, however, is found in Ephesians 4:11. "And He [Jesus] gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers."

Again, we observe that Paul, under inspiration, mentions bishops [elders] and deacons as church officers in I Timothy 3:1-13 and Titus 1:5-9.

Before we examine these offices and gifts in detail, let us also notice the *example* of the New Testament not only in Acts, but also in Paul's epistles.

New Testament Example

In the historic record of the early Church, we find that God ruled the Church by Jesus Christ, its Head (Eph. 5:23). JESUS IS THE HEAD OF OUR CHURCH TODAY!

Christ directed the Church through the apostles who were chosen directly by Him (Luke 6:13). The apostles were His *direct* representatives, His *delegates*, sent into the world as ambassadors *bearing authority*. The word *apostle* means "one sent bearing authority." The apostles were instruments in Jesus' hands, through which He could spread the gospel, correct, reprove and lead the Church.

Among the twelve apostles, Peter was pre-eminent, although they all held *equality of office*. Peter had no one-man dictatorial authority over the other eleven. Peter was never a pope. The same authority vested in Peter was also vested by Jesus in the other apostles (Mat. 16:19; 18:18 and John 20:23). Yet Peter was their *leader* because he was born with special leadership qualities and ability to make decisions. Jesus gives spiritual talents according to the natural talents with which a person is born.

Paul, himself, said that Jesus entrusted Peter with the direction of the gospel to Israel as Jesus had entrusted Paul with the direction of the gospel to the Gentiles (Galatians 2:7 and 8). But in

another place we find that the apostles *sent* Peter and John to Samaria, though Peter may have suggested this (Acts 8:14). His gifts carried the greatest weight in the Church and would have been especially helpful to the newly converted Samaritans. Among the twelve there must have been such a spirit of peace and love that they had perfect harmony without jealousy in equality of rank and office. They did not quarrel among themselves by trying to build on one another's foundation (Rom. 15:20); they did not compete with one another or take disciples from another.

However, it is in the experiences of Paul that we find the detailed operation of God's government, since little is recorded with regard to the work of the twelve apostles in Judea and nothing of their ministry to the ten tribes of Israel.

How God Operated Through Paul

Always Paul spoke of what *God* had wrought through his labors (Acts 15:12). Paul the apostle was subject to Christ, so yielded to God that Jesus could make His will known to Paul and could use him in *directing* the work of the Church and the preaching of the gospel. More than once Paul wanted to go one place or do one thing, but Jesus ordered otherwise (Acts 16:6).

Thus we find the government of God operating through Jesus, who used *the apostles as direct representatives* bearing His authority. Paul was not free to go and to act as he pleased.

Next, in *government* authority, we find the *evangelists*—Timothy, Titus, Demas, Silas and many others—who directly assisted the apostle Paul as he was directed by Christ. Paul had the *authority* when necessary to *command* Silas and Timothy to go wherever he designated (Acts 17:15); although in other instances when duties were *not* imperative, Paul sometimes left it to the convenience of the evangelists (I Cor. 16:12). Paul was not a dictator.

Even though evangelists were next *in authority* under the apostles, next in spiritual order and above the evangelists are listed the prophets (I Cor. 12:28). Often in the Bible, "prophet" means "preacher" or "poet." But in the New Testament history there are several instances mentioned in which prophets—*both men and women*—were used to foretell by special and personal revelation from God (Acts 11:27-30; 21:9-10). They spoke and exhorted the brethren and, if men, sometimes preached, although not usually evangelistic for the purpose of raising up churches.

Those who evangelized had authority over local churches, whereas *the prophets had no government office* or author-

ity. Even in the Old Testament, where both men and women were used as prophets, none of the prophets had government authority unless they were *also* judges. In the New Testament, the only prophets with government authority were *also* apostles, evangelists, or elders (Acts 15:32; I Tim. 4:14).

The evangelists, under the direction of Paul the apostle, preached—*evangelist* means an announcer of good news—made converts, established local churches and appointed elders and deacons (Titus 1:5), and visited established churches (Phil. 2:19-20) *with authority over local officers* (I Tim. 5:19-20). The evangelists ministered to the brethren, corrected them and encouraged them whenever and wherever it was impossible for the apostle Paul to do so personally.

Government in Local Congregations

Jesus commissioned *the apostles* to preach the gospel *to the world* and gave them the assistance of evangelists. But He also told Peter to "feed my sheep" (John 21:15-17).

Peter called himself a *fellow-elder* (I Peter 5:1) even though he was also an apostle. Paul designated himself as a *teacher* of the Gentiles (I Tim. 2:7) though he was also an apostle.

The term elder or teacher is used to designate the general office of authority *in the local congregations*, in which the apostles and evangelists spent part of their time. Acts 20:7 and 28 plainly prove that there were often several elders (called also "bishops" or "overseers") in a local church. It was their duty to preach, teach and rule by example, as shepherds and not lords, not for "filthy lucre" but out of love.

In I Corinthians 12:28 and Ephesians 4:11 we find only the mention of pastors and teachers rather than bishops, elders, presbyters or overseers, *but they represent the same general office* of authority in the local churches.

Duties of Elders

The word *pastor* means a "shepherd." He is one who tends the flock. Jesus not only is the Chief Apostle and High Priest (Hebrews 3:1), He is also the Chief Shepherd and Bishop of the Church of God (I Peter 5:4; 2:25). Peter is not the bishop of bishops. There is today—as always—only One Supreme Pastor or Shepherd over the entire Church—Jesus Christ (John 10:16).

But over the local church congregations there is also a local pastor directly under the apostles and evangelists. He is the presiding elder or bishop over other elders in a local congregation. Notice that in the gathering at Jerusalem, recorded in Acts 15, there were *many elders* in Jerusalem, together with

the apostles. Yet it was James—not one of the original twelve apostles, but the brother of Jesus—who, in the capacity of apostle and pastor of the *Headquarters Church* in authority over the other elders, voiced his decision (Acts 15:14).

All elders must be apt to teach (I Tim. 3:2), hence they are called teachers in I Cor. 12:28 and Eph. 4:11. Elders who rule well are to be highly respected for *their works'* sake, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching (I Tim. 5:17). Hence today we, too, distinguish between teaching and preaching elders.

The congregations are admonished to *submit* to the elders (I Peter 5:5).

The members do not elect and dismiss elders, nor do they vote on doctrines which the elders are to preach. Rather, elders are chosen by the apostle, or, as he directs and authorizes, by an evangelist, according to the qualifications given in the letters to Timothy and Titus. *Elders must first be proven* before they are to be ordained by the laying on of hands with prayer and fasting (I Tim. 5:22). Thus there may be in local congregations those who are able to teach, but who must first be proven sound in the faith, even though they might "desire the office of a bishop."

Here, then, is the spiritual government of God in the early Church plainly stated: The Father manifested His will to Jesus, the living Head of our Church, Who in turn manifested His will to the apostles. They in turn instructed the evangelists in carrying out the gospel. The evangelists, together with the apostles, taught the elders who presided over the local congregations. In each congregation was a presiding pastor, usually with other elders, who taught the members. There was no membership politics, no voting on church offices or doctrines. The elders *ruled* the local church, but *were not ruled* by the congregation or lay boards.

Office of Deacon

Paul wrote to the Corinthians that *beside* the spiritual administration, there was also a *physical* administration made up of helps or helpers, usually referred to in Scripture as deacons. They were physical or material helpers, who waited on tables, did janitor work and many other physical duties related directly to the work of the Church.

Philip, originally *ordained as one of seven deacons* to serve at tables (Acts 6:6), was so filled with the Holy Spirit that he later became an evangelist (Acts 21:8). Those deacons who helped in material duties were sometimes called "ministers" in old English usage. The apostles Barnabas and Paul had Luke and

John Mark to minister to them (Acts 13:5). Today, however, the term "minister" is used to designate a pastor.

Elderly women also helped in physical needs. Paul wrote to the saints at Rome: "I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant [the original word means *helper* or *deaconess*] . . . that ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you: for she has been a succorer of many, and of myself also" (Rom. 16:1).

Offices Are Gifts of Holy Spirit

All offices in God's Church are gifts of the Holy Spirit. It is God Who created us with our natural talents and Who adds to those talents, portions of His talents through the Holy Spirit. Many of the gifts are *offices with authority*, but others are purely Spiritual gifts which belong not only to the *ministry* but to others also. There are the gifts of healing and speaking and interpreting foreign languages. There are the gifts of knowledge by which TRUTH hidden for centuries is revealed, and the gifts of wisdom and of faith.

All these gifts are distributed throughout the Church as God sees fit so that He may work through the Church and *govern* it. God, not man, decides who shall be given the responsibilities in carrying out His work.

Government in Our Church Today

Down through the ages Jesus has chosen directly those who serve in the capacity of apostles—His direct representatives bearing His authority. The world does not use the title apostle for the highest office in the Church under Christ. Instead, it has invented other lofty titles—primate, archbishop, pope, all offices of men's devising.

But in our Church, the Church of God, *in which the government of God exists today*, Jesus has chosen Mr. Armstrong as His direct representative, as an ambassador of the Kingdom of God to the nations of this world, as a man through whom He can work in preaching and publishing the true gospel to the whole world. Mr. Armstrong's office carries with it divine authority, backed up by the *power of God*. Jesus has sent him to speak in His name and by His authority, and has given testimony to it *by the fruits which only God can produce*.

When Jesus was asked by John the Baptist if He were the One who should deliver the world from its headlong plunge to destruction, Jesus told John's disciples to LOOK TO THE FRUITS—the sick were being healed, the gospel of the kingdom was being preached (Luke 7:22). It is *by the fruits* that we recognize the office with which God

has invested His direct representative.

In the work of carrying the gospel to the nations, Mr. Armstrong has had to choose young men, as did the apostle Paul; and as God has given proof by their fruits, they have been ordained as ministers, with authority, ministering to local churches and serving in various other fields in our complex ministry of today when we must also use the radio and the printing press.

In our local congregations today, there are elders pastoring the local flocks, and deacons and deaconesses, who serve the congregations. In every way it is the government of God. *Those who are the greatest in authority serve the most*. It is not a rule by the will of man, but by the will of God.

The critics who *think* God's government is man's government DO NOT KNOW THE POWER OF GOD. God's ministers know only too well that God will DESTROY those who seek to devour the Church by leading away disciples after them.

How plain it is that *God* rules our Church. The congregations are ruled by the elders, who are ruled by the evangelists, and they are ruled by the apostle who is ruled by Christ who is ruled by God! All offices are appointive, by a superior office. It is government from GOD down to each individual member in the Church.

Come to the TABERNACLE

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family should come. Do not bring unconverted, non-member adults, whether of your own family, or relatives, or friends. This is NOT the place to try to "get them interested" or converted. Ask all such to listen to the broadcast or write for *The PLAIN TRUTH*. This Festival is set aside by God for the fellowship and worship together of His begotten, converted people ONLY.

That is *God's way*—God's command!

Do you think it will be impossible to do what God says? Certainly *not!* All through your Bible, God has promised *blessings* on those who obey Him. And God *keeps* His promises! We will actually be *better* off financially and every other way if we obey these commands.

Be sure to start saving this tithe *immediately* so you can attend the Feast of Tabernacles and God's other feasts this year! It may require determination and sacrifice, but that is the very *way* to develop character. And you'll be blessed in every way if you do.

Not the *First* Tithe

Please do not confuse this second tithe, especially for these occasions, with

the first tithe which God has commanded us to render to His true ministers for proclaiming to the whole world the Gospel. *Unlike* the second tithe, the *first* tenth or tithe of our income belongs to God. He created all things and is only *permitting* man to use this material world anyway. "The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein" (Ps. 24:1).

In Numbers 18:21 we read that God gave a tenth or "tithe" of Israel's income to the Levites for an inheritance. This tithe does not belong to us, it is the inheritance of God's ministry. Today the priesthood has been *changed* (Hebrews 7:12)—the ministry of CHRIST superseding the Levitical priesthood—so we now pay our tithes to God's representatives, Christ's true ministers, for the gospel work (I Cor. 9:14).

In Malachi 4:8-12, it says that we are *robbing* God if we fail to render to Him (through His true servants) tithes AND offerings. Most people in this confused world don't even realize this. But once we have the knowledge of the truth, we had better repent and begin to obey God in this matter. It is all for our own personal good. As we just read in Malachi, if we do obey God by paying our tithes and giving offerings—He will bless us abundantly. But God does want us to be willing to obey Him, and to put that ahead of our own selfish desires.

In Deuteronomy 14:22-27, we find that our Creator commands us to lay by a *second* tithe of our increase or income and go to the place which God has chosen. From this tithe we ourselves are to eat, drink, and rejoice in this place—the place God has chosen for His annual Holy Days are to be held. We set aside this special tithe (or tenth) of our income *every year* in order that we might have the expense money to attend and to rejoice with the brethren.

Notice it says in verse 23, "and THOU shalt eat before the Lord thy God . . ."

This tithe is to be spent on *yourself*—not for the ministry. Since there is a commanded tithe for the ministry, this must be *another, different* tithe.

In the twelfth chapter of Deuteronomy, this *special* tithe is mentioned in verses 6, 11 and 17 along with the offerings Israel used to bring. Here again, this second or *special* tithe is for *you* to use at the place which God has chosen for *you* to appear before Him on these annual Holy Days.

Yes, God has provided a method by which we can keep His festivals IF we are willing to do our part! It isn't difficult once we try. God has promised to care for our every need (I Peter 5:1). And if we love the brethren we won't fail to do it.

Are we going to follow Christ or not? Let every one examine his own heart!

Use Wisdom to Solve Problems

Sad as it sometimes is, with some families, the second tithe *just hasn't been enough* to get them to the Feast of Tabernacles. In this case, those having *more than enough* second tithe should help those who lack. Remember, God doesn't expect the poor to save more than their small tenth, but *they must do their part!* God often blesses others, however, with a larger tenth so they can help those who have less.

We find in Acts 4:32-35 that the early church helped its needy members, and we try to follow this principle. If there is not enough second tithe to take the entire family to the three great feasts, then just the man, as head of the family, should go (Deut. 16:16). The other members of the family are expected to go, if circumstances permit, and God will help us work it out in time if we do our part. Of course, if the husband is an unbeliever, the wife should certainly come anyway.

Tithe for Widows and Orphans

In reading the reference given in Deut. 14:22-27, some of you may have wondered about the meaning of verses 28-29. In these verses, God is commanding another, altogether *different* tithe.

In both Deut. 14:28-29 and Deut. 26:12-15 we find this tithe commanded. It used to be set aside in every walled city, "within thy gates" (Deut. 26:12). This third tithe is to be saved *only every third year*.

Since the laws of letting the land rest, releasing the poor debtors, etc. were based on a cycle of *seven years*, we are to save this special tithe in the third and sixth years out of every seven year period. None of you were really God's children—*spiritually Israelites* (Gal. 3:29)—until you were converted and baptized. So you won't save this third tithe until the third year after you were converted.

This tithe is *for* the widows and orphans. If *you* are a widow or orphan God *does not expect you to save this tithe!*

And remember that this special tithe is *only* to be saved every third and sixth year out of seven.

Some of you may think that paying God's (not yours!) *first tithe* to His work, saving a *second tithe* with which to attend His feasts, and, every third year only, saving an additional *third tithe* for widows and orphans is going to be impossible. That's what the *world* believes! But we are not of the world but of *the household of faith*.

Do you think God has commanded you to do something which He knows you will be unable to perform? NO! Those of us who have saved these three

tithes know by *EXPERIENCE* that God is able to bless us sufficiently that we abound to every good work (II Corinthians 9:6-8). He is doing it this moment for many of the brethren, and He will do it for you. You just do *YOUR* part, and God will be faithful to do *HIS!*

Historical Example

A most convincing example from a reliable historical source of how the Jews paid these tithes is given in the book of Tobit. This book is found in the Apocrypha—a collection of Jewish history and writings covering and extending beyond the period between the Old and New Testaments.

These writings were not inspired, but they give us much reliable information. Tobit was a man of the tribe of Naphtali, which was among the ten tribes of Israel taken captive by Assyria. He continued to keep the commandments of God even after the rest of his tribe began offering sacrifices to Baal and leaving their land of captivity for Northwestern Europe where Israel is today.

In the third paragraph of the book of Tobit, he tells us, "But I alone went many a time to Jerusalem for the festivals, as the Scripture commands all Israel with an everlasting decree, taking with me the first fruits and the tenth part of my crops and my first shearings, and I would give them to the priests, the sons of Aaron, at the altar. A tenth part of all my produce I would give to the sons of Levi, who officiated at Jerusalem, and *another tenth* I would sell, and go and spend the proceeds in Jerusalem each year, and a *third tenth* I would give to those to whom it was fitting to give it, as Deborah my grandmother had instructed me—for *I was left an orphan* of my father."

Thus we see that the Israelites had always understood that they were to save all three tithes, and that each one was to be used *for a different purpose*. God's commandments are not hidden from anyone who sincerely desires to know the truth.

Are you living by every word of God? Let us obey our own spiritual Father by keeping His annual Holy Days and saving the tithes that He has commanded!

The Great Blessings

Obedying these commands of God will bring greater blessings than you have ever experienced! Hundreds of you have written us asking, "How can we have fellowship with other true believers?" God in His infinite wisdom *knew* that His children should congregate for instruction and fellowship. That is *why* God *blessed* us by giving us His annual festivals.

Saving your second tithe will make
(Please continue on page 12)

Amazing 2000-Year History of the Church of God

How much do you really know about GOD'S CHURCH? Where has it been? Have you supposed it was re-established after 1900 years through the efforts of Herbert W. Armstrong? IT WAS NOT! You will be ASTONISHED to see the true history of GOD'S Church. This true history, authentically documented WITH NEW FACTS which our older members should re-read, is breathtaking. Here are the astounding facts! This surprising truth is bound up in the real meaning of the SEVEN CHURCHES IN REVELATION!

by Herman L. Hoeh

HERE—for two thousand new readers—is the TRUTH about our Church! Almost two thousand years ago a Messenger came to this earth bringing startling news of a coming world government!

That messenger was Jesus Christ!

Jesus came to *deliver* this message from God to man. He did *not* come to preach it *personally* to the whole world. Instead, Jesus spent His ministry *preparing the foundation for THE CHURCH which would carry his gospel of the Kingdom* to all nations.

Why Jesus Promised to Build Church

Jesus devoted His ministry to calling out disciples, teaching them the gospel, setting them an example by His own ministry. He authorized them with the greatest commission ever given to human beings—to preach the "gospel of the Kingdom of God in the whole world" (Matthew 24:14; Mark 16:15).

Before Jesus ascended to the throne of God, He commanded the apostles and disciples to remain in Jerusalem until they were imbued with the Holy Spirit, which made them the begotten sons of God, put them into His Church (I Cor. 12:13), and endued them with the POWER OF GOD to carry out His work!

Jesus founded His Church by sending the promised Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, Monday, June 18, 31 A.D.—a date *absolutely* established by the exact and *inspired* mathematical and astronomical computations of God's Sacred Calendar.

It was an inspired Church, a Church in which Jesus, through the Holy Spirit, was living His life and THROUGH WHICH JESUS BEGAN TO PREACH AND PUBLISH HIS GOSPEL TO THE WHOLE WORLD.

What Is the True Church?

The true Church is the collective body

of individuals, called out from the ways of this present world, who have *totally* surrendered themselves to the rule of God, and who, through the Holy Spirit, become the begotten sons of God (Rom. 8:9).

The true Church is not some *politically organized denomination* which one joins or becomes a member of in order to be "saved." Jesus did not die for some one *organization* called a Church (Acts 20:28).

You can't *join* the true Church; *only God can put you into it!*

The Church is called the body of Christ because it is a *spiritual organism* whose LIVING, ACTIVE HEAD is Jesus Christ, in the same sense that the husband is *head* of the wife (Eph. 5:23, 31).

Notice that from the very beginning the Church was subject to the rule of God. It was not a government by the will of man or boards of men. Jesus is the Head of the Church. He rules the Church. Read the accompanying article in this issue.

Church Grows in Truth

Before He ascended to the Father, Jesus prayed that His Church would be kept ONE in the Father's name. "Holy Father, *keep through thine own name* those whom thou hast given me, that they may be ONE, as we are" (John 17:11).

The true church—"the Church of God" (I Cor. 1:2)—is not many divided quarreling denominations, but ONE Church, composed of many scattered members, ONE Church united in Spirit, mind, attitude and heart because its members have *totally* surrendered their wills to God and have yielded to correction and reproof from the Word of God.

No denomination could be the true Church, because none has been willing to admit where it has been wrong, none

has received God's correction, none has allowed the Holy Spirit to guide it into truth. The Church which Jesus is building is composed of those *scattered* individuals who have God's Holy Spirit, who admit it when they are wrong, as the apostle Peter did when he made a serious mistake (Gal. 2:11).

Now notice Jesus' promise in John 16:13. He would send the Spirit of truth who "will GUIDE you INTO all truth."

Here is the KEY which proves who are in God's Church. It is composed *only* of those who are *growing into truth* as God reveals it. The moment anyone ceases to GROW, but wants to retain only what he had five or ten years ago, *from that moment on the Holy Spirit ceases to live in him.*

False Teachers Prophesied

Now let's notice what was prophesied to happen to the Church.

Jesus warned that there would be a great falling away—MANY false ministers deceiving the MANY (Mat. 24:4, 5). Paul earnestly warned *the elders* that from their own number some would depart from the faith (Acts 2:29, 30). False apostles and false brethren arose within local church assemblies (II Cor. 11:13-15, 26). Soon they outnumbered the faithful who *alone* made up the TRUE Church of GOD.

Not only did Jesus prophesy that false ministers would deceive the many, but He also said His Church would be *scattered* and persecuted. The Church first became scattered in the days of the apostles (Acts 8:1).

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."

Notice what Daniel says about the Church: "And they that understand among the people shall instruct many: *yet they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil, many days.* Now when they shall fall, they shall be holpen with a little help: *but many shall cleave to them with flatteries.* And some of them of understanding shall fall, to try them, and to purge them, and to make them white, even to the time of the end" (Dan. 11:33-35).

How plain! The true Church was forced out of the local organized congregations and scattered. False churches would arise professing to be the churches of Christ. False brethren would *betray* God's people.

But Jesus promised to be with the faithful remnant to the end of the age—to guide His people into truth.

Where has His Church been these 1900 years?

An Amazing Prophecy!

In the book of Revelation is an amazing prophecy. Almost no one understands it, yet it is so very plain. It is the Seven Churches of Revelation.

Notice Revelation 1:12-13. John sees a vision of seven candlesticks and Jesus in their midst. The Bible interprets the seven candlesticks to mean seven particular church congregations (verse 20). Jesus Christ is pictured as dwelling among the Seven Churches AS THOUGH THEY WERE A TYPE OF THE ENTIRE CHURCH.

There is the answer. Jesus dwells in the entire Church. Since this vision pictures Him dwelling only in seven churches, *those seven churches represent the entire Church!*

Jesus chose the seven because *they formed a perfect two-fold pattern.*

First, they were typical of general conditions among God's people anywhere. That is why we today are admonished to hear what the Holy Spirit says to *all the Seven Churches.*

Second, those seven churches, each with its own particular characteristics, were chosen because their location *in successive order* on a long mail route WAS TYPICAL OF SEVEN SUCCESSIVE STAGES OF GOSPEL LABOR OF THE CHURCH OF GOD THROUGH ALL AGES.

Who ARE the Seven Churches?

WHY have all Bible students, until NOW, been unable to identify these churches? It is due to the fact that everyone has ASSUMED, erroneously, that these picture the seven stages of the visible, organized churches which have called themselves "Christian." In other words, it has been assumed that the churches of *this world* are pictured in Revelation 2 and 3 as continuations of the true Church in apostolic days.

Everyone, it seems, has *supposed* that, following the apostolic Church, these seven churches picture the course of history in the Greek and Roman Catholic and the Protestant churches—the churches of the god of *this world!*

This is not true!

These two chapters of Revelation picture, and convey God's message to THE TRUE CHURCH OF GOD—the Church in which CHRIST lives and works—the Church which is HIS BODY—His instrumentality—the Church HE USES! It is the Church that was scattered, persecuted, unorganized—many of whose members have been martyred. This Church is composed of members who, even though begotten by and led by the Holy Spirit, yet are human and therefore not perfect. In the message to each of these seven churches Jesus has a word of correction. In every case He points out things they need to overcome. But they are the people who have and are led by His Spirit, who put themselves under GOD'S government instead of human traditions or self desire or the way that seems right to a man, and who have in the main THE TRUE GOSPEL, even though they often lost vital portions of it.

Notice, chapter 2, verse 1: "These things saith He that holdeth the seven stars (the angels of the TRUE church) in His right hand, *who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks*" (*these seven churches*). Jesus Christ is IN these churches. They are HIS churches, not Satan's churches which falsely masquerade as "Christian."

And remember the TRUE Church has not been politically organized, powerful and recognized by the world—but scattered, persecuted, *seldom noticed* by the world, and even then regarded as heretics.

Now let's UNDERSTAND who they are, one by one.

The Apostolic Age

The church at Ephesus pictured the *Apostolic Church*, a Church which patiently labored in the gospel, which met many false apostles but remained steadfast to the truth (Rev. 2:1-7).

THERE WERE TWO 19-YEAR CYCLES IN THE HISTORY OF THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH DURING WHICH THE GOSPEL WAS CARRIED TO THE OLD WORLD. It was exactly 19 years from A.D. 31, when the Church was founded, to the time that Paul received the vision to go into Europe! In Acts 16:9 Paul had a vision of a man in Macedonia (in Greece) who shouted "Help us!" Paul described this even in II Cor. 2:12-13 where he wrote that "a door was opened unto me of the Lord" by which he meant that a way was opened to preach the gospel in Europe.

Paul went into Europe about the time of Pentecost in the late spring of 50 A.D. After a few months of preaching, he arrived in Corinth in the fall of that year (Acts 18:1) where he remained for *a year and six months* (verse 11). It was now the beginning of 52 A.D. An insurrection broke out against Paul when Gallio was deputy or pro-counsel of Achaia (verse 12). A recently discovered inscription in Greece states that Gallio held this position during 52 A.D., which proves that the gospel went to Europe in 50 A.D., just 19 years after the Church was founded!

From 50 A.D. it was another 19 years until the fleeing of the Headquarters Church at Jerusalem in 69 A.D. Here is what happened in 69 A.D. on the Feast of Pentecost—exactly two 19-year cycles after the Holy Spirit came on the day of Pentecost: "Moreover," records Josephus, the Jewish historian, "at that feast which we call *Pentecost*, as the priests were going by night into the inner court of the temple . . . they said that in the first place they felt a quaking, and heard a great noise, and after that they heard a sound as of a multitude, saying, 'LET US REMOVE HENCE.'" (From *Wars of the Jews*, bk. VI, ch. v, § 3.)

God's people did *remove hence!* They fled to Pella, beyond the River Jordan. From that time forward the *united* power of the Church of God to spread the gospel of the Kingdom ceased. No longer was there a Headquarters Church at Jerusalem to whom all churches could look as the standard of TRUTH. It now became a *struggle to strive for the faith once delivered* (Jude 3).

The many local churches soon *left their first love*. Shortly after John finished the book of Revelation, the remnant of the true Church was scattered over the length and breadth of the whole Roman Empire. This fulfilled Jesus' warning: "I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place" (Rev. 2:5).

Thus ended the Apostolic Age typified by the "Church at Ephesus."

The prophesied "Church at Smyrna" arises next. It appeared to be dead—non-existent—yet it was alive, *suffering persecution*. This pictures God's Church during more than four centuries under the persecuting Old Roman Empire.

Besides the true Church there was also a "Synagogue of Satan" (Rev. 2:9) developing during this period.

The Synagogue of Satan—What Is It?

Now read Revelation 2:9. "I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan."

Notice, this is a synagogue of Satan. A synagogue is merely the Hebrew word

for church. Then Jesus is not speaking of a *race*, but of a *church* that belongs to the devil!

This church claims they are Jews. Why? Because Jesus said, "Salvation is of the Jews" (John 4:22). "To the Jew first, then also to the Greek" (Rom. 1:16).

In Romans 11:16-27 Paul explains that Israel and the Jews, to whom salvation belonged, were broken off because of unbelief. Gentiles were grafted in their place. But once grafted in, they were no longer Gentiles—"being in time past Gentiles in the flesh" (Eph. 2:11). Now they were all one in Christ Jesus, "no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints" (Eph. 2:19).

"He is a Jew," says Paul, "which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God" (Rom. 2:29).

So here was a church made up of Gentiles, claiming salvation, claiming to be Jews inwardly, masquerading itself as a "Christian" church.

This synagogue of Satan is the apostate church which developed after 80 A.D. and ultimately became recognized as the State Religion of the Roman Empire. That Church has had many Protestant daughters which are also Satan's churches.

The True Church Persecuted

The world at this time did not recognize which was the true Church. "The world knoweth us not" (I John 3:1). It is from the enemies of God's Church that we have scanty records of God's people, who were now maligned as heretics.

For centuries, Catholic writers mention small remnants of the true Church within the bounds of the Roman Empire. Sometimes they were individuals, sometimes scattered families, and especially in the Near East there were still a few local congregations preaching the gospel and keeping the commandments. As late as the beginning of the fifth century in Asia Minor, the bishop Chrysostom bewailed members of the Catholic Church, who, upon learning the truth from the scattered remnants of the true Church, repented of their ways and began to observe "the feast of trumpets, the feast of tabernacles, and the feast of the great day of expiation" (Bingham's *Antiquities of the Christian Church*, bk. XVI, ch. VI).

As a result of the Council of Nicaea (325 A.D.), Emperor Constantine commenced the Tribulation (Revelation 12:6) with full force. The true Church fled into the valleys and mountains in Europe and Asia Minor.

Now notice what John writes to the



"Church at Pergamos": "I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is; and thou holdest fast my name, and has not denied my faith" (Rev. 2:13).

A Miracle Occurs

The local church to which John wrote was situated in Pergamos, the capital of the Roman province of Asia in Asia Minor—Pergamos was Satan's seat of worldly human government for that province. Just as the local Church at Pergamos was situated in a city where Satan swayed human politics, so the next work of God's Church occurred *within* the bounds of Satan's government—the Eastern Roman Empire—where a small body of God's people was found.

It was about 650 A.D. that God, as if by miracle, raised up among the scattered remnants of his Church in Capadocia and Armenia a man who revitalized his people and spread the gospel. This well-educated man, by the name of Constantine of Manales, was given a gift of portions of the Bible. He was utterly amazed by the truth he found revealed in it after study. Soon he began preaching and with the help of trained evangelists found such a fruitful harvest that there were tens of thousands converted to the truth.

After twenty-seven years of ministry, he was stoned to death in 684 A.D., but an officer, Simeon, sent to destroy him, was so stirred by his death that he became converted and carried forth the gospel until he was burned at the stake six years later! Within another hundred years God raised up a third minister, Sergius, to guide his people who were allowing many false teachings to grow in their midst.

The name given to these people of God by their enemies was the *Paulicians*.

The reports circulated about these people were slanderous and false. It was not till almost the beginning of the twentieth century that a book called *The Key of Truth*, containing many of their teachings, was translated into English by Fred C. Conybeare.

This partially preserved record of God's people proves that *they preached the gospel of the Kingdom; that they believed the Church was founded not only upon Jesus Christ, but also upon the apostles and prophets* (Eph. 2:20); *that they baptized by immersion; that they laid on hands for the "reception of the Spirit"* (p. CXXIV). *They not only "continued to keep the Passover on the fourteenth of Nisan," but they also observed the sabbath and the festival of unleavened bread* (pages CLXII and CLII of *The Key of Truth*).

The devil was angry with these people who understood the gospel and kept the commandments. Knowing that he could not overthrow their faith by force, he corrupted them by introducing false teachers who taught the "doctrine of Balaam" (Rev. 2:14). In turning to Numbers 31:16, you will see that Balaam induced the Israelites to practice idolatry and commit spiritual fornication.

Once again Satan, in his wiles to overthrow the Church, introduced false teachers among God's people. These teachers induced many in the Church to celebrate certain *idolatrous* pagan holidays, particularly Epiphany, the original birthday of Nimrod, supposedly in honor of Christ's birth and baptism.

Satan also caused many in the Church to take part in worldly politics in the hope of safeguarding themselves. Mixing with the politics of this world is called "fornication" in Revelation 17:2. God's Church is to be a virgin and remain pure and *separate from the world*,

waiting for the marriage to Christ (II Cor. 11:2).

As a result of these sins, Jesus warned his Church: "Repent; or else I will fight against thee with the sword of my mouth" (Rev. 2:16). Most took the warning lightly until it was too late. Trusting in their worldly political alliances with neighboring Arabs, instead of relying on Jesus' protection, they were betrayed and slaughtered—one hundred thousand of them! The faithful few who escaped were driven to Southeastern Europe and called Bogomils. "There they thrived for centuries, and . . . spread . . . their tenets into Bohemia, Poland, Germany, Italy, France, and even into . . . England" (p. CIV).

The Church in the Wilderness

John was inspired to commend the "Church at Thyatira" because *the last works of the Church were more than the first*. But in the local Church there was a false teacher (symbol of the Catholic Church) who taught some to practice idolatry. Jesus warned He would cast them into great tribulation and "kill her children [Protestants] with death" unless they repented (Rev. 2:18-29).

Now let us notice how this description fits exactly the next great expansion of God's people.

As a result of the evangelization of the Alpine regions by the Paulicians and Bogomils of Bulgaria, as God's people were called, there arose numerous ministers and faithful congregations. One of these men was Peter de Bruys who preached the gospel of the Kingdom in the south of France (Jones' *Church History*, ch. 4, sect. 3). Two other preachers of the time were Arnold and Henri. They were charged by the Catholic Church with remaining faithful to the whole law of God and of observing the sabbath (*Ecclesiastical History*, by Peter Allix, pp. 168-169).

The Lutheran historian Mosheim says of other congregations of the Church in the twelfth century that they held "a notion that the observance of the law of Moses, in everything except the offerings of sacrifices, was obligatory upon Christians . . . they abstained from those meats the use of which was prohibited under the Mosaic economy, and celebrated the Jewish Sabbath. The second tenet which distinguished this sect was advanced in opposition to the doctrine of three persons in the divine nature."

Yes, they knew that God was not a trinity, but a family!

A crusade was instituted against many of these people in Southern France. Thousands perished. But when it seemed that *the first work would soon be ended*, there arose an even *greater* leader among God's people.

It was the close of the twelfth century.

In Lyons, France, lived an astonishingly successful and wealthy merchant, Peter Waldo. "One day, while in the company of some of the leading citizens, one of his friends fell lifeless at his side. Terrified by the event, he said to himself: If death had stricken me, what would have become of my soul?"

Being a Catholic, Waldo asked one of these theologians what is the *perfect* way. "Ah! answered the theologian . . . here is Christ's precept: 'If thou wilt be perfect, go, sell that thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come take up thy cross and follow me.'" (Comba, *History of the Waldenses*, p. 21).

Waldo disposed of his property by distributing to the poor. But from his wealth he also had a translation of the Scriptures made. In this translation he noticed the command to the apostles to preach the gospel of the Kingdom of God. His mind began to understand the Scriptures.

God was using Peter Waldo.

Comba says that "he brought to the study of the Scriptures that practical common sense which had guided him in his business transactions . . . The word of Christ was clear enough; for Waldo it was simply a question of furnishing a literal translation" (p. 243 of Comba's *History*).

The humble remnant of the Church of God listened to him. Soon many new disciples were coming to repentance. "His disciples became almost as many *co-workers* for him" (p. 26). The world called them Waldenses.

God's Church was once again spread-

ing the gospel! *A school for ministers was established to provide the trained help to carry the gospel.*

Called the "Church of God"

Their enemies admitted that these people proclaimed the gospel of the Kingdom of God, that they baptized repentant believers and obeyed the *whole* law of God.

But just as there was a false teacher, Jezebel, in the local church at Thyatira, so now there were many *false* teachers and *false* brethren among these people. Some rose up among the Waldenses teaching that it was right to have Catholics and Protestants baptize their children and to attend *idolatrous* mass once in a while. Others committed spiritual fornication by meddling in politics in the hope of avoiding persecution.

To correct his people God caused a frightful crusade to pass over them 300 years after the death of Waldo. Only a faithful remnant escaped.

Once again 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 halfhearted believers who either go aside into total error in the face of persecution or else are forced to give up their lives for the faith, as Daniel prophesied.

But in 1315 A.D., long before the crusade against the Waldenses occurred, the truth of God was carried to England by a German Waldensian preacher, Walter Lollard.

Now let's notice what John wrote to the "Church at Sardis."



PHILADELPHIA as it is today. The ancient city in apostolic times became a type of this work today! Here is a modern view of Philadelphia, in Turkey, from the plain overlooking the city. Mt. Tmolus rises in the background.

The Church in England and America

The "Church at Sardis" had a name that it was alive but it was dead (Rev. 3:1). Only a minute fraction of its people were really surrendered to God and holding to the faith once delivered. This is just the picture of the Church of God for over 600 years after the preaching of Walter Lollard.

Through the preaching of Lollard and other helpers, hundreds were repenting. Thousands were learning for the first time that Catholic religious holidays came from paganism and that Sunday was not the Sabbath.

But within sixty years after the coming of Walter Lollard, a reform movement under John Wyclif arose in England and nearly engulfed the teachings of the original Waldensian preachers. After a period of persecution, there remained only a few who kept the faith and observed the Sabbath and the annual festivals. When confronted with imprisonment for their faith, several ministers gave up the faith even though some of their followers remained steadfast (Cox's *Sabbath Literature*, Vol. 1, p. 162).

It was not until about 1650 that there were enough Sabbath keepers to establish local congregations. They called themselves the Churches of God, but the world termed them Sabbatarians and Sabbatarian Baptists.

From England the Church of God spread to America. In 1664, Stephen Mumford, sent to Newport, Rhode Island, raised up a small church mainly from Baptist converts. One by one new churches were established through continued help of the churches in England.

But as always happens, after several generations the children take truth for granted and never really surrender their wills and their lives to God. In less than one hundred and fifty years, the English churches almost disappeared, having cut themselves off from God by *turning from* his truth, and by adopting the name "Seventh-day Baptists."

In America the *number of churches* gradually increased as the gospel was spread from state to state. But so nearly dead were these congregations that in 1802 many began to ORGANIZE THEMSELVES together into a General Conference instead of submitting to the government of God for the carrying out of the gospel. At this serious juncture, *most of the local churches joined themselves together* to form the Seventh-day Baptist General Conference. Some began teaching the Trinity doctrine and the immortality of human souls.

Several congregations did not become members of the Conference. For another half century they maintained the truth they possessed, although most of them did not go all the way in obedience to

God. John aptly described this period: "Be watchful, and establish the things remaining, *which are about to die*: for I have not found thy works perfected before my God" (Rev. 3:2).

The Adventist Movement

During this time the advent movement among *Sunday-observing churches* was begun by the uninspired William Miller. In 1843 several followers of Miller in Washington, New Hampshire, became acquainted with the truth of the Sabbath. It was not until after the miserable disappointment of 1844, however, that the general body of adventists had the Sabbath called to their attention. A small number accepted the Sabbath and soon *united with the few remaining Church of God brethren* who refused to be affiliated with the Seventh-day Baptist Conference.

They called themselves the "Church of God" and began publishing "The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald." Their first songbook was dedicated to "The Church of God scattered abroad."

With each passing year, new and different doctrines were being introduced to explain away the adventist failure of October 22, 1844. Finally, a meeting was held in Battle Creek, Michigan, September 28 through October 1, 1860.

"This conference also took into consideration the subject of a name by which our people should be called," wrote Loughborough on page 351 of the *Great Second Advent Movement*. "This again called forth a diversity of opinions, some pleading for one name and some for another. The "Church of God" being proposed, it was objected to on the ground that it gave none of the distinctive features of our faith, while the name "Seventh-day Adventist" would not only set forth our faith in the near coming of Christ, but would also show that we were observers of the Seventh-day Sabbath. So unanimous was the assembly in favor of the latter name that when *put to vote* only one man voted against, and he soon afterward withdrew his objection."

In the spring of 1861 another conference was held in an unscriptural effort to reorganize local congregations. The following covenant was recommended for this new church organization: "We, the undersigned, hereby ASSOCIATE OURSELVES TOGETHER AS A CHURCH, *taking the name of Seventh-Day Adventist . . .*"

Once again men forgot that they can not organize themselves *into* the Church of God. They can only organize themselves *out of* the Church of God!

A Remnant Remains!

When this new name was being

forced on the churches, there appeared an article in the April 9, 1861 issue of the "Review and Herald" in which a few brethren from Ohio wrote that they would not give their offerings for any other purpose "than the advancement and extension of the truth and the 'Church of God.'"

Within the space of sixty years, two major departures from the church of God occurred. The ministers would not strengthen that which was ready to perish!

For another seventy years conditions remained almost unchanged. The remaining brethren retained the name "Church of God." Among local congregations only a few individuals repented and strengthened the truth that was ready to perish in their midst. But most of the ministers resorted to organizing evangelistic work on the pattern of state conferences rather than yielding themselves to God's government and direction in the carrying of the gospel. In fact, instead of the true gospel, most ministers taught a "third angel's message," which they had accepted from the adventist people.

Today's Church Prophesied!

Notice the amazing description of the next event in the history of God's people. John writes to the "Church at Philadelphia": "I know thy works: behold, *I have set before thee an open door*, and no man can shut it: *for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word and hast not denied my name*" (Rev. 3:8).

Here is a Church with little strength, few in numbers, but which has kept the word of God; one which has not denied the truth. Here is a Church which is preaching the gospel because Jesus promises to set before it *an open door* until the work of the Church is completed.

Here is a Church which Jesus loves despite its weakness! Here is a Church to which He says: "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience [which Jesus interprets in Revelation 14:12 as *keeping the commandments* and the faith], I also will keep thee FROM THE HOUR OF TEMPTATION, WHICH SHALL COME UPON ALL THE WORLD, TO TRY THEM THAT DWELL UPON THE EARTH" (Rev. 3:10).

This verse pictures a Church which is carrying the gospel just prior to the last great time of trouble that will engulf all the world. *This is the Church of God TODAY!*

The Gospel Goes to All the World

Jesus chose Paul, who was highly educated, for spreading the gospel to the Gentiles. He later raised up Peter Waldo, a successful businessman, to keep

his truth alive during the Middle Ages. In these last days WHEN THE GOSPEL MUST GO AROUND THE WORLD, Jesus chose a man amply trained in the advertising and business fields to shoulder this mission—Herbert W. Armstrong.

Paul was struck down. Waldo was shocked by the sudden death of his friend. In like manner God three times swept away Mr. Armstrong's business in order that he might come to understand the truth.

Shortly before this event, God had opened the mind of Mrs. Armstrong to understand the Sabbath truth from an elderly Church of God woman. After six months of study, in a persistent effort to prove Sabbath-keeping unscriptural, Mr. Armstrong also *surrendered his will to God* and accepted the Sabbath.

From this moment forward, God opened the minds of Mr. and Mrs. Armstrong to understand one truth after another. The Church of God brethren with whom they associated became so intensely interested that Mr. Armstrong soon found himself speaking at their insistence—then *preaching* to small groups in Oregon!

Not long after his ordination, a momentous juncture occurred. A movement was under foot to organize the local congregations of the Church of God under human government—a financial board of seven men. By 1933 certain leading ministers demanded that no more *new* truth be preached to the brethren. They were refusing to repent and allow the Holy Spirit to work through them to establish the truth that was ready to perish!

Most of the congregations succumbed to error. The age of the Church of Sardis was over. *The Church period of Philadelphia was to begin!*

A DOOR Opens

The time had come for the gospel TO GO AROUND THE WORLD! Having tested and proven that Herbert and Loma Armstrong would remain faithful and subject to His government, God opened before them and a few faithful brethren the marvelous DOOR of radio and the printing press to carry forth the gospel. From a minute beginning in Oregon, in 1934, the work of God spread to cover much of North America in 19 years. In 1953 it leaped to Europe and the world!

This is very significant.

God gave the Apostolic Church *just two* nineteen-year cycles to carry the gospel to the Old World. He opened a DOOR to the apostle Paul at the *beginning of the second nineteen-year cycle* by which the gospel went to Europe (Acts 16:9; II Cor. 2:12-13).

So now, just before the second com-

ing of Jesus Christ, God has given His Church—THIS CHURCH—*just two* 19-year cycles in which to carry the gospel to the world!

The first cycle *has already passed*. God opened the door for the second cycle in January 1953, and the gospel is now going to all the world!

Do you catch the significance of this?

It means that this work, this MISSION to which God has called us *all*, is a DIVINE work, a DIVINE mission!—not the work of some one man. WE ARE THE CHURCH OF GOD to whom Jesus committed the *greatest* task ever to fall upon mortal man—the carrying of His gospel, the good news of the Kingdom of God, to *all* nations.

We are a people with "little strength," but God has set before us an OPEN DOOR WHICH NO MAN CAN SHUT. We must use that door. We must become zealous, working, praying, studying, giving tithes and offerings as we have never given before, so that this gospel can go *in power* around the world.

Future Is Dangerous

This is the time of the end when prophecies hidden for ages are being revealed. TRUTH is being restored, knowledge is rapidly increasing. But knowledge brings *responsibility*; it becomes *dangerous* if not rightly handled.

Now notice Jesus' LAST WARNING to His Church. At the *very close* of this age, when the work of spreading the gospel is almost finished, Jesus addressed yet another Church work—the Church at Laodicea: "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: . . . I WILL SPOUE THEE OUT OF MY MOUTH" (Rev. 3:15, 16).

This frightful condition lies just ahead of us. Just as the Sardis era of the Church existed side by side with the Philadelphia era, *so we will continue our work* at the very same time that another work will develop. Another separate work is yet to arise—made up of begotten individuals who are spiritually lukewarm! WOE BE TO ANY OF US IF WE TAKE PART IN SUCH A WORK! Here is a work, yet to arise because of our preaching, which will say: "I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing." And Jesus will reply: "As many as I *love*, I rebuke and chasten: be ZEALOUS therefore, and *repent*."

It is time to WAKE UP! If you become complacent, lacking in zeal, looking upon a local church as a social club, instead of having your heart in the gospel, you, too, may end up in the "Church at Laodicea." Jesus, then, will *not* deliver you from the impending, horrifying tribulation.

Notice Jesus' admonition in Luke 21:36. "WATCH ye therefore and PRAY

always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape *all* these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man."

Let's *pray* and *work together* to carry this gospel to all nations so Jesus will say to each of us, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

Come to the TABERNACLE

(Continued from page 6)

the joyous privilege of attending these festivals possible. Because God has commanded this special tithe, He is *bound* to help you fulfill this command. If you do YOUR part, you can *know* that God will enable you to attend His Holy Festivals!

Do you realize what this means?

It means that God is commanding us, instructing us—and will BLESS us that we may take a *vacation* in joyous fellowship with His people! This is the time to take *your* vacation. It is a time when God will make it possible for *all* His children to rest from their regular duties and to *worship* and *rejoice* together in His festivals.

So by all means *come to the Tabernacle!*

When? At the time God has set—at the Feast of Tabernacles, which begins this year on Sunday evening, September 28 and ends on Monday evening October 6.

How? By setting aside your *second* tithe regularly which God has commanded that you use in attending His Holy Days.

Why? Because your Creator knows that you *need* the spiritual fellowship made possible by these festivals. He has *commanded* you to attend.

Honestly, *you can't afford NOT to attend* God's festivals! Write us if you wish further help and information on God's festivals. Also be sure to write us if you plan to attend so that all arrangements can be made in advance.

Some few of you may not be able to save enough second tithe between now and the Feast of Tabernacles to attend this fall. In that case, continue to save it and be sure to attend next year—*and from then on*. The wonderful sermons and joyous fellowship will much more than repay any efforts on your part. And God blesses only those who OBEY His commands!

By commanding the *second* tithe, God has made your presence possible at His festivals IF you do your part! Thousands of brethren in every conceivable type of occupation and situation have found that they CAN save a second tithe with God's promised help.

YOU are *no different!* Just be sure your heart is *surrendered* to obey Him!