

Servants' NEWS

Vol. 4, No. 2

A newsletter for servants of the Almighty Eternal Creator, wherever they may be

Mar/Apr 1998

What Has Happened To Us?

Most larger WCG splinter groups set out to do the same kind of “work” as the WCG: big-budget TV, radio, magazines, etc. (plus the Internet and other improvements). But it is these largest groups that seem to be furthest away from fulfilling their stated mission. They claim to be the main or only group preaching the Gospel to the world, but at best, they are reaching only a few thousand people each month. (Whereas, some of the smaller groups with limited mission statements are actually fulfilling them.)

This article cannot possibly cover all of the important recent events in the major WCG splinter groups. But we will attempt to accurately cover enough events to help everyone **understand the overview of what these groups are doing and how the Eternal is working with them now.** During the past few months, significant events have taken place in all of the major “Church of God” groups.

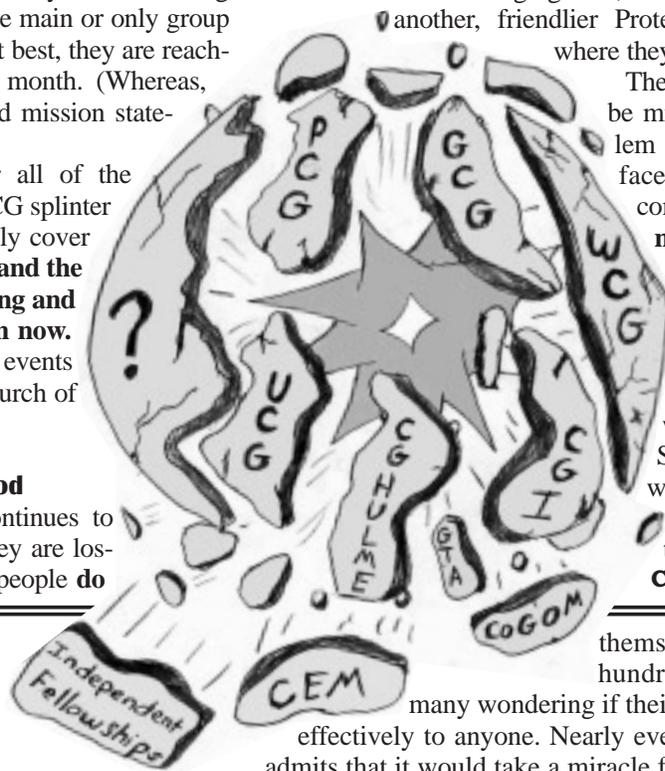
The Worldwide Church of God

The Worldwide Church of God continues to shrink drastically—from both sides! They are losing both members and money because people do

not believe their new doctrines, and because people do believe their new doctrines. As local WCG congregations go to Sunday, Easter and Christmas worship, those convicted of Sabbath-worship are finding alternatives. Those who have accepted the entire slate of essentially liberal Protestant doctrine can find almost no reason to drive a long distance to a hierarchical WCG congregation; many are deciding to attend another, friendlier Protestant church nearer to where they live.

The WCG appears already to be mired in the biggest problem most other Protestants face: getting members to commit to doing **anything more** than showing up once per week. One local WCG congregation gave a survey to its members regarding when they would like to worship (Saturday or Sunday) and when they would like to have a Bible study. Less than half of the members returned the

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Does the Eternal Have to Use Us to Preach His Final Message?

For decades, most Worldwide Church or God members thought they would be members of **the one organization** that would preach the “last warning” message to the whole world, and then the end would come. But now, these people find

themselves scattered among hundreds of organizations, many wondering if their group will even preach effectively to anyone. Nearly every leader who is honest admits that it would take a miracle from God for their group to ever come close to half of the media power of the WCG in the late 1980's.

And the miracles are not happening.

Anyone who has studied Sabbatarian history realizes that these groups came and went—they would sometimes learn and grow and teach effectively, then laxness, self righteousness, internal politics and error would destroy them.

It seems that the Worldwide Church of God breakup is little different than much of the rest of Sabbatarian history.

Has anyone ever asked the question: Does the Eternal have to use the former WCG members to preach the Gospel to

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This issue includes the new loose-leaf magazine Shelter in the Word.
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Trucker's Bible Study

Oak Grove, Missouri



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The Trucker's Bible Study originated with my father-in-law, Arlo Gieselman. He noticed a new truck stop in Oak Grove, Missouri, visited the manager, and the manager agreed to make the trucker's lounge available for Bible Studies on Sunday morning. Arlo asked me to help out with this project, and I have been honored to do so, and since then others in our congregation have indicated an interest in participating.

It is not all that unusual for truck stops to have a ministry for truckers who are passing through. In fact, truck stop managers generally want what the truckers want, and if there is a need or desire for this type of thing, they are quite willing to oblige.

We did not feel it appropriate to have a mini-church service, as do some truck stop ministries. We're Sabbath-keepers, and a Sunday morning worship service doesn't feel right. Even more important, our purpose is to promote a greater understanding of God's word, and an interactive Bible study is a better format for this.

We have received many positive comments on this approach. People who have an interest in God's word want to share their understanding, and are just not content to sit and be spoon fed. Rather than having a curriculum or lesson plans, sometimes we begin by reading a few scriptures and asking for comments. Often, this is enough to get an hour-long discussion going. Sometimes we just go around the table and ask if anyone has questions. Usually it's good to have a short topic planned because it is impossible to know whether someone is new or old to the study of the scriptures.

These methods allow for a free flow of ideas and open up interesting opportunities relative to true Biblical doctrine. What did Jesus mean when He said, "The meek shall inherit the earth"? Why do we pray "Thy kingdom come" instead of "when we go to Thy Kingdom"?

The studies have allowed us to touch people where they are. One gentleman who is just beginning his search for God told us about his little brother who died at two weeks old, and that he still thinks about him all the time. This opened up the opportunity to talk to him about the resurrections, and how he will see his brother again. Perhaps he could be the one to teach the child about the truth of God! **It is difficult to describe how rewarding it is to connect with people on this level, and in most instances it is more effective than scoring points in doctrinal debate.**

So why are we doing this? It is not going to build our local congregation, so what's the point? Our purpose is not to convert people. Rather it is to help people in their search for God and their walk with Christ. If we can plant a few seeds here and there, then we know that at least some of it can take root, and **God will give the increase.** As Paul said: "I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth. So then neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but God who causes the growth" (1Cor 3:6-7).

We are planting seeds, and we are watering seeds. Who knows what will happen somewhere down the interstate? If the word of God is planted, we have His promise that something will happen. Isaiah wrote it: "So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me void, but it shall accomplish what I please, and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it" (Isa 55:11).

If you would like more information or some tips on organizing your own Trucker's Bible Study, please feel free to contact me. For updates on our latest studies, check out our web site: <http://home.swbell.net/shemp/kccog.html>.

—Leonard Cacchio, 705 NE Bryant Drive, Lee's Summit, MO 64086
e-mail: e-mail at lcacchio@unicom.net.

Servants' News is a ministry to help others understand the Creator's will, obey Him, and teach others. We believe that the Bible contains the foundation of knowledge about our Creator and that He is actively working through people today. Our focus is to help the Sabbath-keeping brethren who believe Yeshua (Jesus) is the Messiah, but we realize that the Eternal works with many groups and individuals.

We believe the gospel should be given freely—you may copy this newsletter and give it to others. *Servants' News* has nothing to sell and has no financial ties with other organizations, but is supported by those who personally decide to help this ministry. We do not have IRS tax exempt status, but the IRS accepts some charitable deductions without such status (see IRS Publication 557, p. 16, col. 1).

Editor & Publisher: Norman S. Edwards
Associate Editors: Tim & Jeanice Davis, Marleen Edwards, Robert & Christine Feith, Missi Lara, Jon D. Pike, Ann Wibbelsmann
Technical Services: George Dewey
Office Administrator: Pam Dewey
Contributors: Many! Thanks to everyone!

NOTICE: The people listed above do not necessarily endorse every article in this newsletter.

Servants' News accepts articles for publication. Include a self-addressed stamped envelope for items that you want returned. We are happy to print corrections for any significant errors. Address articles, letters and subscription or literature requests to:

Servants' News
PO Box 220

Charlotte, Michigan 48813-0220

Phone: 517-543-5544

Fax: 517-543-8899

E-Mail: 75260.1603@CompuServe.com

Internet: <http://www.best.com/~oasis7/sn/>

Subscription and literature requests **may** be sent to the following addresses. Contributions received at these locations will be used for duplicating and mailing. Please make checks out to the name shown with the address:

Australia: Dale Heslin, 9 Alice Jackson Crescent, Gilmore, ACT 2905

Canada: *Servants' News*, RR 3 Box 55, Hastings, Ontario, K0L 1Y0

Europe: *Servants' News*, Gulpen 122, 4852 Hombourg, Belgium

U.K.: Jenny Whiteman, 2 Warren Rd, Narborough, Leicester, LE9 5DR

Most scripture quotations are from the New King James Version unless otherwise noted.

Circulation: 2300

Servants' News is published monthly except for combined March/April and September/October issues. Subscriptions are free to people who request the publication and are genuinely interested in it. The Publisher reserves the right to refuse subscriptions. *Servants' News* is published by Norman S. Edwards, 202 Pearl St, Charlotte, Michigan 48813. Periodical postage pending at Charlotte, Michigan. Postmaster: send address changes to *Servants' News*, PO Box 220, Charlotte, Michigan 48813-0220.

Shelter in the Word

Shelter in the Word is a new magazine designed for people with no “Church of God” background. It is being produced by the *Servants’ News* staff. The first issue is included with this issue of *Servants’ News*, and will continue to be included until it makes economic sense for it to be mailed separately. *Shelter in the Word* will be produced every other month. Its purpose is to assist in **individual spiritual growth**. It is designed to help its readers learn to study the Bible (on their own or with others) and to establish a lasting relationship with the Eternal.

The magazine will encourage people to study the Bible, to do what it says, and to talk about it with others. Christ often healed people first, then taught them truth. *Shelter in the Word* will attempt to serve people first—answer questions that they have, and show them that the Bible can help them. It will expose the errors of some popular Christian doctrines, but the method will be “let us help you understand a common mistake”S. This gentler approach avoids the in-your-face, “I told you so method.” (Sometimes a Sabbatarian attacks others for keeping pagan holidays that these others think are in the Bible, rather than letting them discover it in the Bible for themselves).

Some *Servants’ News* readers will probably think that *Shelter in the Word* is “not strong enough.” They may even object to our treating *Shelter* readers like they have a relationship with the Eternal. These same people may even say “unbaptized people don’t know enough truth to have a relationship with God.” We would like to point out that Jesus spent nearly his entire ministry talking to people who did not have the Holy Spirit, yet he taught them that they could pray, and that their prayers would be heard. We intend to produce a variety of additional booklets to teach the deeper truths. We realize that the Eternal has to open people’s minds. *Shelter in the Word* can be there to help teach those minds, but it cannot force its way in there.

Non-Denominational

Shelter in the Word will not promote membership in any organization. The

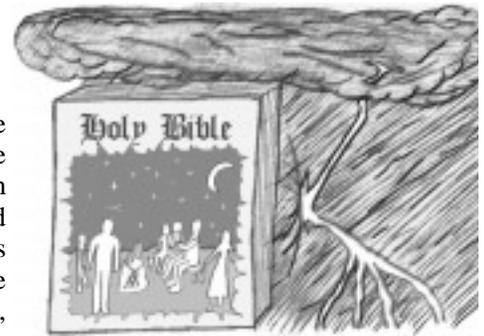
editors will make every effort to be sure that articles **do not assume** that the reader has any knowledge of “Church of God” groups, their theology and their problems. The publication is aimed at people with interest in the Bible. As Paul was a Jew to the Jews, and a Greek to the Greeks, we want to be a Judaeo-Christian Truth Seeker to the Judaeo-Christian Truth Seekers. We realize that a religious publication of this nature is not going to appeal to everyone. The Eternal will certainly work through others to attract the businessmen, the highly educated, the atheists, and others who may be uninterested in religion.

Share With Others

There will be no cost to the magazine, and no advertising. The magazine will be on loose-leaf, 8.5x11 white paper. This makes it simple to produce, simple to mail, simple to copy and simple to study. It is hoped that a circulation will be created by Sabbatarians making them available to people whom they know might be interested. We do not have resources to mail tens of thousands of copies. Nor do we have the resources of answering numerous telephone calls and letters. We hope that Sabbatarians using this magazine as an evangelism tool will try to give each issue to their friends personally, and ask if they have questions. This is the same kind of concern that the early disciples had for others who asked about “that way.”

Sending to People Who Really Want it

Today, office stores and copy stores can quickly make good quality copies of two-sided paper. Some charge as little as 4 cents for both side of a page. This means one issue of *Shelter in the Word* can be copied for about 50 cents—\$1 at more expensive stores. It costs us about 25 cents to print a copy and 25 cents to mail it. So the total cost for you to copy an issue is somewhere between the same as our cost and twice as much. However, the value of the personal contact (when you copy and deliver the publication) cannot be underestimated. Also, you have the



option to “dress up” the magazine if you think it would help someone to read it. You could place it in a nice binder with a clear plastic front, or have it copied on to nicer or colored paper.

On the other hand, if someone loses interest in the magazine, you will obviously not keep copying and giving it to them. (But if we mailed it directly, we would have no way to know when they lost interest.)

We realize that you may find some people who are interested in *Shelter in the Word*, but it is not practical for you to hand them each issue. We have no objection to you mailing them a copy yourself, but it does cost less for us to mass-mail it. We will give a subscription to *Shelter in the Word* to anyone who writes or calls in for it **themselves**. We will give a subscription if someone else writes or calls and tells us that a third party has specifically asked to receive it. At this time, we would rather not accept requests to send the magazine to others who have **not** requested it. We would rather that you find out that they really want it, first. If you think somebody might be interested, send them a copy yourself, and ask them to contact us for a subscription.

You Can Have a Part

We do not have an objection to people placing ads **for** *Shelter in the Word* in other publications, but please give your own address and/or phone number as a contact point. If you leave copies of the magazine in waiting rooms or other public places, we ask that you include a page of your own with it, directing inquiries to yourself. First of all, this will show you how effective your work is. If you get several requests for subscriptions, it may not be practical to deliver them personally. Please wait a few days until you think most of the requests are in, and send them to us all at once. We also recommend that you keep track of the names and

addresses yourself. You may wish to organize a Bible study (even an in-home one) and invite these people in the future.

Shelter in the Word is intended to be one of many tools for use in local evangelism. It is designed for use by some believers to reach **some** other people. No one should ever think that this is the one way to teach new people. For some people, it may not be helpful at all. Even for those that it helps, it cannot make up for personal contact, Bible study, and in-depth literature. There are many other good resources that can fulfill other specific needs.

Comments on *Shelter in the Word* and article submissions are welcome. For either a sample copy or free subscription, please write to: *Shelter in the Word*, PO Box 220, Charlotte, Michigan, 48813. Telephone: 517-543-5544, fax: 517-543-8899, e-mail: shelter@youall.com. 

Standing for Truth Can Be Risky Business.

When William Penn was 17, he was expelled from Oxford University for daring to criticize certain Church of England rituals. On a cold winter day in 1668, 24 year old William Penn paced back & forth in a cramped chamber in the famous prison, Tower of London. What for you may ask? Arrested for blasphemy after publishing a pamphlet that questioned the doctrine of the trinity.

The Bishop of London had decreed that if Penn didn't recant publicly he would remain imprisoned for the rest of his life. Penn's reply was unequivocal:

"My prison shall be my grave before I will budge a jot, for I owe my conscience to no mortal man".

Fortunately William Penn did not have to live out the rest of his life in prison. He did much to promote religious toleration in England and founded the colony of Pennsylvania, also noted for its religious toleration.

—submitted by Robert Pinto

What Can One Person Do?

We print this report as an example of what one person has done as a personal ministry—in addition to their full-time job. Your skills are probably different than Alan Ruth's. It is good that the body has many members to function.

This is the 1997 year end report for Barnabas Ministries, a service organization dedicated to encouraging communication, cooperation, caring and Christian growth in the churches of God. We additionally have the goal of preaching the gospel to as many people as we can reach. The major accomplishments for Barnabas Ministries for 1997 are as follows:

1) Bible Study Internet Web site:

Our World Wide Web site at address <http://www.biblestudy.org> has seen encouraging growth for the year. The site now contains more than 150 articles by at least 50 different authors from a variety of Church of God organizations, fellowships and service groups. Conservatively, there have been more than **20,000 visits to the Web site this year**. In 1997 we moved our Web files to a better computer system, redesigned our "home page" and added a program allowing visitors to search articles on the site based on any topic.

2) Visiting Fellowships: We had the opportunity to visit more than 20 different Church of God organizations, fellowships and home-based groups in 1997. Barnabas Ministries was also able to visit and speak at the Servant's News, UCG-Birmingham and Christian Educational Ministries feast sites. We also attended a few special Bible study meetings such as CEM conferences in Alabama and Illinois, Sabbath Campers Fellowship study weekends, UCG-Birmingham Pentecost weekend and the "In the Footsteps of the Messiah" conference in Oklahoma.

3) Wrote Internet and Computer Guide with sections on tips for buying a computer and help regarding getting onto and using the Internet.

4) Wrote article reaffirming the validity of the New Testament based on a person's personal relationship with God and Jesus Christ. This was written in response to a heresy which stated that the New Testament and Christianity is of the Devil.

5) In 1997, we had various **miscellaneous** accomplishments such as the creation of a business card size, easily readable Holy Day calendar. We also received

requests and sent out literature to U.S. and several foreign addresses.

Total contributions for the year were \$2113.00. This figure consisted primarily of offerings by individuals and donations received for creating and maintaining sections of our World Wide Web site for other service organizations. Our expenses for the year were \$3211.53. Expenses were for Internet access, fees paid for Web site hosting, travel costs, office supplies, copying costs, postage and miscellaneous.

Lastly, please let us know of any improvements we can make to our Web site when you visit it at <http://www.biblestudy.org>. Also, if you know of well written articles for possible inclusion to the Web site, please Email us or send the article to the address below. Thank you.

—Alan Ruth, Founder/Webmaster: Barnabas Ministries, PO Box 310208, Detroit, MI. 48231, USA; Email: Aruth88521@aol.com

Good Sermons Wanted!

What are some of your **favorite** sermons or messages? The sermons that inspired you, uplifted you or made you think? The messages that made excellent points on basic Bible doctrines or that explained difficult scriptures and complex beliefs in an easy-to-understand way? What are your favorite messages? The Bible Study site at www.biblestudy.org wants to share them!

The Bible Study Web site wants to put some of the **best** sermons and messages given in the Church of God on the Internet. The world needs to hear the truth of the Bible. This project cannot flourish, however, without your help. Let me know about the good messages you've heard, who gave the message, and who can be contacted for permission to put the sermon on the Internet. If you can send a copy of the taped message, please do so!

Send suggestions and tapes to: Barnabas Ministries, PO Box 310208, Detroit, MI. 48231, USA or Email: Webmaster@biblestudy.org. 

Local Congregations



SN Editor in Kansas City

You are invited to share a special Sabbath weekend, **June 5-7**, in Kansas City. **Friday** night, an informal get-together will be held at one of the members' homes. **Sabbath services** will be at 2 PM. The subject will be *Teaching the Word to Others* and the speaker will be Norman Edwards. Questions and comments will be welcomed. A potluck meal will follow (about 4PM). On **Sunday**, a picnic and outdoor study will be held, weather permitting.

For details, contact Rex Jamerson, 913-262-6009 or Rick Frazee, 816-461-3252.

Sabbath Campers Fellowship

The Sabbath Campers Fellowship is planning two campouts this summer:

June 5-7: at the Holiday Rest Campground in **Millersville, Tennessee**, just north of Nashville. The campground is about 12 miles north of Nashville, just a mile or so off of I-65. Jim Rector, and George and Pam Dewey will be joining us for this first campout. We expect that they will have words of encouragement and exhortation for all of us. There will probably be a Bible Study on Friday evening. If you have ever been to one of these campouts then you know the informal way that things seem to happen. The weekend will feature music, Bible Study and much Christian Fellowship.

For directions, details, information, reservations and such, please call Sabbath Campers **coordinator Richard Fox** at 1-800-228-2473.

August 21-23: at the Gateway Park Campground in **Hillsdale, Michigan**, near the Indiana border in Michigan. This is the same facility the SCF used for two campouts last summer. The campground has a nice meeting hall, a swimming beach, playground, and **new this year:** a swimming pool. The format will be the same as the June campout. Ray Wooten and Norman

Edwards are planning to join us at this campout.

Camping prices per site for each night at the August campout are: Full Hookup: \$18. Primitive: \$17. "Pull thru": \$20. One-day visitor's pass: \$2.

You may make reservations for the August campout at this time by contacting: Norm Wilcox, Gateway Park Campground manager, at 517-437-7005, 4111 W Hallet, Hillsdale, MI 49242. Be sure to mention you are with the Sabbath Campers Fellowship.

For all who would like to be there for the fellowship, but prefer motel beds to tents and sleeping bags, there are numerous motels within a few minutes drive of each of these camping facilities. For further information, contact Richard Fox 1-800-228-2473.

Healing Responsibilities Conference

The **purpose of the conference** is to bring together knowledgeable lecturers who can present the subject of health and healing from two viewpoints: the church's and healthy lifestyle advocate's viewpoint. Perspectives will include evangelical, Pentecostal, non-denominational, and natural health practitioners.

Another purpose is to find the primary agency of responsibility. Is it the individual, the church, the medical community, or the federal or local government? What are the responsibilities of each agency? Questions will be taken after each session.

Moderator: Kenneth Bozeman, elder from the Church of God.

Lecturers: James Van Eps, Active Living Fellowship; Dr. Timothy J. Ourada, Chiropractic and Natural Health Practitioner; Thomas Hauri, Tucson's Prayer House; John Purvins, God's Church in Appleton, Green Bay area.

When: Saturday, May 16, 1998, 9:00 am to 4:15 pm.

Where: Little Chute Library and Community Center, 625 Grand Avenue,

Little Chute, Wisconsin 54140.

Cost: All sessions are free of charge and open to the public. No collections will be taken.

Notes: Reservations preferred, due to space; lunch will be provided.

Conference Coordinator: Gary Lesperance (920) 739-1911 or 1992; Fax (920) 739-9325.

Sponsor: Church Counsel of Wisconsin.

Seventh Day Adventist Conference to Hear John Merritt

The *Proclaiming the Sabbath More Fully* conference will be held May 29-31, 1998, at the Lake Region Conference Campground (Camp Wagner) in Cassopolis, Michigan. For information on attending the conference, call Sidney Davis, 847-688-5647 ext. 150 (work) or 847-785-0315 (home) or check web-site: www.arkansaw.com. Cabins, RV hook-ups and food are available at very reasonable rates.

Servants' News readers may not be as interested in attending this conference as they are **in knowing why it is being held**. It is sponsored by a "grass-roots" movement within the Seventh Day Adventist Church that are concerned about a lack of diligence at the high levels in their own organization. It is also interesting to note that this group

Are some of the events in your area every bit as important as these?

Yes! Please help us by sending in brief stories from your local area. If you think you can't write, do not worry, we can improve a story as long as it contains the essential facts. We prefer items via e-mail, but we are also quite willing to work with items on floppy disk, type-written or even hand-written. See page 2 for information on how to send your news to us.

has Holy Day dates posted on their web site (mainstream SDAs do not keep the Holy Days).

Most SDA members may have forgotten, but their organization was challenged before on this core belief. In the 1980's an SDA minister, Robert Brinsmead, became enamored with Martin Luther's writings and teamed up with an evangelical Lutheran scholar by the name of Paxton and conducted seminars near SDA hospitals and colleges that attracted many SDA members. Eventually they stopped keeping the Sabbath altogether and abandoned the SDA church.

The arguments that Brinsmead raised were some of the same ones that the Worldwide Church of God faced only a few years ago. **John Merritt, former Board member of Ambassador College** and founder of Friends of the Sabbath, was invited to speak on an otherwise exclusively-SDA slate. He will be able to show first-hand how these changes can be brought into an organization from the inside as well as the outside.

Christian Renewal Conferences

Sponsored by Christian Educational Ministries (CEM):

Lexington, Kentucky, June 19-20, 1998. For more information, call James or Jeannette Hicks at 606-266-8641

Chicago, Illinois, July 24-25, 1998. For more information, call Mike or Maureen Linacre at 773-288-5650

Summer Camp For Teenagers

Place: Wagoner, Oklahoma

Date: July 12-17, 1998

Sponsor: CEM

Summer camp is going to be held in cooperation with various independent Churches of God and will be open to all teens who have reached their 13th birthday by the time camp ends and who have not yet reached their 19th birthday. It is open to all teens, regardless of their church affiliation and will foster a spirit of cooperation and love for all.

We have volunteers from around the country and we hope to add some new activities this year. We will also have most of the activities from prior years, including the always-popular canoe trip down the Illinois River, as well as volleyball, basketball, softball, swimming, group initiatives, and more.

Christian Educational Ministries, PO Box 560, Whitehouse, Texas 75791, 903-509-2999 (fax: 903-509-1139), e-mail: cem@ballistic.com.

Pentecost Weekend Conference

May 29-31, 1998 at Paradise Lake, Bushkill, Pa. Cost: \$76 per person from Friday thru Sunday including all meals \$59 per person Saturday and Sunday including all meals. \$20 per person for Saturday meals with no stay over. Children under 10 get 25% off. Speakers include: Ray Wooten: UCG Alabama; Jim Rector: Cornerstone Ministries; Don Esposito: CoG New Jersey. For reservations please call Don Esposito at 610-863-3323. Please try to make your reservations as soon as possible.

—Don Esposito, Church of God New Jersey, PO Box 424, Iselin NJ 08830.

Preach Gospel: Run Local Ads

Looking for an idea? Here's one: Carolyn Landgrebe is spreading the Gospel by running ads in her local shopping guide. In the Classified Ad section of Community Times of Plymouth-Knox, Indiana, a free booklet about the Kingdom of God is advertised. Readers may call or write for the booklet. In this way, spreading the Word is affordable.

Phone Hook-up to Rector Service

Anyone interested in hearing Jim Rector's Sabbath Service may do so on the **second Sabbath** in each month (if the Eternal be willing). The time is 4PM Eastern Time (3PM Central, 2PM Mountain and 1PM Pacific Time). The procedure is simply to dial **1-800-886-1509**. When the operator requests your *PIN* number, push **2663**. The operator then will ask the name of your conference. Tell her it is the **Monica Lockwood conference**. You can join us anytime and hang up anytime. This is a great improvement on our old method that required you to have 3-way calling and remain hooked up for the entire service.

This service is intended for individuals as well as home fellowships. A good quality speaker phone can easily make the phone transmission loud enough for a room full of people to hear it. (Speaker phones that do not have an AC-power

plug are rarely ever loud enough for a larger group.) It is hoped that this dial-in service will not encourage people to stay home, but to meet with others and discuss what they have learned. It can be an ideal supplement to home fellowships that do not have their own live speakers available every Sabbath.

Born to Win Broadcast Yields Unexpected Result

Sponsoring the CEM program "Born to Win" has produced more fruit than expected by our small congregation here in Charleston, WV. The Church of God—Southern WV and a few co-sponsors started airing the program on January 2nd, 1998, on a 50,000 watt station in Huntington, WV. Having received a response to the program by the second airing, our group's expectations of produced fruit was shortly to be dwarfed by the reality of tangible fruit, and no longer mere expectations.

Exactly one month later, on February 2, 1998, Larry Watkins of CEM contacted our Charleston congregation with news that a group of about 50 Sabbath keepers had just contacted CEM and wanted to make contact with the sponsoring congregation. This group of Sabbath keepers have been within 30 minutes' drive of our meeting hall, even through our times in the Worldwide Church of God and the United Church of God, but we never knew it. They were aware of the larger COG's and even received some of their literature, but never became members of any group and chose to remain independent.

On February 2nd, calls were exchanged between both groups' spokespersons, and visits to services by representatives of both groups occurred within the next two weeks. While both groups have differing worship services in place, each accept this difference and are enjoying the fellowship, worship and free flowing exchange of ideas. As one of our members here said, "I think we can learn something from these people." The first thing we've learned "about" these people is that by the fruits they have displayed, they are truly of the Body of Christ and our brethren.

—George Hampton

[When I worked for the Global

Church of God, other groups of independent Sabbath keepers were pleasantly surprised to discover the GCG's broadcast or literature. Unfortunately, nearly all of these relationships came to an end when the group found out that the only way the GCG could have an on-going relationship was to put them under their hierarchy and to expect them to tithe to GCG headquarters. One would hope that the hierarchies would learn that if the Eternal can bring people to that level of truth without a hierarchy, than He can continue to guide them on to the Kingdom. —NSEJ

Born to Win on Shortwave

The Orange County Fellowship of God, an independent voluntary association in the Church of God tradition, is pleased and excited to make the following media announcements.

In conjunction with Christian Educational Ministries and Ronald Dart, we will be sponsoring the following weekly broadcasts of the cutting-edge *Born to Win!* radio program on the following channels:

WWCR—*World Wide Christian Radio*, Nashville. This is a total Global-Covering Shortwave broadcaster at 12.160 MHz. 11:30 AM Central Standard Time, Saturday Mornings.

KBRT—740 AM, a 10,000 watt station broadcasting from Catalina Island in Southern California. This signal reaches from Santa Barbara California to nearly 100 miles south of the Mexican Border and Inland through the Los Angeles, Orange and San Diego County areas out to Arizona. Program time is 9:30 AM, Sunday Mornings.

KPRO—1570 AM. Final negotiations are in progress for a weekly program on either Saturdays 10:30 AM or Sundays 2:30 PM. This is a 5000 watt broadcaster that serves the "inland Empire". Areas covered will include San Bernardino, Riverside, Victorville, Moreno Valley, Corona, Temecula and Palm Springs.

The Orange County Fellowship of God Outreach Group is a volunteer group of highly-motivated Christian individuals dedicated to individual Christian growth and to preaching the Gospel to all the world.

—Bill Lussenheide,

Public Relations,
Orange County Fellowship of God
[For information on hearing or sponsoring *Born to Win* in your area, contact Christian Educational Ministries (CEM) at 903-509-2999 or cem@ballistic.com] —NSEJ

Sabbath-keeping High School

For 50 years now, Spring Vale Academy in **Owosso, Michigan**, has been committed to providing a solid, well-rounded education in a Christian environment. Spring Vale is affiliated with the **Church of God Seventh Day**, Denver, Colorado. The entire staff realizes their God-given responsibility to care for the students, and recognize their influential role in shaping the character of each. Their earnest desire is to have a significant impact—academically, socially and, most importantly, spiritually—on each and every young person who spends time on the Spring Vale campus.

The Bible is fundamentally important to all that transpires at Spring Vale. It provides the best light for life in this world and the only hope for life in the eternal world to come. The teachings of the Bible, especially the gospel message of salvation through Jesus Christ, are held in the highest regard.

Spring Vale is committed to providing the best possible education for each student. A low student/staff ratio allows for individualized attention that can help maximize the talents of each student and prepare them for college. A wide variety of extra-curricular activities and programs allow for social and personal development. Formal and informal, scheduled and unscheduled times of Bible study, worship and praise provide a climate for spiritual growth. With many staff members living on campus, a family atmosphere and learning environment continue after school hours.

The staff of Spring Vale Academy is committed to doing its utmost to equip students for life in the last decade of the twentieth century—and for life eternal.

Spring Vale Academy accepts students who have satisfactorily **completed the eighth grade** or one or more years of high school, who have a high regard for Christian moral values, and who are willing to commit themselves

to the school's academic, social and spiritual programs and comply with the school's standards and policies.

A Spring Vale Academy bulletin for 1998-1999 and application form is available upon request. **Applications for Fall 1998 need to be submitted before July 15, 1998.**

Spring Vale Academy, 4150 S. M-52, Owosso, MI 48867, Phone 517-725-2391, Fax 517 729-6408.

Sabbath in St. Louis

I had an interesting Sabbath visit to St. Louis, March 28. The Church of God Sabbatarian hosted an appearance by Ronald Dart, preceded by a musical concert by the Crystal River Trio, a gospel music group from Oklahoma. The group consists of Charles Pope, an elder in the Fellowship Church of God, Midwest City, OK, and Roy and Debbie Nikkel, who are Baptists and longtime friends of the Popes. Their selections, some original compositions, were often lively in the southern gospel tradition but were all Christ-centered.

Mr. Dart's message touched somewhat on the recent tragedy in Jonesboro, Arkansas, and how Hosea, chapter four, applies to our society today. There were numerous visitors from central Illinois, Iowa, and the Kansas City area.

Among those present were Bill and Scarlett Stough, frequent contributors to *The Journal*. The previous evening, Bill interviewed Mr. Dart for an upcoming article. All in all, it was a pleasant, warm spring Sabbath day.

—Larry Evans

Lost Ten Tribes E-mail Group

You are invited to participate in the Lost Tribes listserver. This listserver (e-mail discussion group) has been set up for the discussion of the Lost Ten Tribes of Israel and the reunion of the two houses of Israel from a serious Jewish perspective in light of the research and writings of John Hulley, James Tabor, David Horowitz, Yair Davidi and others.

To subscribe, send an e-mail to majordomo@nazarene.net with the word "subscribe losttribes" on the first line (not the subject). Hope to see you there.

—James Trimm 

1998 Feast of Tabernacles Sites

These Feast Sites are in addition to the ones covered in the Jan/Feb Servants' News issue—back issues are available from Servants' News. The Edwards, Deweys and some of the other SN staff will be attending the Feast in Gatlinburg, Tennessee this year. Detailed information is available from Servants' News, see back cover. Unless otherwise noted, the Feast is from October 5-12. Most will have the first service on Sunday night, Oct 4.

Southern California Feast Site

The Church of God Southern California has made arrangements for a new festival site at the Arrowhead Springs Conference Center located on 1800 acres of spacious, manicured lawns, ponds, cool streams and bubbling mineral springs that are combined with natural wild life that reflect the majesty of the surrounding mountains as well as the beauty of the valley below.

Arrowhead Springs is located in the

Friendly, Open Feast Sites!

These Feast sites will welcome you regardless of whether you belong to an organization or not (though they probably will not invite you to speak, and may not have any interactive Bible studies.) Call for details or an information brochure:

Church of God International sites include: Panama City Beach, FL; Land Between The Lakes, KY; Wagoner, OK; Ballina, NSW, Australia; Ocho Rios, Jamaica; and Manila & Naga City, Philippines. For any site, call 903-825-2525 or write PO Box 2530, Tyler, TX 75710.

Church of God Outreach Ministries sites and contact information: **Australia:** Alan Kendall, 011-6149-912525; **Canada:** to be announced, call 800-611-8080 for update; **England:** James McBride, 011-44-1526-860508; **Daytona Beach, FL:** Manuel Rojas, 904-673-8324; **Nashville, TN:** Paul Bell, 615-896-9365; **San Antonio, TX** 800-797-1234; **Sun River, OR:** Jeff Henderson, 415-726-3005.

mountains above San Bernadino but is so secluded and peaceful, it seems to be hundreds of miles from civilization. In reality it is only a little over one hour from Los Angeles, Orange County and Palm Springs. From the Ontario, CA. airport it is about 30 minutes drive.

Great golf, shopping, and other attractions such as Disneyland and Knotts Berry Farm are easy driving distance.

The "all-inclusive" resort has the comforts of a hotel or bungalows with the relaxed atmosphere of a resort. There are two elegant dining rooms, good food, an Olympic-size swimming pool that is heated with hot spring water and can be up to 100 degrees even in winter. There are tennis courts, basketball courts, sand volleyball, hiking trails, ping-pong, shuffleboard, horse-shoes, and a recreation room with foosball and games.

In addition to Church Services featuring speakers such as Dr. David Antion, there will be planned activities at the Center such as a swimming party and picnic, movie night in their theater, scheduled hikes and other afternoon socials and get-togethers.

For more information write to: Church of God, Southern California PO Box 50773, Pasadena, CA 91115 or visit our web site: www.cogsc.org

—Harry Curley

UCM also in KeyStone Colorado

United Christian Ministries (UCM) will help sponsor a second site this fall at the Keystone Resort in Keystone, Colorado. The Resort is 75 miles west of Denver, or 90 miles west of Denver International Airport, on I-70. The Resort is a short drive from the Rocky Mountain National Park and other scenic points of interest, such as the Loveland Pass. The Keystone site is in addition to the Gatlinburg, Tennessee site, which the UCG will host for a third consecutive year. The decision to include a Rocky Mountain site was based, in part, on results of a survey taken during the Feast last year.

Ray Wooten, a UCG board member and pastor of the United Church of God, Birmingham, will speak at both sites.

The meetings will be held in the

Mountain House, located in the west end of the Resort. Restaurants and condominiums are available within walking distance of the Mountain House. Lodging prices near the Mountain House begin at \$89 per night for a one-bedroom studio. Two- and three-bedroom units are also available near the Mountain House and in other parts of the resort at substantially discounted prices.

The use of the Mountain House is contingent upon 35 rooms being booked for the Feast. Before agreeing to this term, UCG Birmingham needs to assess whether there is sufficient interest. Also, knowing how many will come will help them better plan activities.

If you plan to attend in Keystone this fall, please call 888-985-9066 (free) to preregister before June 1, 1998. You will be asked for your name, address, and the number of people attending in your party. Although there is no deposit requested, we ask that only persons seriously interested in attending in Keystone call to pre-register.

After June 1, UCG Birmingham will contact by mail those who have pre-registered to provide more information. (Those planning to attend the Feast in Gatlinburg do not need to pre-register.)

—Daniel Page

Interactive in Sun Valley Idaho

This site will be non-aligned and consist mostly of interactive services. It will be hosted by Adam Miller and his daughter, Jennifer. The theme is "The Abundant Life in Christ." The entire book of Romans will be read and studied during the Feast. **Ray Wooten** and **Norman Edwards** will be conducting

More Feast Sites!

If you know of a non-aligned site that is not listed here, please let us know, and we will include it. A thorough list of Feast sites, including those run by larger organizations can be found at:

<http://www.cei.net/~anderson>

For more Feast information, we also recommend *The Journal, News of the Churches of God*. Call or write *Servants' News* for a free copy.

interactive Bible Studies via two-way teleconference—you can ask questions!

The purpose of this Feast is to leave behind church politics, bring a diversity of brethren together, and concentrate on spiritual matters. This Feast will not be a place to expound upon theories, but simply to obey and **worship** God.

Sun Valley, Idaho, although a little out of the way, is **definitely** worth the trip. *Conde Naste traveler* and *Ski Magazine* readers rated Sun Valley the #1 resort in the US. *Golf Digest* ranked their course #1 in Idaho. *Tennis* magazine rated it among the top 50. *Ski magazine* also rated the resort #1 in lodging facilities. Sun Valley is a resort village with everything in walking distance. (If you travel by air, you will not need to rent a car.)

The resort has fine dining and shops, and is in a natural setting of 3700 acres of mountains, ponds, and a lake. Temperatures typically range from 67° to 70° during the day and 40° at night. Although the Feast is a spiritual time, there *will* be fun activities: biking, hiking, ice skating, golf, tennis and more. A picnic and dance are planned, also.

Room rates range from \$64 for a room to \$139/\$159/\$179 for 2/3/4-bedroom condos. You may contact the resort at 800-786-8259. Camping is available for about \$20 per night, call 208-726-3429. Delta/Skywest can fly you directly into the Sun Valley Airport. Other airlines can take you to Boise, Idaho, where a shuttle is available to Sun Valley. If you need additional details, or you would like to speak or serve in some other way at this Feast, contact Stacy Webber at 512-335-0132 or e-mail: amillerjr@usa.net.

Orange Beach, Alabama

Learning Together will hold a non-traditional Feast of Tabernacles at Orange Beach, Alabama this year. The focus of the Feast will be the worshipping and learning about God and Jesus. Everyone will stay in the same condominium complex where the meeting room is located. The services will be held in small group Bible study fashion where everyone will be able to discuss the scriptures that God has given us. Examples of subjects are: faith, forgiveness, listening to God, etc. There will be a leader of each subject, but no one will have speeches or messages.

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Instead, we are going to discuss the scriptures that pertain to the subject.

No one should come planning on convincing others of their ideas, but rather with scriptures to back up the things they believe. We are there to learn together through each other what God has given us in the Bible. We will be gathering with open minds and a desire to learn. Rates are reasonable with one bedroom condos \$71.00 a night, two bedroom condos \$88.75 a night and three bedroom condos \$101.25 a night for an eight night stay, plus 9% tax. If you are interested please contact us as soon as possible as the site will be limited to about 60 people due to the type of feast we are planning.

Upon request we will send you all plans and topics available now.

—Ron and Debi Wilson
7807 N. Illinois
Caseyville, IL 62232-2058
618-344-5203, LRNTOG@aol.com

Full Moon Calendar in Oklahoma

The Walkers are hosting an open Feast site on their 20-acre homestead in the Ouachitas mountains outside LeFlore, Oklahoma. It will be a primitive site with several bungalows and tent sites. The bungalows are equipped with propane stoves/ovens and running water. There is a central hot shower building. There will be a fishing pond and creek, hay-ride, hiking and lots of animal husbandry activities. They will have open forum Bible studies, group prayer, and much praise and worship music. Within 15 minutes are Wister Lake and Talamina State Park—30 minutes to Robers Cave State Park. The nearest Hotel/motel and restaurants are 10 miles in Talhina.

The Feast dates are based upon the observation of the full moon being the new moon, and are tentatively Oct 19th-25th. All will be welcome. Contact: John Walker, General Delivery, LeFlore, Oklahoma, 74942

Paducah, Kentucky

An independent, non-aligned feast is being planned for Kentucky in the area of the Land Between the Lakes, 25 miles from Paducah. This feast is being sponsored by independent brethren who hold the basic principles that no one has

received the Holy Spirit except those who have truly repented, and turned from keeping Sunday and the other pagan holidays, and to keeping God's Sabbath.

That the Sabbath is the seventh day of the week to be kept from evening to evening. That God is not a trinity nor binary, but that Jesus or Yahshua and the Father are individual beings, the Father being greater than the Son. That the new covenant requires obedience to the ten commandments, and unless one enters into the new covenant, he cannot inherit eternal life. That it is by the grace of God that He gives us the opportunity to enter into the new covenant with Him, to have redemption, or forgiveness of sins that were under the first covenant. The feast will be observed Oct. 5–11, the last great day on the 12th.

If you are interested in attending the feast at the Land Between the Lakes, with a group who holds these fundamental principles, then for more information contact Henry Anderson, 58 Meadowrue Rd, Russellville Ark. 72801. Phone: 501-968-4546 or e-mail: h-andy@cswnet.com.

—Marg Coulson

[This group appears to be a bit specific regarding doctrines which they would like those attending to hold. If you think you might have doctrinal differences with this group, we suggest that you contact them and make sure that your beliefs are compatible before attending this feast.]

—NSEJ

Northern Ireland Feast

Here is more information on this non-aligned Feast than was listed in the last issue. It will be held at Giant's Causeway, County Antrim, Northern Ireland. This is a very rural area with beautiful scenic views over the North Antrim coastline. The Giant's Causeway is a tourist attraction and there are a number of hotels and B&Bs in the area. We hope most people will stay in the self-catering (condominium) housing which has 13 separate units.

Contact: Greg and Caroline Gault, 253 Castlecatt Road, Dervock, Ballymoney, County Antrim BT53 8BN, Northern Ireland; Phone/Fax: +44 1265 741 616; E-mail: Greg.Caroline@btinternet.com

Six Reasons Why I Don't Eat Unclean Meats



Sabbatarian Christians who adhere to the “Law of Clean and Unclean” Meats in Leviticus 11 are sometimes accused of being “arbitrary” in their decisions about which Old Testament laws are relevant to Christians under the New Covenant. For example, why do they consider some meats “unclean,” but do not consider themselves “unclean” from touching a dead animal, bodily emissions, etc? Dialogues on the subject often degenerate down to a question of whose “proof-texts” are more relevant. Without trying to answer all of those questions, I offer below six *practical* and *symbolic* considerations that have convinced me that eating only those meats designated “clean” in the Scriptures is a **wise choice**.

1. In Mark 7, Jesus makes it clear that **spiritual** “cleanness” is not affected by what goes into your mouth and stomach. But does that mean God doesn't care what you put in your body or how you take care of it?

By abstaining from those meats listed as unclean in the Bible, I make a statement about God:

I believe God cares about the whole person: spirit, soul and body!

2. It seems logical to me that God would not provide such an *elaborate categorization* in Leviticus 11 of those animals which are clean vs. unclean unless the distinction had some basis in *physical reality*. Many of the animals labeled as “unclean” are primarily scavengers. They do not have the kind of multiple digestive system that the cud-chewers do, so the poisons that they consume go directly into their flesh. Only the unclean animals are regular hosts to such parasites as the trichina worm. Isn't it amazing that almost every cookbook notes that you should always be extra careful to fully cook pork to a well-done state, but they **never** mention that their unspoken **reason** is—so that you will be sure to kill the trichina worms in their little cysts! It is an accepted fact that much of the pork in America, even with all our “modern” health precautions, probably contains trichina. Health authorities also warn

against eating shell fish at certain times of year because they are poisonous then. They don't bother to mention that the shellfish have the same scavenging habits all year long that **causes** this problem. Trichinosis and possible poisoning is bad enough, but the unclean animals are host also to much more serious problems for humans. The AIDS virus and other serious diseases may have been spread by humans eating contaminated monkeys and/or other unclean animals.

By abstaining from those animals listed as unclean in the Bible, I am making another statement about the nature of God:

I do not believe God is capricious and arbitrary.

3. All of the same reasoning about “law and grace” which some attempt to apply to “do away” with the Sabbath and Holy Days is also used to “do away” with any notice of the distinction of unclean meats. By abstaining from unclean meats, I am making an effort to be **consistent** in the way I view the issues of law and grace:

What I eat or don't eat doesn't “earn” me salvation.

It doesn't make me “more spiritual” than the next person.

It doesn't “earn Brownie Points” with God.

It just makes sense to me to accept God's word on what He created to be used for food.

4. God did not **first** make the distinction among animals known at Mount Sinai. Noah knew of the distinction centuries before the “Law” was given on Mount Sinai—and long before Israel (Jacob) started the family later known as the nation of Israel. Noah took seven pairs of each clean animal and only one pair of each unclean animal on the ark. I see no reason to think that the distinction was created just at the time of the Flood. It would seem most logical that it had been made at creation—Abel sacrificed animals. His sacrifice was acceptable to God. Given all the other evidence in scripture, I cannot imagine that he sacrificed a pig!

It makes sense to me that this dis-

inction, which didn't “start” with the giving of the Old Covenant, isn't “ended” by the coming of the New.

5. Only clean animals were sacrificed to the Eternal. Sacrificial animals all represented Christ. Under the Law, sheep, goats, cattle, doves and pigeons were the only animals sacrificed. But Noah sacrificed one of **every** kind of clean animal at the end of the Flood, so in one way, you might say they **all** can represent Christ. Given:

- The principle of sacrificing only clean animals
- The fact that the priests and the people ate parts of the sacrifices
- The fact that Jesus said his disciples are to “eat his flesh”

For me there is a **symbolism** in abstaining from unclean meats year around that is similar to the reason for eating unleavened bread during one season of the year—

Eating only clean meats represents for me “taking in” only the pure truth of Jesus, not feasting on a hodge-podge of false doctrines and pagan symbolism, and accepting and following false prophets and false messiahs.

6. **No one** really believes **everything** is good for food! We all have our own list of “abominable” foods—for most folks in America, that would include dogs, cats, horses, spiders, centipedes, etc. The reasoning of some folks on eating unclean meats is the same as it is for deciding to observe the pagan holidays—“**I** don't have to keep any days God listed in the Bible... but **I** can keep other days for all **my** own reasons.” Likewise, they may say, “**I** can eat anything **I** want to, but here's the list of what **I** don't want to.”

I believe it makes sense to have my list of “abominable things” be the same as God's rather than invent my own.

—Pam Dewey



A Lesson For Pentecost: Utilizing the Holy Spirit

Are You a River or a Well?

Adapted from a Bible Study by Mordekai Joseph



John the Baptist came baptizing in the river Jordan. He baptized with water, but he spoke of another who would baptize with the Holy Spirit (Mark 1:5-8). Our Savior, after His resurrection promised his followers: “For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence” (Acts 1:5). That day was Pentecost.

The Jordan River in Israel comes from the melted snow of Mount Hermon. It flows through the middle of the country. It is very alive and flowing, yet it ends up in the Dead Sea, where it moves nowhere. It is so hot, and the water is so salty, that nothing can live in it. The river starts out with life—and ends up in death. Unless the water is used along the way, it is of no value.

Water As A Symbol of The Holy Spirit

The Eternal is the primary source of the Holy Spirit. He is full of love—His love flows out from Him to us. God constantly loves, gives, blesses, and creates. God does all this with all His heart. He continues to give and to love in order to uphold His name. Otherwise, He would not be the Great Giver, Blessor, Creator. Jesus Christ said, “...If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink” (John 7:37):

*first, you must **thirst**.*

*then, **come***

*after this, **drink***

*and then **believe** (Also includes
*repent & obey)**

Jesus Christ has promised the Holy Spirit to those who do these things—without any respect of persons. Verse 38 says: “He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.” Wherever these rivers go, they give life. After tapping the Eternal’s source, then we become a source of living water. God is the primary source of these spiritual rivers. We are the secondary sources.

What are these rivers of living water?

“...the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control...” (Gal 5:22).

There are two main sources of water. One is a well where you must dig to find it. Another is a spring or a river where water is bubbling out and flowing—the water comes to you.

Are You a River or a Well?

If you are a river, no one will have to pump or work hard to get something out of you. You will respond and give easily. Words and actions of life-giving qualities will easily flow outward to others.

Some people decide to be wells. They withdraw into their own shells, and you have to pump out the water instead of it flowing out. It does not come up by itself. A well is an aloof, unconcerned person who prefers to remain hidden. This person may have goodness, but it is buried deep inside. “A man who isolates himself seeks his own desire” (Prov 18:1).

The Ever-living One has given us the capacity to be like Him, even in this life: The Father and Son have life in themselves (John 5:26). Whoever is thirsty, come to the waters and drink (Isa 55:1). The Eternal will pour out His Spirit on us so we can pour His love into others (Joel 2:28). Our Savior comes from heaven and gives life to the world (John 6:33). The Messiah was still pouring out his soul, even unto death (Isa 53:12).

Let The Waters Flow

It is a law of nature that if you stop using your hands or legs, then they become useless. The same thing holds true for spiritual qualities. If you do not allow qualities of love and giving to flow from you to others, then you will cease to have those qualities, for they will die within you. **Continue to give of your gifts and substance to others,**

or else, the quality of giving will stagnate and die, just like the “dead sea.”

Even when you feel someone does not deserve it, do it for your sake, not someone else’s sake. God does not give to us depending on if we deserve it or not. Humans do things on merit—whether one deserves it or not. Outgoing love has nothing to do with feelings. You may not feel like giving to someone, but the law of love commands you to do it.

You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lamp-stand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven (Matt 5:14-16).

A light bulb that is not switched on does no good. The Eternal did not withhold His only Son from us (John 3:16). Neither are we to withhold ourselves from others. God gives us so much to give. People get bored because they are not giving enough. When you have the capacity to give, do it. If one does not deserve it, then it is his problem, not yours.

We have the ability to give life to others through the Holy Spirit. Are we doing it? We can use the Holy Spirit and God’s goodness for the benefit of others. We can use our voices to comfort and cheer others. We can use our faces to smile to give life giving qualities to others.

How do you determine if you are a river or a well? The degree to which we yearn and ache to give to others will tell us. Giving to others will be a pleasure. When you find yourself stingy, you are lacking love. Let us not stifle the Holy Spirit—allow it to flow to others. Stay tapped into the Source of the spiritual rivers and continue to give them out to others by sharing and helping. Be one who flows like a river. 

Letters & Responses

We print a representative sampling of our mail—both positive and negative. We do not include names unless we are fairly sure that the writer would not object. To avoid any difficulty, writers should specify how much of their name and address they would like us to print.

Appreciates All The Letters

LETTER: February 24, 1998
Dear Mr. Edwards,

Just a quick note to let you know how much I appreciate receiving Servants' News and wish to help in a little way. It is so uplifting to read other COG brethren's letters and to begin to understand all the problems that have been rampant for years (and I was so unaware). Thank you for your service.

—Carolyn Ardeeser, Florida

RESPONSE: Thank you for your letter. Many people tell us that the letters are their favorite part of *SN*. We also were unaware of the COG problems for many years. Yet, when we learned about many of these issues that were largely being ignored, we were compelled to share them, hence, *SN* began.

—NSE

Wanted Doctrinal Journal for Years

LETTER: March 11, 1998
Editor, Servant's News

Craig White's letter about creating a Trans-organizational Doctrinal Journal hit a chord with me. Back in the 70's, the idea of a learned journal for the Worldwide Church of God was born, and quickly aborted.

The problem was, the only things that could be published were those which confirmed, or shored up, the status quo. The status quo was whatever Mr. Armstrong said it was on a given day.

Today, we have a whole "Pod" of churches all coming out of the same tradition, who hold only slight variations on the same doctrinal themes.

The major bone of contention within these groups is ministerial and organizational authority/structure, not whether or not to keep Shabbat, the feast days, or believe in the doctrine of the US&BC.

The only way a journal of this type would be meaningful is if it encouraged a truly open forum discussion about doctrine within the

Pod. So long as it was edited to "preach to the choir" it would be largely meaningless. Iron sharpens iron. The way we are all sharpened is to allow our ideas to be challenged. Worldwide Church of God "theologians", for example, should be allowed to

enter the discussion about whether or not a non-Jewish Christian is required to keep the feast days, the Sabbath, tithing, etc. etc.

The goal should be to arrive at objective exegetical truth on any given subject through the most rigorous and disciplined thinking—not merely to confirm the status quo. In other words, the aim should be to follow Truth wherever it leads and hang the political consequences.

It is very unlikely that any of the main Pod churches would support such a journal since it would not be in their political interests to do so. Doctrine, as much as anything, is politicized in churches. It is determined more on grounds of interests (i.e. money, following & power considerations) than on objective study. As I have said for years, where people stand on issues is determined mainly by where they sit in relation to them. Where you stand is where you sit!

Intellectual and exegetical honesty is a rare phenomenon in church hierarchies. If a given insight threatens the status quo—especially a leader's status, credibility, or access to funds, it will be quickly dismissed. If it looks like it will alienate a conditioned and generous following, it will be labeled heresy, foolishness, or liberalism—or worse. Whole sections of Scripture are commonly glossed over because, if faced squarely, they would undermine some aspect of church dogma which is viewed as "trunk of the tree". Traditional explanations follow a traditional pattern from which deviation is rare.

I agree with Craig that such a journal is desperately needed within the Pod—if for nothing else but apologetic purposes. But I have no confidence that it would be sustainable if edited to be a truly open forum for doctrinal discussion. If it could not be sustained by subscription prices and advertising, it would die a quick death, because it certainly wouldn't be subsidized by Pod member hierarchies unless it supported what they already teach.

—Brian Knowles, California

RESPONSE: We very much appreciate this letter coming from you, the former editor of the WCG's Tomorrow's World magazine, and other publications. We agree. One of the main points that Church organizations use to keep members is the claim that they have nearly all of the right doctrines and can explain them from the Bible. The free and open Bible study that you

describe would quickly show that it is very difficult to justify certain teachings of organizations from the Bible.

As an example, suppose this journal were started and was read by a significant percentage of members and ministers in various organizations. Suppose someone wrote an article showing how the Greek New Testament text simply does not have a separate word or expression for "deacon" and "minister"—the two are the same. Would all of these organizations suddenly combine these two positions, or would just some of them do it? Would the organizations that did not change then appear unbiblical?

The truth of the matter seems to be that organizations are not a bit interested in changing their practice based on what outsiders may teach them—no matter how obvious the teaching is from the Bible?

—NSE

SDA Member Discusses Hierarchy

LETTER: March 10, 1998
Dear Brother Edwards:

This is a belated thank you for sending me Servants' News. Though I have not written to you before, I have read each issue with interest and found much in it to increase my understanding of how others feel.

I observe that your paper is aimed primarily at former WCG members, and I appreciate your efforts in trying to get them to recognize each other as fellow believers, even though they may have varying ideas. Though I have never been a WCG member (I have been a Seventh-day Adventist since 1938), my oldest brother has stayed loyally with the WCG. And as editor of The Sabbath Sentinel for 25 years, I had the opportunity to know and accept as brothers and sisters many folks of other Sabbatarian groups.

May I give a few observations?

The WCG leadership seems to have thrown out the baby with the bath-water in making some of its doctrinal changes, though admitting that some of their beliefs were not correct is commendable. And the hierarchical aspect of their organization hasn't changed: Members are now arbitrarily getting booted out of the church for things that were recently considered orthodox. Is blindly accepting a leader's beliefs a good thing?

I am amazed that **some of the questions your readers are asking are similar to those a few SDAs are posing:** [1] Should we accept what church leadership proclaims as "the truth" without searching Scripture to check it out? [2] Should our denomination change to a more congregational, rather than hierarchical, form of government? [3] Is there room for us to

have members who believe most, but not all, of our creed? [4] Should the clergy have less, and the lay membership more voice in decision making? [5] Is it possible that we do not have a monopoly on biblical truth? [6] Is it possible that we are not, in ourselves, the "true church"?

I am wrestling with these questions while trying also to remain a faithful member of my local congregation—people whom I love. We are now in an inter-regnum period between pastors. The former pastor knew of my theological quirks and respected me despite my having them. But what about whoever follows him?

I am intrigued with the idea expressed in some of the letters to you of home churches. But I see dangers in them of **one forceful person taking control**, of petty differences splitting them, or lack of specific goals.

I'd like to hear your comment on some of the points I have mentioned. Thank you, and may the Lord bless your needed ministry.

Eugene Lincoln, Maryland

RESPONSE: I appreciate your letter very much. You are right about the WCG. Numerous doctrines that they teach today would have caused a person to be booted out if he espoused them 15 years ago. Conversely, people who proclaim certain 15-year-old doctrines of the WCG are now getting booted out. Both sets of doctrines cannot be right—the WCG has taught error part of the time, and they have disfellowshipped people for believing truth.

You asked: "Is blindly accepting a leader's beliefs a good thing?" If following Christ and the Bible is the most important, then the answer is "no". If remaining in a specific human organization is most important, then the answer is "yes". But when one has been in a specific organization for many years, and have many friends, it is not easy to leave over one doctrinal problem—friends may not see that one problem as important, and may decide to stay. If hundreds of doctrinal problems develop, then many people will probably want to leave, but even then, they will not all be ready at the same time. As you mentioned, when a new Pastor comes, things can change suddenly. He can alleviate a lot of previous tensions, or he can "come down hard" on people for differences that the previous pastor accepted. To answer your numbered questions:

1) People usually join Sabbatarian church organizations because they verify the doctrines taught there in the scriptures. Why should they stop checking things once they are members? The church leaders should either be able to clearly answer Bible questions about a specific doctrine, or allow members to believe

whatever they want on a subject.

- 2) In the New Testament, there were leaders directly chosen by Christ—they were taught by Him. These leaders named a few other leaders, such as Timothy and Titus. But there was never any promise of "offices" where successors would be named throughout the generations. Both hierarchical and congregational government can be abused. The main way to prevent bad leaders is for each member to look to the Holy Spirit for guidance as to which people have spiritual gifts of leadership. People should cooperate with what they believe is righteous leadership, and not cooperate with groups they believe to be seriously flawed.
- 3) Some people in Romans 14 clearly believed they should not eat meat and some believed that they should. Paul told them to try to respect each other's practices and not offend. However, if each group were trying to force the other to adopt their own practice, the group would be so contentious that it would have to split. We should be willing to work with other brethren as long as they are not a corrupting influence and are willing to work with us in peace.
- 4) I do not believe that the Bible makes a distinction between "clergy" and "lay members"—these terms are not in most Bibles. There are no words with these meanings in the Greek. People should seek to work with leaders gifted by the Eternal, not someone credentialed by an organization. (For more information, read our paper, *How Does the Eternal Govern Through Humans*.)
- 5) No organization has a monopoly on Biblical truth. No group has a monopoly on the original language texts of the Bible; they are scattered all over the world. Nearly every Church organization's doctrines are a mixture of doctrines from previous organizations and their own understanding. Most organizations occasionally make doctrinal changes—they change to a doctrine that someone else (either in their own group or another) has already believed for many years.
- 6) Romans 11:1-5 shows that Elijah did not know about 7000 men who were trusting in the Eternal, and indicates it would be that way in the Church. The elect will be gathered from the four winds (Rom 24:31). These and many other scriptures indicate that **true believers will not be in one central organization at the time of the end.**

I have struggled through these questions, and have talked to hundreds of other people who are struggling with the same thing. It is

hard to walk away from what we have known for so many years, but it is wonderful to see that we are beginning to trust Christ to lead, rather than rely on human organizations that often make promises that they cannot keep.

—NSE

Computer 2000 Reactions

LETTER:

March 17, 1998

Dear Norman,

Thank you for an excellent explanation of the Y2K bug (year 2000 article in December 1997 issue). I made several copies and shared it with many of my friends and family members and was surprised with the reactions I got.

Most gave me a **blank stare as in disbelief**: the ostrich syndrome—or the self-denial syndrome. Or "the government is well aware of this problem and will correct it before anything happens." Or Bill Gates already has a program for it and he is waiting for the last minute so he can cash in big time. Or "you don't really believe this will happen, do you?" "You're more naive than I thought" etc. etc.

Well, I did my part of sharing vital information with others—now I must do my part to get ready for the worst and hope and pray for the best. Since no one knows exactly what will happen on that day and there are so many unknowns, (and there are various conclusions and opinions on this matter) I must do my best to be prepared and be ready. I only hope and pray that all those who have been alerted to this problem will take heed and also prepare for it.

This makes me wonder if people, especially Christians, will be asleep when the real tribulation is at our door. If we cannot see the writing on the wall about the Y2K problem and all its indications, how are we going to see the end times indications when they become clearly visible?

What worries me is that when the year 2000 is near and most of what you wrote in *Servants' News* begins to happen, we will have widespread panic. **The panic can be more devastating than the Y2K problem.**

If people wait to the last minute (and all indications are that they will), I imagine millions of people rushing to the grocery stores, banks, etc. to hoard every single item on the shelves and withdraw their money from their banks. It could collapse our economy. Imagine this scenario worldwide!

As you said, we must "start now" not only to prepare physically, but most importantly spiritually. We better be the closest we've ever been to Christ and our Father **before** the year 2000. If we start now to get close to God, we will be **ready** to withstand

what is coming and to stand firm on Christ's protection and promises.

Please continue to inform and update us on this very important issue. When you write a second article, please include a more extensive section on physically getting prepared (a list of things to do and have) before that eventful day nears.

Sincerely,

—Angel Gonzalez, New Jersey

RESPONSE: I plan to write another article sometime this year. It is amazing how many people think this problem cannot happen. There certainly was no conspiracy behind it—most management knew nothing about it before 1990. But, our world now runs on an accumulation of 40 years of hardware and software, some percentage of which will fail in the year 2000. The effect will be disastrous, because it will happen all at once.

Here is a hypothetical story to help people get a physical grasp of the problem. It is almost as if a bunch of evil electric-motor manufacturers got together in 1960 and said: "We will randomly put a bomb in about 1/3 or the motors we make and set it to go off January 1, 2000." If such a plot were just now discovered, how could we go about finding and fixing or replacing them all? Small electric motors are in cars, airplanes, kitchen appliances, medical equipment, elevators, toys, soft-drink machines, etc. They are in places that nobody thinks about. Even if the existing manufacturers repented and agreed to help defuse the problem, they cannot possibly find all of the problems in time.

Computer hardware and software companies (including Bill Gates) cannot solve the problem today. Like the motor parable above, defective computer hardware and software is scattered throughout the world and nobody knows exactly where it is. Why? 1) Many of the companies that made it are out of business. 2) The other companies have almost no organized records of which products were 2000-compliant and which were not—they were not testing for that. 3) Of the products that they know won't work, they have no sure way of knowing where all of them are now.

There is no "solution" to the year-2000 problem. There are only ways to reduce its effect. People who are responsible for computers should fix them as quickly as possible. Everyone should be ready to survive a while with a low-technology existence. December 31, 1999 is a Friday night. We would hope that the world will be full of sober people trying to deal with the problems, not a bunch of drunk people "celebrating" the new year.

—NSE

Year 2000 Real Problems

LETTER:

April 17, 1998

My wife works for a small oil company as the "accounting department". This company has a special software package that is sold to small oil companies for oil and gas revenue and gathering. The company was informed today by letter that this software is not Y2K compliant and it will not operate after year 2000. If their company wants to update, the package will be available June 1998. If the company doesn't update then, the software company will get to them as an opportunity becomes available, and if their system crashes because the oil company did not upgrade, then they are on their own. This was very specific, in no uncertain terms.

My wife has been trying to get the owner's attention on this matter and has been told that "it's not a problem, we just bought you a brand new computer." Typical ostrich syndrome. Now they get a reality check.

—Oklahoma

RESPONSE: We have heard many similar stories about the problem of computers failing in the year 2000. Some companies and people are hard at work on the problem, others want to pretend it will go away. There are others, like your wife's company, that have done something to solve the problem, but do not realize that they have not done enough. One person told me that her business computer had been tested for year-2000 compliance and passed. What she meant was, her **hardware** had been tested. But she uses **software** that bills clients based on the date. When I asked if her software was year-2000 compliant, she again assured me that her computer had been tested—she did not grasp the fact that bad software on good hardware will still fail. Both your wife's company and this company will have to do their accounting manually if they do not fix their systems before year 2000—they have almost no chance of getting computer help in January of 2000.

Another friend told me of one mortgage-service company that is rushing to make sure they are year-2000 compliant as early as possible. Why? So they can advertise it and pick up business from some of their competitors whom they think **cannot be ready on time**. The question is, will these competitors admit that they are not ready and lose nearly all of their business? Or will they pretend that they are going to be ready until it is too late to transfer the business in an orderly way?

We hope our readers continue to think about getting a supply of emergency food, cash, and other essential resources for what is certainly going to be a difficult time for the world, now only 20 months away.

Post Christian Era

LETTER:

April 11, 1998

Greetings,

Last week I received in the mail a mass-mailing post card inviting me to attend Easter Services. The church is a local non-denominational group. I was compelled to call the church to inquire as to how they have come to celebrate a holiday that is not in the Bible.

After speaking to two ladies that could not help me I was finally forwarded to the pastor of the church. He was a very nice fellow with an English Accent, very willing to discuss the particulars concerning the Easter Tradition. After a brief discussion (15-20 min.) to my amazement he admitted to me that we are currently living in a "post Christian era"! I was impressed that a man who pastors a church will admit such a thing. He told me that we are currently in a "traditional era" of religion. He also stated that he could not teach the Bible the way I was explaining it (that Easter is not biblical) because it simply would not be accepted. That because the people of his church (and most of the world) are so tied to the tradition that the understanding that I presented him with would be flat-out rejected.

Ending our conversation he thanked me for stretching and challenging his mind to the understanding that I presented to him. He thanked me for calling and we closed on courteous terms. Just thought I'd share this with you. Thanks for reading this.

—Robert Pinto, San Jose, California

RESPONSE: Thanks for the note. It shows how much work there is for people with our knowledge to do. I think most "Christians" believe they are doing what God instructs from the Bible. If not, they think that the Bible has authorized their church to implement whatever practices they have. Your letter shows the work that Sabbatarians have cut out for them. The world needs a lot more teachers who have learned what they know by studying the Bible, not by studying man-made "improvements" on the Bible.

—NSE

Likes Judaism Article

LETTER:

March 18, 1998

Hi there!

The latest issue of the Servant's News was truly a God-send! I appreciated the article on "Where does Judaism Fit into NT Teaching?" by Norman Edwards. We have been going through that very thing in our own Bible studies. It is just amazing how

God works these things out.

—Marla Prouty, Washington

Jewish Background, Sacred Names, German-Language Web Site

LETTER:

April 12, 1998

Greetings Mr. Edwards,

Thank you very much for the *Servants' News* I have received during the last years. The Judaism article was written with good background information. I agree with you that we can learn much from the Jews. I have read the commentary from David Stern—great background information. I have his Jewish NT—also very good. This perspective of NT translation is very helpful for gentile believers. It's a pity that the WCG under Herbert W. Armstrong never learned some of these things. Norman, I have more learned from the Bible after I have left the WCG (1982) than in the WCG.

Groups that never look at outside material will only promote the philosophy that "we are such a special group." They will never learn from obvious things that outsiders have to say. Look at Flurry, Meredith, Garner Ted and other founders from WCG splinter groups.

Norman, as author and publisher you have to know that you are responsible for all articles you are published. In the masthead (page 2) you use "Yeshua." This is the correct name of the Savior Messiah. It's your responsibility, even in articles from other authors, to clarify, when the name Jesus, Christus or other wrong names are written, that **the correct name is Yeshua**. You should follow a correct line in this way when you have personally recognized the real name of the Messiah—accept no other standards as valid. The Creator Yahveh and Yeshua don't allow false names!!!

In other things we can be a multi-cultural society—different meanings and thinkings are O.K. (but this is another theme). But when you have learned the Truth, Norman, then hold the Truth and say the Truth. Say not "Jesus" or other names than Yeshua when you are convinced that Yeshua is the correct name. This is good advise from me!

For three years I have published a monthly paper in Germany. After three years I have learned the thinking of the most of my readers. Most WCG or former-WCG members are very narrow-minded. Most believe only what they have learned in the WCG. The Germans are a special kind of people in this way, unfortunately.

For people interested in reading German Bible articles, I have a Homepage

with lots of Zip Files to download:

<http://ourworld.compuserve.com/Homemepages/Juwelen>

A surfer can get to more than 500 pages via my web-sites. I will revise the appearance of my web pages soon.

—Alexander Gonska, Cologne, Germany

RESPONSE: We agree with your comments about learning from other sources. The Holy Spirit should help us discern truth from historical sources, not hide from them.

Regarding names, the Chaldean and Greek portions of the Bible do not attempt to transliterate (convey the sound) of the names of the Father or Son in the Bible. The Greek New Testament uses *theos* for God and *Iesous* for Jesus. Yet, the Greek New Testament does transliterate less important words such as *Abba* ("father"), *Armageddon* and *Abaddon*. It is possible that Hebrew names for God were in the original New Testament, but the Eternal has not chosen to make any copies of these writings available to us. It is hard for me to insist that *Servants' News* writers use Hebrew names when the Eternal has not insisted on it for those whom he used to copy the scriptures. (Also, I have seen so many papers on the exact pronunciation of the names—Yahweh, Yahveh, Ee-ou-ah, Jehovah, Yeshuah, Yashuah, YeHoshua, etc. Exactly which names would I have to insist upon?) However, if you or anyone else are convicted of using certain names for the Father and Son, please do so!

It is sad to hear about the WCG-teaching-only attitude of your readers. One would hope that lessons could be learned from seeing what has happened to the WCG. We cannot remember any other requests for articles in German, but we encourage you to keep working. The Eternal may shake up the German people and cause some of them to seek Him. Hopefully, you will be ready to serve them when they are ready.

—NSE

Herbert Armstrong the Elijah?

LETTER:

April 20, 1998

Norman:

It makes no difference to me that you won't print an article because of your bias against Mr Armstrong. But be consistent. God was angry with Moses and wouldn't let him walk into the Promised Land, which doubtless affected the faith of some of God's people. So stop publishing anything Moses said directly or indirectly.

I really have more confidence of seeing HWA in high office in the Kingdom than I do of seeing you above him in rank. He remains the most important member of the Church of God in the 20th Century. The

Elijah-who-has-come—whom you will have to one day acknowledge as fulfilling that office. Mark my words—because I will remind you of them in the Kingdom.

Sincerely,

—Geoff Neilson, South Africa

RESPONSE: I still distribute literature that Herbert Armstrong wrote, and I publish things that speak positively about him. However, I refuse to publish articles that consider his writings Scripture or claim that they are all "inspired". Herbert Armstrong and his writings are very far away from Moses and the five books he wrote. Here is why:

A high percentage of the five books of Moses are direct quotes of the words of the Eternal. If we believe that Moses and the scribes through the centuries conveyed these words correctly, **there is no debating them**. Most of the rest of the contents of these books is history, some of which is confirmed by archeology and other ancient writings. We have almost no "doctrinal opinions" of Moses. The latter books of Moses **do not** correct errors that Moses made in earlier books "before he had a complete understanding". In contrast, Herbert Armstrong virtually never claimed to be writing words directly spoken to him by the Eternal. Armstrong wrote his best understanding of the scriptures and history, some of which may have been inspired by the Eternal. At other times, he obviously was not inspired: he had failed prophecies, doctrines based on erroneous Bible translations, and doctrines which he changed. During his life, Armstrong taught three different methods of keeping Pentecost. Moses was never in doubt. Armstrong's teachings caused the breakup of many sound marriages because one mate had been previously married—he later determined that was a mistake. Moses had no such mistakes. (We could list other examples, but this is enough.)

The writings of **Moses** that we have are **Scripture**. Each individual can trust them. Whereas the individual must compare the writings of Herbert Armstrong **to Scripture** to see if he can trust them.

Moses, Elijah, John the Baptist, and Christ all lived a life-style rich in direct contact with God, but were all relatively poor. Herbert Armstrong claimed almost no direct contact with God, but appeared to be obsessed with wealth. Furthermore, the scripture never states that salvation or even eternal reward depends on our acceptance of some human leader. We must accept Christ as our way of salvation, and beyond that we are judged on how we treat everyone else.

Lastly, I do not understand this preoccupation of some former-WCG members with those who will have "the highest position in the kingdom." The Body of Christ requires

a diversity of functions (1Cor 12). If I am to be a part of the Temple that our Savior is building, I know that He will judge me in perfect righteousness, and place me where I best fit in his Temple. I strive to be a profitable servant and do the most I can with what He has given me. However, I will be perfectly happy if Herbert Armstrong, you, and a host of other people have a "higher" position in the Kingdom than I do. Several times, Christ had to remind his disciples **not to debate** about "who is the greatest". The Bible points out the mistakes of many ancient leaders; many writers, including myself, point out the mistakes of some modern day leaders. The purpose of this "mistake pointing" is not to pass a judgment on the person's life, but to prevent others from repeating the same mistakes.

"Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts. Then each one's praise will come from God" (1Cor 4:5).

—NSE

Why Another Organization?

LETTER:

April 19, 1998

To Whom It May Concern:

At the present time the UCG-AIA is undergoing a schism over the issues of church government and administration. The fundamental dispute surrounds three basic issues:

- 1) Should the church's HQ/HO be on the West Coast, or in the Midwest?
- 2) How much should be spent on preaching the Gospel (by media work) compared to feeding the flock (through a paid ministry)?
- 3) How much centralization and decentralization in preaching the Gospel should exist between HO efforts and local evangelism?

The side that's presently departing from the UCG-AIA wants a West Coast HQ, a centralized media work that eliminates most or all local evangelistic efforts, and more spent on preaching the Gospel compared to what is presently being done, by eliminating a number of the paid ministry's positions. On the latter issue, Steve Andrews advocated eliminating 33 full-time ministers in the UCG-AIA, and giving the average minister 3 congregations to tend, and some churches be downgraded to video groups. By these moves, the media budget would be increased from a shade over \$2 million to \$4.4 million. This trade-off Bob Dick called "Guns or Butter?" ("New Beginnings," 2/9/98), between having more paid ministers or spending more on preach-

ing the Gospel.

The removal of David Hulme from the UCG-AIA's presidency, combined with the reelection of all Council of Elders members, showed that the more decentralist element was in a strong majority in the General Conference as a whole. Now, the reality is that what the pro-centralist side wants already exists: It's called the **Global Church of God**. It has a West Coast HQ, a major and centralized media effort, and considerably more (as a percentage of its budget) devoted to preaching the Gospel. According to Larry Salyer, by his calculations, some 42% of the GCG's budget was devoted to preaching the Gospel compared to a 4% figure by one calculation that the UCG-AIA was committing to this (See Robert Thiel's article in "The Journal," 1/30/98). So now, why doesn't the side which is now leaving join the Global Church of God? Why reinvent the wheel? Do we really need yet another COG corporate organization, one with a form of church government that's between Global and the UCG-AIA's?

Now Roderick Meredith has admitted that he made mistakes when he was superintendent of the ministry in the WCG, that he was too hard-driving. Hence, the GCG is not run like the WCG was in the 1960s. Its Council of Elders can fire the Presiding Evangelist. From my worm's eye view as a UCG laymember, it seems the only reason for forming yet another COG is to avoid the leadership of Dr. Meredith, believing that he hasn't changed.

I ask those who are leaving to avoid creating yet another COG, but join one which already exists. Otherwise, it appears personality conflicts among the ministry are the only reason for the separate COGs in this regard. Why split up friends and family yet another time, over administrative matters?

—Eric V. Snow, UCG-Lansing
snoweric@pilot.msu.edu

RESPONSE: Why did not Gerald Flurry join Fred Coulter when he left the WCG? Because he believed God had inspired him with Malachi's message and chosen him to be a leader. Why did not Rod Meredith join Gerald Flurry when he left the WCG? Because Meredith disagreed with some of Flurry's teaching and because Meredith had worked with Armstrong for many years and thought he was far more qualified to run "the work". Why did not the UCG ministers join Rod Meredith? Most disagreed with his government or had bad memories from the past.

The truth of the matter is that there are over 100 splinter groups from the WCG (contact Servants' News for the "WCG Splits Paper" if you are interested). People start new groups because

- 1) they have been mistreated,
- 2) they believe they have more truth,
- 3) they think they can do a better job,
- 4) they believe God has chosen them.

The problem is not as much with the starting of a new group, as it is with the effort to convince people that they cannot fellowship or share activities with other groups. The solutions to the *above numbered problems* should be as follows:

1) If church leaders would seem themselves responsible for dealing with all of their members **according to the scriptures**, fewer members would leave because of mistreatment. If elders who sin were "rebuked before all" (1Tim 5:19-20), members would more likely believe that their problems are resolvable and stay. Do people sometimes claim to be mistreated and use it as an excuse to start a new group? Yes! But it is good that they leave your group—you do not want such people in your group. Yes, one who lies may deceive other innocent people into attending with him, but those diligently seeking the Eternal will find their way.

2) Members should be taught to compare teachings to their Bible, rather than to believe their church organization "always preaches the truth". This approach would allow for a greater diversity of teaching **without** breaking up congregations. If a congregation does divide over doctrine, brethren should be free to go to either as the Holy Spirit moves them.

3) If a person believes they can do a better job—that they have a spiritual gift—of serving, evangelizing, teaching, or whatever, then they should be able to use that gift. If organizations were not so restrictive in whom they allowed to do what, there would be less division. But if a person feels they must go elsewhere to use their gift, brethren should be able to go where their spiritual needs are best met, without losing their friends.

4) If a person believes that God has chosen them to lead, it is probably best that they start a new congregation or group so they can lead? Why? If the Eternal **has chosen** them to do it, then they should be where they can lead. If the Eternal **has not chosen** them, it would be better for the true body of believers not to have a false leader in their midst.

David Hulme apparently believes that God has chosen him to lead. I think we should take Gamaliel's advice in this case: "And now I say to you, keep away from these men and let them alone; for if this plan or this work is of men, it will come to nothing; but if it is of God, you cannot overthrow it—lest you even be found to fight against God" (Acts 5:38-39).

—NSE

The Last Straw at UCG

LETTER:

March 17, 1998

To "LikeMinds" Internet List:

I feel the need to express my (and my wife's) concerns about recent happenings in the UCG and also feel "qualified" to write about such. I have been associated with the church (i.e.. Radio, Worldwide and now United) for over 52 years now, with the sixth generation of my family presently attending. I also feel our service in the church and to the brethren should be without question.

It was a refreshing change to be a part of those first in attendance at United services (we have been through the hullabaloo in the 50's, the fiasco's of the 60's, "witnessed it first hand at Big Sandy", was on the visiting teams, helped baptize over 300 people, etc. etc. etc.) thinking the problems of those years were gone....ha, what a rude awakening! Some have reverted to the same old thing of striving for the top seats instead of seeking to serve, both on the COE and in the local churches—very sad!

One of the more astounding things at present is, so many are engaged in following and answering to men. We only answer to Christ and should follow and emulate Him with every move—man can't give us squat! Christ didn't appoint the apostles to be control freaks over the "little people", as we have been called many times recently.

As was said in a recent letter we received, "why can't ministers *minister*, instead of **administer**? Why can't local elders (older men) advise from humble experience? So much time is spent fighting and jockeying for that upper seat or control of all the marbles, (dictating to the congregation what we can or cannot read, what we can or cannot listen to) when it could be better spent in outgoing concern and love for one another. Why can't we agree to disagree—worship God together in a "live and let live attitude"? Be mature, stop judging each other, begin treating one another with respect.

Why can't we let Christ do the judging, making us over in His image, through the perfect spirit of God?

With all due respect, I do hereby resign from all duties and responsibilities in the United Church of God (this shall include the position of President of the local board).

Respectfully,

—Dave Burton, Salem, Oregon

RESPONSE: As each additional congregation or group break-up is reported, the importance of being with the "one true church organization" decreases in the minds of many. Individuals doing what is right and following the Eternal becomes increasingly

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more important.

—NSE

To Whom Are You Loyal?

LETTER:

March 1, 1998

Dear Norm:

Greetings to you and your staff from Canada! I just wanted to take some time to thank you for the fine job you are doing through Servants' News. Enclosed is a small gift to help meet the expenses of serving so many of us with your publication.

The last issue I received (Dec 1997) was very informative and interesting. I would like to comment on one article from page 15 titled: **UCG-AIA Moves Toward Isolation**. First, let me state I am a member of the United Church of God here in Canada. While I enjoy fellowshiping with our small group here, I cannot help but be concerned by what seems to be an **exclusive and controlling** attitude by some in our organization. Why would anyone request Mr. Kubik remove links to other sabbath-keeping groups from his web-site? That amounts to **arrogance** and plain selfishness. Has somebody recently discovered that we are now too big and important to associate with other "lesser" sabbatarians?

When we (and this applies to any group, not just UCG) try to equate loyalty with unconditional and exclusive support of our particular group, we are treading on dangerous ground. The danger of trying to enforce loyalty to an organization is that we run the risk of putting loyalty to the group above loyalty to God. If loyalty to anything or anyone (church organization, minister, mate, money, position, etc.) impedes or transcends our loyalty to God, then we are committing idolatry (Exodus 20:2-3). We do need to have a certain degree of loyalty to our group, but it should never interfere with our ultimate loyalty to God.

One wonders when some of our people will wake up. Are we any different from the average consumer practicing **brand loyalty** when we display subjective and seemingly subconscious devotion to some people or individual? When we try to promote our brand name such as UCG, GCG, WCG, PCG, CGI, etc., as being better than the rest or as the only true church, then we are no different from Mrs. Laundry Consumer who will use no other detergent but "Tide."

Do we ever stop to think how God feels when He sees the many **Brand Managers** (Church Leaders) competing for market share (membership, tithes & offerings) among the many brand loyal consumers (brethren loyal to their particular church)? It

would do us well to consider that **Paul had to rebuke the brethren in Corinth for this competitive spirit** which is carnal to the core (1Cor 3:3-9)! Why don't we focus on God rather than men and organizations? If we concentrate on being loyal to God then much of the problems and animosity within and between the various groups would vanish in no time. May God bless your efforts.

—Kenroy Allen, Canada

RESPONSE: I completely agree with your analysis of the situation. Most of the problems are not arising from church leaders who want to "be bad to members", but from leaders who are used to solving their problems with an administrative decision that everyone used to honor. When people thought that the WCG was the "only true church", most stayed there no matter how offensive the decisions were. These church leaders simply are not used to thinking about how their decisions will impact others because they rarely had to think about it before.

It is a scary thing for both members and leaders to realize that the Eternal is **not** promising to judge them favorably just because they are a part of the right church organization. People are slowly beginning to realize that whether or not they treat others according to Bible principles is what matters, not their position in some group. We all have a lot of repenting and changing to do, but that is why the Eternal continues to work with us.

—NSE

Correction About Hulme Video

LETTER:

March 11, 1998

Can I just correct something in your article on UCG, page 20-21?

You state in the second column that "Hulme's primary platform seems to be to preach an Ezekiel warning messagesimilar to that of HWA and GTA."

This is not correct. Although DH wanted to do his own TV program, he did not believe in the Ezekiel warning message. In fact, he was very concerned that no one watching should be offended by his message. This is one reason why the Council rejected his pilot program—it was too weak. DH seemed to have no interest in prophecy.

At the end you also mention that CGI and UCG have differences on Passover and church eras, etc. I am not aware of any difference on the Passover; please elaborate. Regarding church eras, UCG has no position, so I cannot see how there is a difference. Perhaps you could let me know what CGI says about both issues.

—[Internet post]

RESPONSE: Thank you for the correction. I have heard David Hulme speak more

than once about preaching a unique, well-polished message on TV, and that he felt he was most qualified to do it. I cannot find a source on him preaching an "Ezekiel message". Either it came from someone else who was wrong, or I falsely assumed it. In my opinion, what you have said would actually be worse. It really does not make sense for a relatively small group like UCG-AIA to spend a lot of money producing a top-quality television program that says little different from other religious television programs.

In regard to the CGI issues, CGI's Passover booklet indicates that the Israelites sacrificed the lamb late on the 14th and ate it on the 15th. They believe in keeping an annual memorial observance (or Lord's supper if you want that term) early on the 14th, and observe the "night to be much remembered" (which they believe is the Passover) early on the 15th (after sundown). However, the CGI has usually been quite tolerant of **individuals** who quietly observed other Passover practices or even used other calendars.

Also, the CGI does not believe that the primary message of letters to churches in Revelation 2 & 3 are seven sequential "church eras". They believe the messages are primarily applicable to churches and individuals of every age. Although I know of individuals in the UCG-AIA who still believe that they are the "Philadelphia era", you are right in saying that there is no "official" UCG-AIA teaching on the subject. This will probably not create much of a problem for brethren.

For what it's worth, I think the CGI is closer to the truth in the above two areas.

The other area of concern is freedom in local congregations: the CGI has tended to have quite a bit. In some ways, this is very good. People are usually free to talk about or even quietly bring other literature to services. However, some UCG-AIA members may find a very few CGI members "too relaxed": These very few may dress "grubby" for services, smoke, shop on the Sabbath, work through the Feast, etc. I think it would actually do good for people in UCG-AIA congregations to have to deal with these issues--it will help them be more prepared to have new members from the real world. In the past, if a member discovered another member smoking outside of services, he might run to the minister and say, "Mr. Minister, make him stop or kick him out!" It would be much better for the member to learn to discern for himself: Is this someone struggling to quit? Is he flaunting his smoking, or trying to hide it? Does he need encouragement or a rebuke?

—NSE

Upset Over Closed Door Meetings

LETTER:

March 9, 1998

I am still outraged and dazed by the conduct of the General Conference of Elders and Robert Dick in the expulsion of "Journal" writers Stough and Cartwright.

I tossed and turned all night, upset at how arrogant the leadership in UCG has become in just 3 short years. How enlightened and humble everyone was back in May of 1995 and how quickly this attitude has evaporated now that a steady paycheck is coming.

I was told, along with many others, that United would offer a new openness and a voice for the membership. No longer would there be back room, closed door politics, "smoked filled rooms". I think it is a shame that United uses a church name so akin to the "United States of America", when it is nothing more than an "Oligarchy".

I can't help but feel a tremendous disappointment, and a "ripped off" mentality. I'm feeling strong feelings of expression.

I want to run down a proposed response with all of you and hear your collective thoughts on this idea first.

I value and respect "The Journal" and Msrs. Cartwright and Stough. I believe the Journal is a necessary estate needed for a proper check and balance of church government. I propose that as many as possible of the "little people" send a tea bag (symbolic of the historic Boston Tea Party in response to tyranny) by mail to the home office of UCG at 444 E. Huntington Drive, Suite 206, Arcadia, CA. 91066-3678.

Written on each bag the slogan: "**No tithe-ation without representation! Freedom of the press and The Journal!**"

Please advise me with further counsel, ideas and plans. I really would like to pull this off.

Sincerely,

—Bill Lussenheide, Menifee, California

RESPONSE: We encourage your attempt to send a message to the UCG-AIA in this manner. It is an interesting analogy to the USA and England over 200 years ago. However, we need to realize that the UCG-AIA is not really comparable to England. Most of the American colonists were born English subjects. They did not choose the English government. Today, however, people joined the UCG-AIA by choice. They do not need to mount a massive campaign to try to force UCG to change it policies. They can simply choose to attend and/or send their money to the place they believe is most compatible with their understanding of the Scriptures.

—NSE

Seeks Biblical Fellowship

LETTER:

March 10, 1998

Norm,

I just received the January/February issue of Servants' News. I almost fell off my chair when I read the letter from "Canada" on page 28. Their gripes about the "old straight jacket mode of conducting Sabbath services" are virtually identical to mine. Quite frankly, **I hate church!** I'm exaggerating, but not much. I just never found the "stick and stay" routine very uplifting. My kids **do** hate church (and judging by the number of teens who sit through services hooked up to a Walkman, my boys are not alone!) We have only been to services once in the past 12 months, which was when we met you in Ann Arbor. We can't find a fellowship where we feel comfortable and wanted.

The focus of my prayers this morning was our desire for a new fellowship—one free of the WCG/CGI hang-ups. Perhaps "Canada's" letter is the answer. Would you please forward my address to "Canada"? I would love to brainstorm with them.

—JB, (Detroit area) Michigan

RESPONSE: We understand the difficulty you are having. It seems that when members of a hierarchical group begin to have difficulties with the group's methods or doctrines, the leaders just respond with more sermons about staying in their group. They never address the real problems head-on because they have never had to do that in the past. But all of the "stay here" sermons with no answers just frustrate people even more.

We realize that you are too far to fellowship with us on a regular basis, but we hope that you are able to find or start a fellowship where you can learn as well as serve others.

—NSE

Left UCG For Home Fellowship

LETTER:

March 16, 1998

Hi Norm,

My wife and I, and another couple have just left UCG because of the long history of problems. We are going to be getting together for fellowshiping on the Sabbath. Another couple may also decide to join us.

I would like to request your article Assembling On The Sabbath to help us do this correctly. We see the potential for a local fellowship growing to 20 or 30 people here locally in time.

We do appreciate the Servants News and are so glad that there are people such as yourself who are serving God's Church. You have our sincere thanks.

—Dave & Iris Locke, Arizona

RESPONSE: We understand why you feel compelled to do what you do. The problem is not that the UCG is full of bad people, but that it has let the concerns of organizations far override the Biblical principle of letting Christ distribute spiritual gifts and letting Christ govern his church.

It would have been interesting if someone at the Cincinnati conference would have asked the elders to raise their hand if they believe that the Eternal had granted them the gift of "pastoring", "teaching", "knowledge", "administration", etc. Those who do not raise their hand for any gift should be asked, "Why, then, are you attempting to be a leader in the church?" Those who do raise their hand should be asked: "If you no longer had any pay or recognition of authority from the UCG home office, would you still try to be serving in a similar capacity?"

Questions such as these are very important. It is very clear that the early New Testament teachers completely trusted the Eternal to take care of them. Today, we have too many "men with jobs in church organizations". For most, it is the only way they know. But we can all hope that everyone will still see that the Eternal did not essentially put an end to the Worldwide Church of God to see if a half-dozen smaller organizations could start it up again.

I will be the first to admit that home fellowships do not have a track record of all "love, joy, and peace". They also have some self-righteous teachers, hypocrisy, bickering, and many of the problems found in larger organizations. But home fellowships offer a much greater opportunity for the person serious about serving our Savior and developing discernment and spiritual gifts. If a person believes they have the gift of teaching, healing, miracles, prophecy, etc., they can probably find a home fellowship where they can use their gift. If they really do not have the gift, it will be clear to everyone relatively soon. Groups may split up and reform, but those who are seeking the Eternal will learn from each re-configuration. We hope everything goes well in your new fellowship.

—NSE

Two Letters from CGI Tyler

LETTER: March 12, 1998
Hello Norm Edwards:

In your article "New Leaders & Members for UCG" you made some statements regarding the Church of God, International (CGI) which I feel compelled to respond to. As a member of CGI for ten years and a CGI home office employee for six years, I know whereof I speak.

First of all, regarding the rumored

merger between UCG & CGI: I am including with this transmission a copy of our standard statement we send to people making such inquiries, for your information and/or publication. This past Sabbath Mr. Charles Groce addressed that rumor in his sermon. I'll send a copy to you.

Secondly, in your article you stated that "CGI presently lacks a clear-cut mission and direction since throughout its entire past history Garner Ted Armstrong WAS essentially its mission and direction." Now, come on, Norm. I've noticed in the past your penchant for broad, sweeping, all-encompassing generalizations. This time I thought it appropriate to respond. Such characterizations are seldom accurate and hardly ever fair. Never are they based on fact, but rather a series of assumptions. I can see how someone would arrive at such a conclusion, viewing things from a distance. However, that doesn't make it so. The presence of Garner Ted Armstrong in the CGI did not give us a "clear cut mission and direction." Neither does his absence create a lack of a "clear cut mission and direction."

In your last issue you published a small portion of the considerable information I provided to you which detailed our "clear-cut mission and direction." The implication that we are floundering around, not sure what to do, and lacking direction without GTA, is frankly insulting and we resent it.

Finally, the CGI Board of Directors, Ministerial Council, and Executive Committee have always defined our mission and direction and they continue to do so now.

Sincerely,

—Eric P. Morris, CGI, Tyler, Texas

Dear Friend:

Thank you for your interest in the Church of God, International (CGI). No, we are not merging with the United Church of God (UCG).

We have openly and repeatedly stated our desire to establish friendly relations and perhaps even work in cooperation with our brethren in the other churches of God. No one should underestimate our resolve on this matter.

However, no one should misinterpret it either. This is about healing, reestablishing friendships, and building bridges. It is NOT about merging. We are not interested in organizational or corporate mergers with other churches. We ARE interested in conducting our relationships based on Christian principles. It is time to stamp out the spirit of competition and mistrust which has dogged the steps of the churches of God for too long. We intend to do our part. I hope this

explanation clarifies our intentions.

Sincerely,

—Eric P. Morris, CGI, Tyler, Texas
cgitylertx@aol.com

RESPONSE: We will list your feast sites the next time we have a major Feast article.

Yes, I did write in sweeping, broad generalizations. I am sorry that I did not more clearly denote them as my opinion. Nevertheless, these generalizations are based on first-hand observations and communications with individuals within CGI. Time will show whether my opinion was right or wrong. But I am quite confident that the structure of CGI, the way it receives and spends money, etc., will be very different two years from now.

I believe that if the CGI leaders pray a powerful "Your will be done" prayer—asking the Eternal to show them what to do, that they will be able to bear much fruit over the coming years. I do not know specifically what the Eternal has in mind for the CGI, but the stated plans to recognize and cooperate with other Sabbath-keepers seem like a good start. Another priority would seem to be finding those to whom the Eternal has given spiritual gifts, and letting them use those gifts. I think most church groups falter when they simply cannot accept what Christ shows them is best for them. Christ told a rich ruler to "Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me" (Luke 18:22). He could not bring himself to do it. The CGI may need to move to change things that have not changed in a long time—it may need to change or eliminate some of its ministry and staff, it may need to move to a smaller headquarters building, or any number of things. It may need to consider more local evangelism, or to encourage an even greater toleration for diverse doctrines among its members.

I wish the best for all of those at the CGI headquarters and those whom you serve. We can be aware of the difficulties of individuals and organizations, but we should do more to encourage what is right, and less to complain about what might be wrong! Your admonition is well taken.

—NSE

CGI Response to NSE Response

LETTER: March 13, 1998
Norm:

Thanks for your response, your words of encouragement, and advice.

For the record, we have made large cuts and have reevaluated many of the things you listed. In 1995 this office employed approximately 40 people. There are now exactly 15 of us. We are all wear-

ing many hats. Yes, we may have to move to smaller facilities. This has been discussed. However, it has been weighed against the fact that our entire 19-acre facility is completely paid for. Local evangelism and other things you mentioned have been addressed (strategies examined, articles published, etc).

We are committed to doing the right thing (I think recent events bear that out), and serving the needs of those people God sends our way. We know this is pleasing to our heavenly Father. We have already and continue to make the adjustments necessary to do that in an efficient, cost-effective manner. Our income has stabilized. All of our members and donors are aware of recent personnel changes. Those who have yet to make up their minds are not contributing anyway.

None of the evil things the idolatrous supporters of GTA have accused us of are true. They are vicious, hateful stories being used as a diversionary tactic, with the intention to divide. People who have their eyes open are able to see that for what it is. When you stand up for and do what is right (as we have done), regardless of the consequences, then everything else will fall into place. Or even if not, your conscience, integrity, and blameless status before God are not compromised.

We also intend to try and make up for past mistakes and shortcomings in keeping with scriptural example. We hope people will give us the time and space to do this without judging, making negative predictions, or being overly critical.

Thanks again for your time.

Just wanted to thank you for the latest issue of SN.

Sincerely,

—Eric P. Morris, CGI, Tyler, Texas

Questions on Passover, Government

LETTER:

April 27, 1997

Dear Mr. Edwards,

My wife and I very much appreciate the efforts of you and your family and associates to serve the brethren in God's Church.

However, there is something that bothers me about your stance on the Passover, i.e.: that the bread and wine ceremony should be kept on the evening of the 15th rather than the evening of the 14th (At least this is what we get from your literature)

If Christ is to be our example and we are to follow Him, how do you explain away 1 Corinthians 11:23 ? The "Lord's Supper" most definitely did **not** take place on the evening of the 15th. If something is a memorial, then you do it **at that time** it

commemorates, not the next night.

We are concerned that Jim Rector and Dean Wheelock also agree with this interpretation of this important part of our commitment to God.

We have learned so many things from the three of you, and have had a lot of things we had come to believe a few years before the big changes started coming down from Pasadena, strongly reinforced. We didn't feel that WCG understood government as far back as 1992. We felt that services were not conducted along Biblical lines around the same time. We tried to keep quiet because we felt that the common good of God's people was more important than our personal differences with the administration and interpretation of doctrine.

Today, we are essentially alone in our former church area. We attended Global for a while, CGI for awhile, and UCG a few times. **All** of these churches of men are modeled, to one degree or another, on the false WCG governmental structure. Regardless of what their leaders and members say, this is true. Anyone from CGI who thinks differently, need only send for the rules for local churches from Tyler. Anyone from United can see that they've essentially built back up a WCG look-alike. Global is trying to do the same, claiming we should follow someone who's been in the "ministry" for 43 years.

I wish the brethren would stop and think, for just one minute. Christ said that the gates of hell would never stand against **his** church. If WCG **was** the true church, **it would still be doing the same "work" it was doing when Mr. Armstrong was alive.** Would God have allowed **his** church to be destroyed by mere men with false doctrines? **If God had been pleased with what we were doing in the WCG, He would never have allowed it to be destroyed. We would all still be together.** To be at work building **back** up a structure of administration and worship that has obviously been torn down by **God**, or at the least, allowed to be torn down by God, borders on idolatry. **I am convinced that we were introduced to an idolatrous form of worship at WCG.** Maybe Mr. Armstrong never intended for that to happen, but it did happen.

Which brings me to the next point. It is starting to happen again. Mr. Meredith claims that you should follow him because of his 43 years experience. Members of CGI claim ("Name withheld's" comments in the 4/5/97 issue notwithstanding) we should follow GTA because he never stopped preaching the gospel **after** he was

disfellowshipped back in the '70's. The guy who is in charge at PCG looks down on anyone who doesn't follow him as a Laodicean. It goes on and on and on. Mere men trying to take the place of **Christ** in our lives. **When are we going to learn that the head of the Church of God is Jesus Christ, and that there should not be, needs not be, any human "leader" between HIM and us?**

Just maybe the "Ezekiel warning" is meant for the **Church!** After all **we** are the people God is concerned about right now; not someone He hasn't called into His truth as of yet. God's people **really need to wake up!** In that respect, ministries like your own and Jim Rector's are to be commended. I'm sure there are others doing this also.

We are getting farther into the time of the end, and the "Elijah to come" and the "two witnesses" are going to come on the scene. What are people going to think who have **corporate church mentality?** Will they recognize these men of God? Will they accept the signs that **will** follow these men? Or are they going to say, "They're not from my church"? I hope they are ready to accept these prophets. It's going to be obvious to those who stay close to God, and look only to God and Jesus Christ for their leadership.

But what if it's not Garner Ted? Or Roderick Meredith? Or Gerald Flurry? Or any of the United ministers? Or any one of a dozen other people claiming that we should follow them? What then?

I wish God's people would stop and think. Just for a few minutes. Let GOD show them the truth about what they're doing. Let Christ show them the true beauty of the one on one relationship He desires to have with each of us. Let ourselves become totally dependent on The Father and The Son and on Them alone. **There is no need to be fearful of standing alone if we stand with Them.** They promise that They will never leave us or forsake us, no matter what mere men do to us.

If you publish this letter you can use my name. I dearly love my brothers and sisters who have scattered out from the WCG. This letter might turn some or all of them against me. For that I am sorry. Mr. Armstrong did say at one time how difficult it was to unlearn error. Unfortunately, he introduced quite a few of his own.

Please continue in the service you are doing for God's people. We may not agree with everything you say, but we look forward to your publication every month. Someday Christ will straighten out all our differences and gather us together to be

truly one, as He and the Father are one. I look forward to that day.

With Christian Love,

—Robert Knarr, Pennsylvania

RESPONSE: Your letter was very similar to some of the articles we are running this time. Regarding Passover, please realize that 1 Corinthians 11 never mentions Passover, but says “on the night he was betrayed”, which I understand to be the night before the Passover meal was eaten. As I explained in my January and March 1997 article, we believe that bread and wine was a common religious practice of the time, used more than just on Passover. We partake of bread and wine on the early part of the 14th, as Jesus did, and also on the early part of the 15th, the traditional time of the Passover meal (the lamb having been sacrificed in the afternoon of the 14th).

One additional point that was not in that article: The New Testament contains many references to the apostles preaching in synagogues and the Temple after Christ's death. If they did not continue to observe the Passover sacrifice late on the 14th, and eat it on the 15th, they would have been “cut off from their people” as the Old Testament commands. The Jews in power did not have authority to kill them, but they could have kept them out of the synagogue and Temple. The NT shows that this did not happen. Furthermore, the converted Jews would not be able to have Gentile converts eat the Passover with them. No uncircumcised person was permitted to eat of it. The church might have recognized the need not to circumcise converts, but the Jews would not recognize any of that. They would have cast out people for letting Gentiles partake of the Passover. So, it is my conclusion that this is good evidence why the 14th is a separate bread and wine service apart from the Passover. Both should be observed—similar to the way the WCG observed them, but with a different technical explanation.

We agree with what you have said about church organizations. If a righteous, miracle-working man from the Eternal appears on the world scene, the groups will have a terrible time accepting Him. They have always figured that such a person would show up at their headquarters and tell them—maybe even ask their permission to start doing his work. If such a man begins addressing multiple church groups, telling them to repent, how will any group's leader claim absolute authority over his people any more? I think a lot of the members in these groups will recognize an Elijah-figure, but I am not sure about the leaders. May the Eternal open their eyes!

—NSE

“What is Happening?” from page 1 survey, and half of those who did indicated that **no time** would be convenient for a Bible Study!

Recent WCG appeals to members to increase their giving have improved the financial picture only a little. If the sale of the Big Sandy college campus goes through, it will save the WCG from drastic cuts or a possible bankruptcy. But it is only a matter of time before that money will be gone. Within the last two months, two separate, loyal WCG members made essentially the same comment to this writer: “I'm glad that the WCG does not have any extensive evangelism now—I would not recommend that a new Christian come into this environment!”

CGI and Its Many Off-shoots

The **Church of God International**, formed back in 1978, has now split into four major groups: itself (CGI), **Christian Education Ministries** (led by Ron Dart), **Church of God Outreach Ministries** (an affiliation of largely independent congregations), and **Garner Ted Armstrong Evangelistic Association** (with its associated **Intercontinental Church of God**). Most are serving brethren in local congregations, participating in various kinds of evangelism, and cooperating with other groups to some extent. Christian Educational Ministries (CEM) is particularly good in this area—it simply **serves local congregations** with educational and inspirational materials; it makes no effort to control them. It is the one major CGI split that appears to be growing as well as fulfilling its mission. (GTA's evangelistic association is also growing, but this writer considers him disqualified to be a spiritual leader according to 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1.)

The previous *Servants' News* issue reported talks of a possible merger between CGI and UCG-AIA. There was talk by a few people, but no genuine interest by the governing bodies of both organizations. (Of interest, there are some independent congregations that are composed largely of former-UCG and former-CGI members—they are having difficulties with hymnals, etc., but they are making it work.) Also, there were talks between CGI and Church of God Outreach Ministries of a shared Feast

Site, but they rejected that idea.

Literally dozens of other small splinter groups have emerged from the CGI and its off-shoots. Some of these groups have scattered members connected only by sermon tapes and/or a newsletter. Others are strong local congregations. About half of the people in the CGI splinter groups were never members of the WCG—which demonstrates the fact that evangelism is possible outside of the WCG. Over the years, the CGI developed an extensive body of literature and tapes that would expound most of the basics of Biblical doctrine—something that most of the other splinter groups have not yet accomplished. Also, most of their congregations had a live minister. His sermons might not be as good as the headquarters video-tape sermons used by other groups, but he was a focal point to run activities and for new people to ask questions. (In some of the hierarchical video groups, there was really no one to which doctrinal or Christian living questions could be addressed.)

The Philadelphia Church of God

The Philadelphia Church of God began in 1990, claiming to be the true successor to Herbert W. Armstrong. Fueled by discontent with WCG doctrinal changes, it grew rapidly and cited such growth as proof that “God was blessing his true Philadelphia Era Church”. The PCG fought the WCG to a stand-still in a legal battle over the right to reprint HWA's *Mystery of the Ages*. They are spending a lot of money to give the book away free. It is probably teaching some people, but it is not enough to answer many of the questions a potential convert has. Unbaptized people are, in general, not welcome in PCG services. In short, the PCG does not have a good way to evangelize and has baptized very few new people.

With the above facts, and the fact

Get the Full Story

For details of what has happened in the various Church of God groups, we highly recommend a subscription to *The Journal, News of the Churches of God*, PO Box 1020, Big Sandy, TX 75755, \$18 for 12 monthly issues. Back issues are available—the last several issues have been excellent!

that very few people leaving the WCG now go to the PCG, the PCG has been shrinking in size. The PCG recently cut its 70,000 circulation *Philadelphia Trumpet* magazine back to 40,000. Some PCG members have openly asked if the decline in membership means that God is not blessing them—and they have been asked to leave the PCG also! Several PCG ministers have left in recent

months. Some have left over doctrinal disputes, some have left over unfulfilled prophecies in the PCG's main booklet, *Malachi's Message*, but most have left because their leadership was not practicing what they preached. Some of the PCG split-off groups essentially believe that their little group of twenty to fifty people is the "Philadelphia Era of the Church"—the main group with whom

God is working. Others are coming to the more sensible realization that the Eternal has worked with many groups for millennia.

The Global Church of God

The Global Church of God was formed in 1993 by Rod Meredith. By that time, the Protestant direction of the WCG was evident to anyone who wanted to look for it. No other paid WCG ministers had committed to join Meredith when he started. Most of the people who did support him were people whom he did not even know—people who had, on their own, found the errors in the "new" WCG doctrine. Many then stayed with the GCG because they wanted to continue meeting on the Sabbath, and wanted to contribute to an organization that was "doing a work." But in the process of their Bible study, they found that some of the old WCG/GCG doctrines did not quite match the Bible. So they wrote papers to headquarters—which were nearly all ignored.

This ignoring became official policy in the Dec 12, 1997 *GCG Newsletter* which straightforwardly told members **not** to send doctrinal questions to headquarters, but to local or regional ministers. Yet, there is no official process whereby ministers must either answer the member's questions or submit them to headquarters. In hierarchical governments, most ministers have long realized that it is their job to **teach** headquarters doctrines, not to **question** them.

Along a similar line, the "send e-mail to GCG" button on the GCG Internet site presents a screen that politely tells the reader that they do not have time to answer e-mail. The GCG seems to fail to grasp that their organization was largely built by people who were individually studying their Bibles. This failure to respond to questions often drives members to study other literature or attend other services. **Rather than see the need to answer the questions of their members who are seeking understanding elsewhere, the GCG tends to send them letters like the one at left.** Some of the same people who came to the GCG by themselves because of their personal study, in spite of their local WCG minister, are leaving the GCG because of their personal study, in spite of their local GCG minister.

The GCG has produced some good literature, and is reaching some new peo-

The letter, below, is being sent to Global Church of God members who are visiting other congregations too much. It is a form letter—the minister just fills in the name. Notice the "double-talk" that is in it:

1. It says members "disfellowshipped **themselves**." If they really did it "themselves", then they should be able to undo it "themselves" and decide to attend the GCG again. But the letter says the **minister** decides when they can fellowship again—so who did the disfellowshipping?

2. The first paragraph clearly says that the people are being disfellowshipped from the GCG, a corporate organization which the minister represents, but the second paragraph "hopes" that the person will come back to "His [God's] Church." Either this is a terrible job of writing, or the letter is intentionally trying to imply to the reader that leaving the Global Church of God is leaving God's Spiritual Church—that there is no other valid group with which to fellowship. —NSE

Global Church of God

Roderick C. Meredith
Presiding Evangelist

Charles E. Bryce
Minister

Dear _____

It is very sad and painfully obvious that you have disfellowshipped yourselves from the Global Church of God. This is a very serious step to take. Please think it through thoroughly, and carefully consider the long term consequences of this decision. The direction your life goes now will start to take on implications that relate directly to your personal relationship with God, and ultimately, even your Eternal life. When and if you do decide to come back to Global, you will need to contact me so we can resolve the conflicts that stand in the way of your attending Church and being a part of helping us finish God's Work while we still have time.

If you ever want to meet with us, at any time, or if we can help and serve you in any way, we will gladly do so. Just let us know. That would be very good news indeed. In the meantime, we will continue to pray for you and hope that you will yield more fully into God's hands so He can lead you back into His Church and guide you in the way of life He has called you to live—the way of peace, happiness, and finally, joy in His glorious Kingdom.

In Christian love,
[signature]
Charles E. Bryce
[address and telephone]

ple with it. But the numbers are in the **hundreds of people** and the cost is in the **millions of dollars**—tens of thousands of dollars per new baptism. They provide Sabbath services and Feasts for many, though most services are video-taped. Even though they have many educated and talented people, they are doing little to train new leaders to conduct local services and evangelism. Many of the GCG headquarters leaders are in their 70's. The GCG's prospect for long-term continuance does not seem good.

The United Church of God—AIA

The United Church of God—An International Association is proving to be less united than all of its founders hoped. Numerous events have taken place since the last *Servants' News* issue. We highly recommend reading *The Journal* (see information on page 21) for more details. Here, we provide a summary with a bit of commentary.

Shortly before UCG-AIA's March 7-10 general conference meeting, Steven Andrews attempted to submit a resolution that would have essentially given the group one-man rule (by then-president David Hulme). A resolution requires only a simple majority to pass, but such massive changes are required by the constitution to be submitted as amendments—which require a 2/3 majority to pass. Had this resolution been put to a vote and actually achieved a simple majority, it could have easily been challenged as invalid—and the entire operating structure of the UCG would have been in doubt. Fortunately, this was avoided. We have to ask the question: if the Eternal is going to establish "His Hierarchical Church Government", would He do it by having people vote it into existence—under questionable circumstances?

At the March 7-9 general conference, the four members of the UCG-AIA Council of Elders whose term expired were all returned to office (Victor Kubik, Les McCullough, Burk McNair, and Leon Walker). However, shortly after the conference, David Hulme and Peter Nathan resigned from their positions on the Council of elders. Hulme initially said that he was not planning to start his own group, but then, why does a person resign from a group when, only days earlier, he was seeking to gain nearly complete control over it? Another election

was held to replace the vacated Council positions. Aaron Dean was chosen to replace Hulme, but there was a tie for Peter Nathan's replacement. It was the council of Elder's duty to vote to break the tie, but their initial vote also ended in a tie. (Is it now easier to understand why the Apostles cast lots in Acts 1 for Judas' replacement?) After a couple more votes, the Council chose Joel Meeker.

Backing up to the UCG conference again for a moment, Joel Meeker had a very interesting role. Some time into a question & answer session, he stood up, asking the chairman (Bob Dick), to address a point of order: Why was Dixon Cartwright, who was not an ordained elder of the UCG-AIA, allowed to attend the meeting? Even though Cartwright had been at nearly every session of every UCG-AIA general conference from its beginning, and even though the entire Council knew that, Bob Dick could not come up with the right words to say: "It's O.K." Being pressed by Meeker, Dick asked Cartwright to leave. Cartwright said that he would rather stay (it would have been better if he would have asked permission to stay, but it is hard to think of everything at once). Bob Dick explained that if he did not leave, he would have to call the hotel security team. Cartwright agreed to leave when the security team arrived, and did so. The security team was a little baffled by it all, but the meetings continued on.

It was not long after the conference until local congregations and individuals began complaining about the removal of David Hulme and the "suppression" of the pilot TV program that he made. *Servants' News* erroneously reported last issue that Hulme saw himself as commissioned with preaching a "powerful end-time warning." There is very little in his pilot program that would be offensive—and very little that would identify it with "Church of God" doctrine. Hulme apparently does believe he has a commission of sorts, but his program could not be classified as a "powerful warning". Rather, it is an extremely well-produced video about the basic story of the Gospels, with modern day shots for geographical and archeological support. The film was so good, that it won a 1998 Cindy (cinema in industry) award in the category of Religion and Ethics. It was a little unusual that another corporation, Century One, also took credit on their

Internet site for winning the Cindy award for this film, but that part of the Internet site quickly disappeared after it was noticed by UCG members. Apparently, the UCG-AIA Council of Elders had no prior knowledge of Century One's involvement. However, Hulme wrote the scripts for this program and 12 others before joining UCG, so he will probably be free to re-shoot the first program and produce all of the others.

A few weeks later, David Hulme agreed to "serve" all of the many people who were leaving the UCG-AIA in support of him. As of this writing, there are about 20 congregations and over 1000 people. (Please see *The Journal* for a complete list of congregations—address is on page 21.) The initial letter that he wrote to these members is reprinted on page 26. He has chosen the name *Church of God* which will be extremely confusing—how does one know if they are talking about the one spiritual Church of God, or about Hulme's corporation (they might want you to believe there is no difference, but I think even most of their members are beyond that stage). Since the name is so unclear, other writers are forced to add their own qualifiers to designate what they mean: *Church of God* (Hulme). (Similarly, the *Church of God Outreach Ministries* used to call themselves *The Churches of God*, but abandoned the name due to the confusion after a little more than one year.)

This writer believes that during the process of separation, many mistakes were made both on the part of the UCG-AIA and Hulme & followers. Hulme controlled UCG-AIA's *New Beginnings* publication, so it contained largely his view. Council members sometimes "leaked" executive session information to *The Journal*. People were treated unfairly on both sides. Nevertheless, the separation is probably much better than continual infighting. Hulme is now free to produce his broadcast exactly as he sees fit. If the Eternal is behind it, it will have the funding it needs and will reach its intended audience. It may be only a stepping-stone to future, more hard-hitting series. On the other hand, it could fail. We believe it will have its best chance of success if Hulme runs it as "ministry" rather than a "church", leaving those who support him free to fellowship with the congregation of their choice.

If Hulme claims that **he is God's one**

or main human leader, he has a lot of hard questions to answer: If he did not believe that God would work through a council-run government, or if he did not want to work under the Council of Elders as the UCG-AIA constitution and bylaws clearly spell out, then why did he accept the job? If he claims that he thought the UCG government was right to begin with, but learned by experience that it was wrong, what makes him think that God has suddenly appointed him to lead His Government now? Would not God use someone like Rod Meredith, who has preached hierarchical government for nearly 50 years? Nearly all UCG leaders claimed that God was involved in the elders choosing the council and the council choosing the president. When did the council cease to be inspired? How were the members supposed to know when "inspiration stopped"?

In any case, it is ironic that Hulme, who was so against independent evangelism in the UCG-AIA, has now started his own independent evangelism. Those interested in more information can find it on the Internet at **www.Church-of-God.com**. (You may need your dictionary. It contains quotes like this: "This desideratum implies nothing less than a paradigmatic shift in the basic perceptions, aims, and methods of established Christian scholarship.")

Now that Hulme (who opposed moving) is out of the UCG-AIA, they have made progress in their move to Cincinnati. They have signed a letter of intent for a 6000 sq.ft. facility that will cut their monthly rental cost from \$10,500 to \$6900. Some of the office could be moved as early as July. About the time of these announcements, the UCG witnessed a surge in income—it appeared that members regained more confidence in the group's willingness to do what they had promised in previous conferences.

Unfortunately, the UCG-AIA also began moving against efforts in local congregations in a variety of ways. Things that Hulme only talked about doing, they have now done. This comes as kind of a shock at this time. How can the UCG-AIA council try to stop all evangelism and teaching beside their own? Do they really believe that they are the one government through which God is working? If so, why did God inspire them to elect David Hulme president only to fire him about two years later?

This writer hopes that the original "spirit of Indianapolis" could be recaptured, and that the UCG home office would become a central "service facility" for congregations, rather than a boss for them. But it is hard for people to change when they have done something one way for many years. Here is a summary of recent UCG-AIA policies to establish central control:

1) Associated church status only applies to international congregations—local congregations must either be subject to the UCG-AIA or not associated at all.

2) Ministers will receive eight weeks severance pay if they are laid off in good standing, but no severance pay if they quit or are made non-UCG-AIA-members. (This makes it more difficult for a minister who believes he can serve his congregation better by taking a job independently from UCG-AIA. If the home office finds out he is looking for a job, they can fire him with no severance pay.)

3) Local congregations must disclose the amount of all funds held locally, including building and local evangelism funds. (There may be no legal requirement for separately organized local congregations to report these funds, but ministers who do not cooperate will probably be reminded of point 2, above.)

4) All local media—radio, TV, magazines, etc., must now be approved by UCG-AIA headquarters. Programs not approved by August must stop.

5) UCG continues to try to take control away from the boards in local congregations.

The most notable case of the above is the attempt by Richard Pinelli, head of ministerial services, to replace the popular pastor of the Big Sandy, Texas congregation, David Havir—with only one week's notice. The Big Sandy congregation's board simply told headquarters representatives that Havir was still the pastor of their congregation, and that they would meet with headquarters representatives if they would agree to do it with the entire congregation would be present. After several attempts to arrange a meeting, president Les McCullough, and Council members Aaron Dean, Leon Walker, Don Ward, and ministers Doug Horchak and Roy Holladay met with the Big Sandy congregation for 4 hours on Saturday, May 9. At the end of the meeting, neither David Havir nor the brethren knew why the UCG-AIA wanted to remove him. The Council claimed that

they could not discuss council "executive session" matters, but seemed to have no regard for the clear Biblical instruction on the matter (Matt 18:15-17; 1Tim 5:20-21; Gal 2:11).

This meeting was unique in WCG-split history in that the members of a large congregation were able to have an open forum with the top leaders of an organization and specifically ask why they were running the organization the way they were. After sitting through this long meeting, one of the Big Sandy members said: "I have never heard so many excuses in my life. 'I was not there when that decision was made.' 'I don't know who decided that.' 'I was out of the country then.'" If these leaders cannot explain why their actions are right to a group of human beings, how will they explain them to the Eternal?

The Big Sandy congregation is well into its plans for a local building. This has been a sore point to other areas, particularly UCG in England, who believe the building money should be used to preach the Gospel. On the other hand, England has six UCG ministers but fewer members than the Big Sandy congregation. Should they fire some ministers to free up money to preach the Gospel? Or should each area simply tend to its own business and ask the Eternal to lead them? Apparently, the UCG headquarters has the choice of letting Havir continue as the UCG pastor, or seeing the Big Sandy congregation become independent.

It is interesting to note that most GCG members came to the GCG as individuals and left as individuals. Most UCG members came with a congregation, and are leaving as congregations (some with Hulme, some independent). During the early days of nearly every new church group, there were eager expectations—the weight of problems associated with the old organization are suddenly gone, new people serve in new functions and do so diligently, some mistakes are corrected, people used to being ignored are heard, etc., etc. But so often, new sets of problems and disagreements seem to overtake the organization, and a split is again likely. Almost nobody enjoys an organizational split—most wish all of these messy problems would just go away. But it seems that neither ignoring them, nor actively trying to do something about them makes the problems go away.

What Happened to the Good Old Days?

Do people still long for the “good old days” when the WCG was the church and everyone’s role was clearly defined? Do you remember the confidence that most members of the Worldwide Church of God used to have? Their thinking often went something like this.

1) They were sure that they were members of “God’s One True Church” because they were allowed to participate in WCG Passover services every year and because they received “member” letters from headquarters.

2) They felt that they had “done their part” in **sacrificing** to become a part of “The Church”: giving 10 to 35% of their income in tithes and offerings; giving up unclean foods, Saturday activities, smoking, dirty movies, etc. Some members actually gave up their spouse, their job, their profession, or their life savings.

3) They felt they had a thorough understanding of the Bible—better than any other church. If a local minister could not answer a Bible question, certainly headquarters could. If headquarters could not, then—

4) “God’s apostle” was the human head of the “Church,” and any major decisions he made were certainly “God’s will.”

5) They believed they were the only group preaching the Gospel to the world. (Other smaller groups preaching similar messages usually escaped nearly all WCG members’ attention since they were taught not to read other religious literature.)

6) They believed that upstanding WCG members would be protected through the Great Tribulation, and would rise into the air to meet Christ when He returns to reign on Earth.

In some ways, it seemed like a “good package.” If one expended the effort to live by the WCG standards (church attendance, tithes, food laws, etc.), then he or she could feel confident that they would be divinely protected both in this life and in the world to come. The large amounts of money sent to a central headquarters made possible one of the largest religious media campaigns of all time. (They also made possible one of the most extravagant life styles lived by any religious leader.)

Why is Yesterday’s Approach Not Working Today?

Most of the WCG splinter groups are
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zealously trying to regain the glory days of the WCG. They hope to establish such a big and powerful media work that all other groups will acknowledge them as the one true work of God. If people thought there was only one true work, then they would have to stay there no matter what. When controversies about doctrine or local evangelism arose, headquarters would simply be free to dictate an answer and members would have no choice other than to accept it.

But unless the Eternal works some miracle, that will not happen in our lifetime. **Today, multiple similar Sabbatarian congregations are a fact of life. Just because church leaders often act as if it is not true does not make it any less true.** If a member (or minister) of a Sabbatarian organization is told by his headquarters that to do some specific thing or be “put out,” it is unlikely that he will think: “Oh, no! I must go along or I’m going to lose Eternal life.” Today, it is more likely that he will think: “If I don’t go along, I am going to miss my friends in this group, and I will have to find a new group with which to fellowship.”

Many WCG-split groups claim to be “the main successor” to the Worldwide Church of God and specifically, to Herbert Armstrong. **But no major WCG splinter-group that we know of is attempting to start their organization in the way that Herbert Armstrong STARTED his!**

Herbert Armstrong never claimed to have received a divine message telling him he had to separate from the Church of God, 7th day (CG7). He did it so he could preach doctrines that the CG7 did not want to preach. If he believed that “God only works through one human government” during the 1930’s, he would have never taught anything in opposition to the CG7 and might have died nearly unknown. As it was, Herbert Armstrong did not start his ministry by mounting a massive campaign to somehow gain control of the CG7 or its budget. He did not start by forming a new corporation and trying to get the CG7 members to come to him. He did not try to get CG7 ministers to join his organization. (As a matter of fact, he did not start a corporation until many years later!) He did not even try to get a local congregation to guarantee him a salary!

Herbert Armstrong started out by throwing his whole life into studying,

writing and speaking on biblical truth. Many will claim he was a man full of faith. Others will say he simply had a big ego, and some will say he got into religion for money. Our Savior will judge his motives—we do not have to. But nobody can deny that he put great energy into his work, constantly talking and writing about it—to **whomever would listen.** Thousands of people saw him as a man committed to doing and teaching what he understood to be right. During his early years, he would write for thousands of people, but he still had time to talk to individuals. He did not simply try to convert Sabbatarians to his way of thinking—he reached out to Sunday-keepers and people with little religion at all.

What are the WCG split-groups like today? **Are they full of leaders desperately trying to teach the Bible to others whether they are paid or not?** Or are they full of leaders concerned about salaries, benefits, collection of tithes, and control of organizations. Are there numerous men each trying to preach the Gospel to the world, or are there numerous men trying to control and regulate the Gospel-preaching of others?

Summary

Today we find most of the Major WCG splinter-groups trying to regain the “glory days of the WCG.” It is not working, but they keep trying harder. In general, the people who are the most “on fire” for the Eternal are the ones who are asking for the most changes. So often, it is these same people who end up leaving. Is it possible that we have made assumptions about what a church organization should be? What does the Bible really say about organizations, ministers, and ordination. **You need to know.** For a thorough study of this subject in the scriptures, please ask for our literature re: *How Does the Eternal Govern Through Humans?* Even if you do not have time to read the paper, its charts and tables give a quick overview of the scriptures.

Also, please read the article beginning on the bottom of page 1. It discusses other assumptions that we as former WCG members may have made.

Our Father loves all of us, but we must work with Him in the way He chooses to work with us. “And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart” (Jer 29:13).

—Norman S. Edwards

David Hulme Letter About His New Organization: “Church of God”

[with comments added by Norman S. Edwards in this style of type]

CHURCH OF GOD, Post Office Box 150, Monrovia, Ca, 91017
David Hulme
Evangelist

April 15, 1998

Dear fellow elders of the Church of God,

I am delighted to be able to send this first official letter to you as a start is made on a viable Work once more. I don't need to tell you of the turmoil of the past few weeks. I hope that the pathway to better times will be as smooth as possible for everyone. Certainly the congregations that I have attended in the past few days have been at peace. Following are the attendance figures as we know them to date (additional groups are forming in a number of places as I write).

[Apparently, Hulme considers the UCG-AIA no longer “viable”. Note that nearly all groups start out “at peace”. Difficulty comes when decisions must be made. Will all of Hulme’s members still be at peace if he finances his TV production from (and yields some control of it to) an outside corporation?]

	Passover	First Holy Day
Arcadia/Glendale, CA	117	190
Oakland, CA	98	155
Modesto, CA	—	137
Salem, OR	22	33
Roseburg (& Coos Bay), OR	28	43
Coos Bay, OR	11	—
Boise, ID	13	15
Rapid City, SD	15	21
Franklin Lakes, NJ	23	42
Allentown, PA	13	26
[totals	340	662]

The ministers who have committed to serving the Church of God include: John Anderson, Steve Andrews, Waldo Armstrong, Don Billingsley, Ted Budge, Wayne Carlson, John Christopherson, Steve Elliott, Dick Emery, Wade Fransson, C.L. Handy, Steve Le Blanc, Dave O'Malley, Brian Orchard, Mike Regan, Edwin Stepp, and Pete Wolf.

In relation to all that has happened, a number of questions continue to be asked by ministers and members. I thought it would be helpful if I would share some of my responses with you.

Q. It has been mentioned to me by a few people that you said you weren't going to leave United and now you have. To them, this demonstrates that you broke your word and can't be trusted. To me, it means you had a good reason! Could you please let me know why you left?

A. I resigned from the Council of Elders for reasons of conscience. I could no longer support a governance structure that I believe has failed. I have had to admit that Herbert W. Armstrong was right in Mystery of the Ages, especially chapter six, where he describes a proven form of government for the Church, (see p. 247). It was also increasingly difficult to participate with men with whom I had less and less in common about how the job of president should be done. A council cannot run the day to day affairs of a church very successfully, and two cannot walk together unless they are agreed.

[Steve Andrews and Hulme were the principle architects of the UCG constitution and bylaws. If they are admitting that system “failed” after admonishing others to support it for almost three years, why should anyone be in a hurry to support a new system of government being tested by Andrews and Hulme?]

[Armstrong's system of government did not work—God did not correct the “man at the top” as Armstrong promised—Hulme and

others had to leave it. A reading through the Government chapter of Mystery of the Ages shows many points with no scriptural support, and interpretations not compatible with the meaning of the Greek text.]

[The unity statement Hulme signed said: “As a member of the Council of Elders, I am committed to pursuing Godly unity which is essential in the Church. I therefore renounce divisions and schisms as a means of solving our differences just as the apostle Paul powerfully wrote in I Corinthians 1:10-14.” He did not promise a relationship with the council, but promised not to create divisions. Is starting a new group with separate services and separate leadership a “division”?]

I don't think I said that I wouldn't leave United. I signed a unity statement in good faith in November, believing that we should give the relationship another chance. But in my opinion others did not exhibit good faith in their behavior through the next few weeks. Obviously I must agree with the apostle Paul that there should not be divisions among us. I have not created a division. On the other hand Paul and Barnabas separated over the matter of taking John Mark with them. There are times when brothers separate for their mutual good. There is also the example of Abraham and Lot when their herdsmen could no longer dwell in the same area together. The solution was to separate. There is no reason, however, that there cannot be cordiality and an amicable relationship.

[Hulme is right in that God does work independently through a variety of leaders in New and Old Testaments. But, as Paul continued to recognize Barnabas as a believer, will Hulme recognize other groups as believers and allow his members to attend other group's services and feasts—or to send money to other groups? He said “I have not created a division”. Does he believe that the people created the division? Over the past years, when members of local congregations asked their pastor to “go independent”, Hulme told pastor and members alike that they were causing division--is he still preaching this? Or has he made an exception for himself? Hulme could claim that if everyone had followed his inspired leadership there would be no division—but every religious leader in the world can claim that, too.]

Q. I thought you said you weren't going to start a church. I've heard that you incorporated on April 3rd.

A. There is no incorporation at this point, and no papers have been filed. It is very likely, however, that incorporation will occur in the near future. While it is possible to function as an unincorporated church, there are distinct advantages to incorporation.

My comments about not starting a church need to be given context. After my removal from office and my resignation from the Council of Elders and employment with the United Church of God, an International Association, it was not my intention to do anything in terms of taking up the leadership of a group of people unless it became clear that it was the right thing to do. I do not believe that anyone should take it upon himself to lead in that way. Through prayer and God's inspiration of His people, I believed it would become clear what the future would be for those who were becoming increasingly disaffected. The emergence of a group of people who are part of the spiritual organism was a spontaneous response to recent events. After several had asked for leadership, one group formalized the requests that had been made to me. I concluded that these were God's people who needed help, and that I would help them whether we became an official church or not. As things have progressed it has become evident that a new incorporation will be

necessary. The ministry who have also stepped forward to help God's people, feel as I do, and agree that this is not a charge that can be ignored.

[If a large group of people ask someone to provide a religious service for them, and that person thinks it is the Eternal's will, I believe they should do it. Does Hulme then recognize Ray Wooten's Ron Dart's, Jim Rector's, and Norm Edwards' ministries because they started in a similar fashion? Also, does anyone know what kind of livelihood David Hulme was considering before these people unexpectedly asked him to serve them?]

Q. What does the Church of God stand for? What are your plans?

A. For the past three years I have written about the Work of the Church in terms of 1) seeking out the maximum opportunities to preach the Gospel, and 2) becoming a Godly community in preparation for the coming of God's Kingdom on the earth. These are the priorities we intend to pursue much more vigorously.

This will mean working diligently at producing publications designed for the world we live in, expressing the truth in terms people can understand. It will mean using television, the Internet, and new technologies, as they become available. It will also mean that the ministry will focus much more on building up and encouraging the spiritual resources of God's people in preparation for the return of Christ.

[We hope he achieves these worthy goals. We hope he recognizes that others are attempting to achieve them also.]

Q. What are the criteria for hiring ministers into the Church of God?

A. At this point there is so little in the bank and virtually no way of knowing what the cash flow will be, that it is premature to speak of hiring anyone. We also want to put high priority on getting out the message. The point of your question though is, I'm sure, whether or not ministers will be recognized and hired without some kind of credentialing process. I and an executive team of advisors will certainly discuss each person who might be considered for a paid position. We will also discuss each person who wishes to have his ministerial credentials accepted by the Church of God. Among other requirements, each applicant will have to give assurances on the basic doctrines that Herbert W. Armstrong learned and taught from the scriptures during his years as leader.

[Notice how "ministerial credentials" are the control mechanism of organizations—you cannot find them in the Bible. For a thorough explanation, Ask Servants'

News for a copy of How Does the Eternal Govern Through Humans? Herbert Armstrong taught government from the scriptures in his 1939 article—his later government teachings were based on creative scriptural interpretations and non-biblical ideas.]

Q. Will all tithes from members of each congregation be required to be sent in to headquarters?

A. Yes. In the first few weeks it may be necessary to have local congregations handle some of their own costs until the accounting system is up and running, but the intention is to have centralized collection of tithes and offerings.

Q. What will be the Church of God policy on disfellowshipping? Will we have to have bylaws before troublemakers can be attended to?

A. The Bible is clear about the grounds for disfellowshipping. The Bible is the guide to policy. The Bible comes first, bylaws a distant second.

[Does Hulme plan to use the procedure in Matthew 18:15-17 for disfellowshipping? Why did he not in UCG-AIA?]

Q. Are there any Feast of Tabernacles plans in the making?

A. Plans are definitely in the making. This week tentative sites have been discussed. We may have one large site for the U.S. or two or more geographically spread. The choice of sites will be under God's direction—where He places His name. At this point it is too early to speculate regarding international Feast sites, except to say that it does appear likely that we will need some.

Q. It has been rumored that you made the TV pilot program without the Council's approval. I personally have a hard time believing this because we were given constant updates in Eagle Rock until suddenly it was never mentioned again. I told others this. But in my attempts to defend you, I would like to be accurate. Could you please tell me what happened?

A. In January 1996 the Strategic Planning Committee of the Council put the TV pilot on the fast track for action that year. The committee's chairman was Roy Holladay. The members were Jim Franks, Doug Horchak, Dennis Luker, Peter Nathan, and me. Sometimes Bob Dick would be involved in the meetings. This represented half of the Council. Also present at times were Steve Andrews, Edwin Stepp and Steve Sidars. I first mentioned the pilot concept in June 1995 to the whole interim council. It was written up in New Beginnings that month. The funds that came in at the Feast of Tabernacles in 1995 were

designated mostly for preaching the Gospel with a lesser amount for the General Conference. So there were restricted funds set aside for preaching the Gospel. In April we leased video-editing equipment to do work on the TV pilot. This was fully one month before I left for Israel. Three members of the Executive Committee approved the lease. They were Bob Dick, Dennis Luker and myself. The fourth member of the committee, Doug Horchak, was not available that day. In May at the Birmingham Council meetings I informed the Council that in three days time I was leaving to go to Israel to begin taping the pilot program. Once there I sent back reports each week to the Council about the trip. Several Council members responded with encouraging comments. In June 1996 the Council reviewed the lease agreement for the video-editing equipment. A month or two later the Strategic Planning Committee saw the first edited version of the program. At the Feast in 1996 excerpts of the pilot, with commentary on the purpose and approach, were shown in the Feast video. It was not until December of that year that complaints about the pilot began to be heard.

[If you read the above, you find that it was mostly the same group of people dealing with the video—the whole council was never asked to approve it—either for evangelism or showing to members.]

Q. We were wondering if we could get on a mailing list to receive tapes of sermons or videos and could we also get the address?

A. Yes, you can get tapes. We will put you on the list for weekly audiotapes. If you need videos, please let us know. The address is:

Church of God, P.O. Box 150
Monrovia, Ca 91017

As you can see from the questions, there is a great deal of interest in where we are going and in what has happened over the past few months. This past week we processed the first few days of mail income and the Holy Day offerings from two congregations. We are very grateful for the generosity of God's People.

Thanks for your commitment to serving God's people in another difficult time. This coming Holy Day and weekly Sabbath my wife and I will be in El Paso. We look forward to meeting all of you where you are in the near future.

With love and respect in Christ's service,

David Hulme

[These activities remind me of helping to start the GCG. I hope things will go better for this group.

—NSE] 

“Does the Eternal Have to Use Us to Preach His End-time Message?” from page 1

the world before “the end” comes? Or could he raise up a new group of people who have never been a part of the WCG? If the Eternal is able to raise up stones to become children of Abraham, (Matt 3:9), He can certainly raise up people to preach His message.

Most Splinter Groups Not Ready for New Members

Most WCG splinter-groups talk about wanting to evangelize, and some have broadcasts and magazines. But how much attention have they given to the kind of environment that they would bring new members into? If a new person or family begins to attend such a group, the messages will likely not apply to them. Headquarters video sermons are often about government, loyalty, “news of the work”, tithing, or rather “advanced” doctrines. Local speakers have the choice of preaching to the majority of their membership (who have been Sabbatharians for decades) or preaching to the very few new people while boring their congregation.

The truth of the matter is that “Sabbatharians for decades” should now be teachers themselves (Heb 5:12), but most have had neither training nor permission to teach or counsel others.

Many long-time Sabbatharians don’t even know how to talk to a new member—much less teach. Not long ago, a person just beginning to attend a Sabbatharian group was invited to attend the “Night to be Much Observed”. Not understanding the doctrine, she brought a leavened dish for the meal. When she took the lid off to show the people, they scrambled away from her like she had brought a biological weapons bomb. She was hurt so much by the way they treated her innocent mistake that she eventually stopped attending the group.

Also, the subject of many of the spoken and written messages of many WCG splinter-groups is **completely baffling to new members**. These groups put much effort into trying to keep people coming to their own organization. Yet, the difference between Protestant groups and Church of God groups is so great and the difference between the various Church of God

groups is so small that a new person would wonder what all of the fuss is about. When a person is just learning about the Sabbath, Kingdom of God, and other doctrines from the Bible, can you imagine trying to explain to them from the Bible why it is good to (for example) go to the UCG-AIA, but bad to go to the Global Church of God? The new person may want to attend both to learn more. What will he think when he finds out that the members from these groups are highly discouraged from or forbidden to mix with each other? Where is the love for each other that Christ said his followers would have?

Most groups answer this by saying that they are trying to preach the Gospel message in such a powerful way that they will begin to have lots of new members, and everyone will rally around the mighty work that is being done. But that seems to become a more and more remote possibility with the formation of each new group—and the passing of each new year.

Rather than being diligent to “reach out to others no matter what” as Herbert Armstrong did during his early years, these groups often perpetuate the major errors that caused the current collapse of the organization Armstrong founded. What were these errors:

1. Herbert Armstrong too often did not practice what he preached. He asked others to sacrifice financially while **at the same time** he and his friends lived in luxury. He tried to cover up the sins in his family, while disfellowshipping others who committed the same sins.

2. Herbert Armstrong let his accomplishments go to his head—he did not retain the humility and respect for other teachers of the brethren as the apostles Peter and Paul did. He claimed to be the human head of God’s hierarchical government, even though he showed that system came from Rome in his 1939 article on government. (A free copy of that article is available from *Servants’ News*.)

3. Herbert Armstrong built a church and college that, in the end, trained people to be Herbert Armstrong followers. **He did not encourage people to accept Christ’s promise of personal guidance, nor to develop the same zeal and pioneering spirit that he had!**

What Needs To Be Done?

From his knowledge of the Church groups, and his study of the Bible, this writer is utterly convinced that the **inability of these groups to keep content members and to preach the gospel to new people will continue** until some major changes are made. Either the leaders will have to change, or the people will have to change and abandon the leaders.

Christ asked John to write seven letters to seven real church congregations (Rev 1:11). These letters no doubt applied specifically to each congregation to which they were written. But every church was told to listen to every letter (Rev 2:7,11,17,29; 3:6,13,22). Is there a letter that applies to the organizations now attempting to imitate the WCG as it was in the 1970s and 80s?

I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot (Rev 3:15).

How many leaders or members in your organization work diligently, even if there is little or no pay? How many are busy serving others, teaching others, counseling others, helping others no matter what group they attend? When the apostle Paul found the Corinthian church aligning themselves with certain teachers, did he serve only those who aligned themselves with him? (1Cor 1:11-21.) No, he served them all and taught them to look to Christ! Most groups of today **are doing or want to do** some kind of works—they are not “cold”. But they do not “do the work as if their life depended on it”—they are not hot either!

So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth (Rev 3:16).

Has all of the arguing among and about church groups made you so depressed that you feel that Christ has vomited you out of his mouth? If so, that may be good. Keep reading!

Because you say, “I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing”—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked—I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and

anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see (Rev 14:17-18).

This verse is obviously referring to spiritual wealth—Christ's gifts and blessings. People who are physically poor, blind, or naked always know it—and Christ does not sell physical gold. This obviously relates to Paul's teaching about doing spiritual work with gold, silver and precious stones (1Cor 3:12-15). Herbert Armstrong's work seems like a wooden building adorned with some precious materials. It lasted a while, but when trials came, **it caught fire and burned**—leaving the gold, silver, and precious stones to drop to the ground. A new, but much smaller building needs to be built from these purified precious materials—it will not work to keep trying to stick them back on a wood, hay or stubble building.

One leader of a major splinter group told this writer that they had 90% to 95% of the truth of the Bible. The other big groups seem to act the same way. They think they have nearly all the truth. They think they know how to "run a Church". They think they know how to preach the gospel. In general, they are not being very successful, but they seem blind to that fact. Organizations have "fasts for their income", but rarely ever have fasts so that Christ will grant them spiritual gifts or so He will show their leaders what to do.

Real Faith That Christ Will Lead

A leader in one organization wrote an extensive paper covering all of the New Testament scriptures about how God rules His Church. Every time he came across one of the many scriptures where Christ miraculously guided His people, his comment was: "God is not working that way today." Yet you can find numerous successful ministries (mostly small) which have helped many people and were started based on what they believe was "a word from God". Did **all** of these people really hear from God? Probably not. Did **some** of them? Probably so. There are many miraculous stories that are hard to deny. Leaders who have no direct guidance from God, and who claim that He does not provide it today, may well appear "naked" before many people who know that they have had it.

As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and

repent (Rev 3:19).

If you have been shaken and distressed by all of these events in the church groups, rejoice! Christ loves you! He is chastening you! But you have to repent. You have to repent of trusting in men, organizations, programs, and policies, and not in Christ. You have to ask him to learn about the spiritual gifts that He uses to do His work (Rom 12, 1Cor 12-14, Eph 4:1-16, 1Pet 4:7-11). This does not mean that you have to immediately leave the group you presently fellowship with. But it means that you have to pray for spiritual gifts and be willing to follow the direct guidance of the Holy Spirit in your life, no matter where it takes you. **If Christ grants you a gift, but an organization says that you are not allowed to use it, you have to obey God rather than men.**

Behold, I [Christ] stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me. To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches (Rev 3:20-22).

Notice that Christ's invitation is to individuals! It is not to the "angel" (messenger) or leader of the church, but to "anyone [who] hears my voice and opens the door". **If you are waiting for a group or for somebody else to open the door for you, it may never happen!** Every letter to the seven churches ends with "...let he who has ears to hear listen...". Christ is able to do His work. He is able to use you to do His work.

Others Already Doing the Job

There are numerous Bible-believing Christians who have learned about the Sabbath, Holy Days, unclean meats, baptism, etc., simply from reading their Bibles. Some are dropping the non-Christian holidays also. This writer knows of public schools which have stopped all Halloween activities because a significant number of parents have complained that it is simple demonism. These Bible-reading Christians are beginning to teach these new-found truths in simple publications and videos. As far as we know, none of

them are claiming to be the "one true Church of God". They just seem anxious to teach what they have learned. In a later *Servants' News* we will list a number of such ministries.

Indeed, very few have probably learned as much truth as the typical Church of God member understands. But many seem **ahead of the typical Church of God member when it comes to faith that Christ is directly guiding their lives and ministries.** Many see themselves as just small parts of His great message; larger Church of God groups often see themselves as the one group that has the right to receive tithes and preach the Gospel worldwide.

Please think for a moment. **Whom did our Savior choose to be His disciples?** Was it the men with the best understanding of the scriptures in his day? The scribes probably had more of the Bible memorized than anyone else. Except for Paul, our Savior chose less-educated, honest, working men who would trust in Him. Whom do you think the Eternal will choose to teach and warn the world in our day? Would you choose a people who knew a lot of truth, but were forever fighting about who is in charge, who gets the money, exactly what truth should be taught, and who should teach it and how? **Or would you choose a people who knew less truth, but were full of faith, eager to be taught more, and diligent to work in whatever way He would lead?**

The best people to choose would be those who both know a lot of truth **and** who were full of faith and ready to be led by Christ. **We can be those people!** But He will not force us. We must accept that the Eternal has broken up the Worldwide Church of God beyond any possibility of human repair—and He is not repairing it. Rather than large groups, small groups, or even individuals trying to act like a bunch of little WCG's, we need to ask our Savior to show us what He wants us to do. We need to trust Him to take care of us—even if that means departing from old familiar methods. We need to read about how the gospel was preached in the New Testament. Rather than paying someone else to take on most of the spiritual responsibility, we can speak up and ask to be personally involved!

—Norman S. Edwards

Partial Literature List

All items are free upon request. All back issues of *Servants' News* are available as well as a **Complete Literature List**.

Our goal is to bring worthwhile information to as many as want it at the lowest practical cost. The loose-leaf format used by *Servants' News* and most of the literature below is inexpensive and makes copying easy (most literature is public domain). You might wish to hold the pages together with a 3-ring binder, staples, brads or a paper

Items Appearing For the First Time:

Mature Literature

- How Does The Eternal Govern Through Humans?** by Norman Edwards. Revised Version—much new information including charts of usage of “ordain” in 7 translations. What does the Bible really say about church government?
- Is Chistianity a Fraud? A Preliminary Assessment of the ConderThesis**, by Eric V. Snow, 136 pages. Now includes effective rebuttal to Conder's *By Gosh Josh*.
- The Theological Marketplace of Ideas or, the Three “C’s” of Ministry** by F. Paul Haney, 11 pages. What is necessary for

former WCG members to reach the world with the Gospel?

Study Resources and Information:

- Freedom Biblical Information Center Catalog** by Wayne Schatzle, 12 pages. Primarily Sabbatarian groups that give away free literature, tapes and/or catalogs.
- Learning Together Newsletter** by Ron Wilson, 20 pages. Bible study, inspirational, and personal growth articles written by a variety of Sabbatarians.
- WCG Hymnal (Dwight Armstrong)**. We have a new supply of these again. Let us know how many you need.

Items Featured This Issue (always available):

Mature Literature

- The Apple of God's Eye** by Jim Rector, 13 pages. God's love is greater than we imagine, and we often take it for granted.
- A Call to Arms** by Jim Rector, 16 pages. Lessons for today from Revelation 2-3 including the oppressive doctrine of the Nicolaitans and the doctrine of Balaam.
- Basic Bible Study Tools** by Richard Nickels, 36 pages. An excellent summary of available Bible study aids and how to use them. Samples of many study aids included.
- Christ's Birth—Hanukkah—and the New Testament Believer** by Eric Paschall, 5 pages. Our Messiah was conceived near Hanukkah and born near Tabernacles.
- Church Government?** by Wesley Webster, 32 pages. Member, minister & historian show dangers of religious hierarchy.
- Confirming Conversion (confirming New Testament teaching through current experience)** by Alan Ruth, 18 pages.
- Does the New Covenant Do Away with the Letter of the Law?** by Eric V. Snow, 42 pages—revised Jan. 1996. A “must read” for those who feel it does.
- The Elijah to Come** by Richard Nickels, 12 pages. Shows similarity between Elijah, John the Baptist, and difference

between those two and Herbert Armstrong.

- Herbert W. Armstrong: 1892-1986** by Richard Nickels, 22 pages. Respectful, balanced biography giving good and bad.
- Just What Does the New Covenant Do?** by Joseph Chunko, 18 pages. Explanation of the difference between the law, the Old Covenant and the New Covenant.
- Rebuttal to the Worldwide News (12/19/95) Article by Ralph Orr: United States and Britain in Prophecy** by Steven M. Collins, 12 pages.
- The Remnant of Israel, An Analysis of G.G. Ruppert** by Richard Nickels, 36 pages. In the early 1900s, Ruppert taught doctrines similar to those of Herbert Armstrong.
- The Seven Eras of Ancient Israel—Type of the Eras of the True Church** by Craig White, 8 pages.
- Should God's People be Assertive?** by David Antion, 2 pages. Use your God-given understanding to be assertive without being aggressive. Article offers a free 6-tape set on the subject.
- Where Is the True Church Today?** by Jack M. Lane, 18 pages. How can there be so many similar groups, yet one true church? What is required of members? Read and see.

Highly Recommended Items Listed Every Issue:

Mature Literature

- Assembling on the Sabbath** by Norman S. Edwards, 16 pages. An exposition of the scriptures regarding our need to fellowship on the Sabbath and how to do it.
- Biblical Calendar Basics** by Norman S. Edwards, 10 pages. Introduction to the issues about the Biblical and Hebrew calendars (beginning of months, years, post-noments etc.)
- Did Christ Reorganize the Church?** by Herbert Armstrong in 1939, 8 pages. Very different than his later approach: Christ

never set up a hierarchical government.

- The Heart of the Matter** by Jim Rector, 31 pages. Our calling is to spiritual growth, not just attendance, socializing, politeness or legalism.
- How Do We Give to the Eternal?** by Richard Tafoya & Norman Edwards, 36 pages. Biblical study of giving and tithing.
- The Worldwide Church of God Splits: Their Triumphs and Troubles** by Alan Ruth, 56 pages. Facts and analysis of the last 20 years of “Church of God” history.
- Study Resources and Information**
- The Christian Beacon** One issue of free quar-

terly magazine on inspiration, Bible education, encouragement, and personal growth.

- Giving and Sharing Order Form** by Richard Nickels, 3 pages. Has many excellent free items, low prices on hard-to-find religious books, and fine literature on floppy disk.
- The Journal: News of the Churches of God** edited by Dixon Cartwright. One free sample issue. Best single source of news about Sabbath-keeping groups. 16 pages.
- Servants' News Statement of Receipts and Expenses**, 2 pages.
- Servants' News Complete Literature List & Index**, 40 pages.