

HERBERT W.
ARMSTRONG

His Life in Proper Perspective

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Millions around the world have heard his voice and read his writings. Some enshrine his memory, thinking they honor him. Others vilify him, trying to destroy his reputation—and attack any who dare to practice what he taught.

But who was Herbert W. Armstrong? What was his life's purpose—*role*—MISSION?

His attackers cannot tell you. And neither can those who worship him.

However, this book, which reflects Mr. Armstrong's life and his 52-year ministry of preaching the true gospel of Christ to the world, reveals *his life in proper perspective*.

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PREFACE

Many have asked us to explain our connection to Herbert W. Armstrong. Some have asked that we write a biography of his life. For some time, we felt this was largely unnecessary, because we cover so much of the latter years of his life in certain of our literature, and because it could also appear to be an attempt to focus attention too heavily on the *man* rather than on his *work* and *teachings*. Over time, our thinking and concern changed.

Here is why.

First, in the early 1960s, Mr. Armstrong did take the time to thoroughly write his own two-volume, 86-chapter autobiography of over 1,300 pages. Before circumstances forced him to discontinue writing it, in serial publication appearing monthly in *The Plain Truth* magazine, he had written nearly 1,100 pages—and this only took him to 1959, covering his early life and just the first half of his ministry. The final, almost 27 years of Mr. Armstrong’s life and ministry were represented in the last part of Volume Two by an assembly of Member/Co-Worker Letters and excerpts almost exclusively from his other writings, spanning this later period.

Why then write another book that is barely more than a synopsis, only one-tenth as long?

Mr. Armstrong’s compelling, fascinating and remarkable autobiography is no longer easily accessible. Its original copyright holders no longer wished to publish it, and the current holders no longer believe or

represent all the many doctrines held by its author, and may or may not ever publish it.

But another important reason that this book had to be written is that Herbert W. Armstrong's story is inseparable from our story—his journey is inseparable from The Restored Church of God's journey—his calling, ministry, purpose and work are inseparable from our calling, ministry, purpose and work, a work that *we* have been commissioned to finish. The life and ministry of this man are inseparable from the history of the true Church of God. And he represents the early, middle and middle-late chapters in the history of *this* Work!

As the only custodians of all the doctrines that Mr. Armstrong taught, and as the true extension of the role that he fulfilled, it became our responsibility to record at least the highpoints of his life—the most important events, the biggest decisions, the most crucial lessons, the most difficult circumstances, and the most significant milestones and developments.

Herbert W. Armstrong was, by all rights, a great leader. All great leaders, regardless of their arena of endeavor, must possess and reflect some combination of *several* unusual and often even very rare qualities in order to be truly effective—to achieve what they do. But Mr. Armstrong's story and astounding accomplishments evidenced the coming together of far more than just the normal attributes found in the lives of those typically considered to be great leaders in the affairs of this world.

This short but compelling biography bears witness to the uniqueness of Herbert W. Armstrong. By all accounts, including those of his detractors, he had an absolutely relentless determination to carry through with his life's work. But there were other qualities that made him truly unique.

He was a study in unwavering faith, coupled with patient endurance. He dealt with the most severe adversity and setbacks, learning to expect miracles as he walked through open doors that God set before him. He continually reminded himself that he was a tool of God, not one who was building something through mere human, or even superhuman, effort.

Mr. Armstrong knew both to expect and how to accept even the most extreme disappointment and frustration. He also learned to overcome all forms of discouragement, and to press on, never accepting anything but full victory and complete success in the pursuit of a goal. And he pointed vast numbers of people toward life's greatest goal, completely unknown to the preachers and religions of this world.

He was, quite literally, consumed with the task of preaching, teaching and explaining the precious truth of God, centering around proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom of God. Those who knew him could never forget how he did this in an absolutely uncompromising manner, until his responsibility came to an end with his death on January 16, 1986.

Mr. Armstrong's dedication—and special ability to keep his focus on the big picture—drove him to sacrifice beyond all bounds, as long as he knew that his purpose was right and that God's Work would ultimately be advanced. This often meant being willing to demonstrate enormous courage under fire—sometimes very intense fire, with no relief in sight. And this meant that he also had to conduct himself with “grace under pressure,” something he wrote that he had to learn in the early years of his ministry.

This book will demonstrate that, especially in the early days, Mr. Armstrong struggled against seemingly insurmountable odds just to avoid complete failure, and the end of the Work. You will see how this period taught him to practice the seven laws of success.

Because he was not without weaknesses, by his own admission, Mr. Armstrong understood the importance of continually relying on the strength of God to overcome all obstacles so that God could achieve what men would say could never be done.

Mr. Armstrong was also forced to learn to *wait* on God through an endless array of circumstances, without either trying to get ahead of, or letting himself fall behind, Christ's overall timetable for expansion and advancement of God's Work and Church.

He came to understand and live the central biblical principle that “all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose” (Rom. 8:28). Mr. Armstrong recognized that no matter how difficult the challenge—or how many the setbacks, which he likened to the “cocking of a gun” before a “bullet is fired forward”—with faith and patience, events would soon turn for the good, and the Work would, often in some unforeseen way, grow bigger or faster.

Mr. Armstrong long believed that writing the story of his life, or even allowing his picture to be taken, which he would not permit for many years, placed an undue emphasis on himself. Yet, the Bible details the personal experiences, calling, training and development of God's greatest servants—and the Bible is scripture recording these things for all time. In this light, the apostle Paul wrote, “Now all these things happened unto *them* [Old Testament Israel and famous Bible figures] for ensam-

ples: and they are written for *our admonition*, upon whom the ends of the world are come” (I Cor. 10:11). Mr. Armstrong knew he lived in the time of the end. Therefore, he eventually came to recognize that experiences and events of his life could be useful in the same way as were those of well-known Bible figures and of the nation of ancient Israel. Hence, the writing of his autobiography.

Opposition and hatred against Mr. Armstrong, then and today, defies normal logic. I too have experienced this vitriol, and seen how it can go beyond all bounds. Mr. Armstrong was persecuted like few men who have ever lived. But, *because* he was attacked beyond all reasonable understanding and explanation, this becomes one of its own proofs that Mr. Armstrong’s ministry was of God. The way of life that his students learned continues, and those “students” who teach it today are themselves attacked for the very same reasons.

Here is why: Mr. Armstrong’s life produced a unique “problem,” in that he left a spiritual legacy that transcended his death—requiring an organization to carry on in his stead. Truly, his is a story that was not completed when his life was. For this reason, this book includes a special Epilogue tying 1986 to the present.

The collective effort of all those on The Restored Church of God editorial staff who assisted in the writing of this biography has successfully captured the dynamic vitality of the most extraordinary human being I have ever known.

David C. Pack

INTRODUCTION

He was a husband and a father of four children. He was a successful advertising executive who ran a thriving Chicago advertising and marketing business. He was known among multimillionaires and several of the nation’s top leaders of industry before he even reached age 30. He was a prolific writer and speaker with a gift for explaining things in plain, easy-to-understand language.

He was the head of a multi-media empire, employing the tools of radio, magazines, books, booklets and television to proclaim a message that had been withheld from the world for 1,900 years. He was the editor and publisher of the largest news magazine in the world, second only to *Reader’s Digest* in worldwide circulation, reaching more than eight million subscribers and up to 25 million readers at any given time. His voice was heard, on both *The World Tomorrow* broadcast and telecast, by ten times this many, on every continent and in almost every nation of the world. He also established and led the world’s largest annual multi-site convention of any kind.

He was the founder and chancellor of three colleges—yet never attended college himself. He was a world traveler who met with one-third of all the world’s heads of state of his time—kings, queens, emperors, presidents, prime ministers and chancellors. He was applauded and highly esteemed—yet also continually attacked, ridiculed and eventually terribly betrayed. He was widely known, yet understood by very few.

He was Herbert W. Armstrong, an ambassador for world peace, without portfolio.

Mr. Armstrong's detractors accuse him of every evil deed imaginable. This book cannot—and will not—answer his accusers. But it will do something much more important, and necessary.

HERBERT W. ARMSTRONG – His Life in Proper Perspective will explain the *who*, *what*, *how* and *why* regarding this man who was perhaps one of the least understood of all God's servants: why he started three Ambassador Colleges—how and why he had to make a clean break from the fifth era of God's Church in order to begin the next era—how he was a man of extraordinary vision, drive and perseverance, destined to fulfill an important end-time role that few today any longer acknowledge and even fewer truly understand—what motivated him, what drove his thinking—why he was so viciously attacked during his lifetime, and even more so, long after his death—how he learned from his mistakes, weaknesses and faults, and from those of others, and why he was not above admitting when he was wrong, even sometimes publicly doing this in sermons and articles to the Church—how his life embodied the seven laws of success in action—how and why he walked “by faith” and not “by sight” (II Cor. 5:7), while constantly surrounded by people who “didn't get it,” who could not see what he saw—and how, like Abraham, he feared, believed and wholeheartedly obeyed the true God of the Bible.

Two Opposite Ditches

We live in the age of the Internet, a time when people from every continent and virtually every nation and territory can easily access a vast storehouse of information about almost anyone or anything. Yet, like the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, such information is usually a hodgepodge of facts mixed with rumors, innuendos, gossip, spin, half-truths and outright lies.

This is especially true when it comes to the name *Herbert W. Armstrong*. Mr. Armstrong was a bold and dynamic speaker, writer and leader. He lived—*breathed*—to do the Work of God. He was *consumed* by the need to preach the gospel of the kingdom of God to every nation—to warn the modern-day descendants of the house of Israel, who are headed for the worst time of trouble man has ever seen—and to feed, protect and lead the flock of God. And yet, today, this man's life, role, purpose and mission have been almost completely misunderstood and misrepresented.

Recent history has demonstrated that there are two categories—two opposite ditches—that people fall into in regard to this little understood man.

In one ditch are those who HATE Mr. Armstrong—who ABHOR *everything* about him—who assault his memory with every kind of slander, outrageous accusation and personal attack imaginable. Invariably, these are people who claim to have the “inside story”—who claim to know “where the bodies are buried.” They use the perceived or reported faults and shortcomings of men as license to attack what Mr. Armstrong taught: the way of giving, helping, cooperating—of outgoing love and concern for others—the only way that brings lasting peace, prosperity and true success. Even though Mr. Armstrong has been dead since 1986, attackers feel compelled to “expose” him—largely through inventions about his character—to the widest possible audience.

Such people cannot be helped by this book. Their minds are already made up—closed. Of course, some will attack *this book* in their effort to continue smearing the man that it honors and explains. Our response to these is Proverbs 26, verse 4: “Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest you also be like unto him.” Mr. Armstrong deeply understood II Timothy 3:12—that “all who will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution”—and that this would apply before (and after) the death of godly men. He did not answer his accusers and would not want us or anyone else to serve as his “apologists.”

Then there are those of the other ditch, the people who *adore*—who unknowingly WORSHIP—Mr. Armstrong. These could be likened to those who place a statue of “Mary” on the lawn or mantle because they require something physical to worship. Such people treat Mr. Armstrong's writings like Scripture, and view his sermons and broadcasts as sacred. Instead of seeing Mr. Armstrong as a human instrument used by God to “restore all things” to His Church (Matt. 17:11), they speak of him in almost hushed tones of reverence, thinking they most correctly honor him. Yet, almost invariably, these generally refuse to continue his work.

In reality, Mr. Armstrong would be embarrassed by such unbalanced and unwarranted gushing over his name and person. And he would be FURIOUS! He never wanted people to confuse *him* with THE MESSAGE God used him to preach.

Some leaders immerse themselves in Mr. Armstrong's image, using his name as a marketing tool to attract sincere yet misguided people who confuse revering Mr. Armstrong with practicing what he taught. This book *can* help the latter—if they are willing to see his life from the proper perspective.

And thus we come to why this book is titled *HERBERT W. ARMSTRONG – His Life in Proper Perspective*. More than a mere biographical sketch, this book reveals who Mr. Armstrong was: what drove his thinking—what motivated his life—why he felt that “*necessity* was laid upon” him (I Cor. 9:16) to “cry aloud, and spare not” (Isa. 58:1)—and what he would expect from those today who claim to follow what he taught.

Here is Herbert W. Armstrong’s life in proper perspective.

A SPARK OF AMBITION

Herbert W. Armstrong was born on July 31, 1892, in Des Moines, Iowa, the oldest of five children—the others, Mabel (who died at age nine), Russell, and twins Dwight and Mary. The Armstrong family grew up in the Quaker religion. Their ancestors had migrated to America in the late 1600s with William Penn, a famous Quaker and the founder of Pennsylvania. Mr. Armstrong’s family line traces back to King Edward I of England.

For much of his childhood, Mr. Armstrong grew up surrounded by an extended family of aunts, uncles, grandparents and even great-grandparents, who lived into their 90s.

The early years of his life took place during the age of milkmen, streetcars and gas-powered streetlamps. It was a time when Thomas Edison, Albert Einstein, Sigmund Freud, Britain’s Queen Victoria, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, George Washington Carver, Theodore Roosevelt, the Wright brothers and other thinkers, leaders and inventors were making their mark in history.

Mr. Armstrong’s youth and early adulthood saw the birth and explosion of amazing inventions and exciting developments in science, technology and medicine, in a way that the world had never seen before: open-heart surgery, radio, hydroelectric energy, mass-produced automobiles, airplanes, turbine engines, motion pictures, X-ray technology, mass-produced cameras, subways, plastics, hydrogen-filled airships (zeppelins), internal combustion engines, electric batteries, fingerprint-

ing, air conditioners, electric typewriters, electrical hearing aids, motor-powered lawn mowers, taxi cabs, motorcycles, photostats, freeze-drying, artificial joints, outboard motors, diesel locomotives, escalators and many other advancements taken for granted today.

Mr. Armstrong's childhood was a happy one, filled with swimming, iceskating, bicycling and playing football, baseball, marbles, going to school, and growing up with childhood chums, several of whom went on to become successful men and leaders in their community.

He was an inquisitive little boy, who constantly peppered adults with questions of "Why?" and "How?" From his earliest memories, he craved *understanding*—he wanted to know the world around him and how it worked. When Mr. Armstrong was five, he remembered hearing his father, frustrated with his son's many questions, say, "That young'un is always asking so many questions he's sure to be a Philadelphia lawyer, when he grows up."

(In a sense, Mr. Armstrong *did* become a "Philadelphia lawyer." As the one God used to lead the Philadelphian Era of the Church Christ built, he had the greatest depth of knowledge and understanding of God's Law of any man of his day. This will be explained later.)

Learning the Work Ethic

From age 12 to 16, Mr. Armstrong held various weekend and summer jobs: newspaper routes, running errands for a grocery store and a dry-goods store, being a draftsman for a furnace company, and other odd jobs.

At age 16, Mr. Armstrong came to a monumental, life-changing turning point. It happened at the end of his first summer job away from home, in which he waited on tables in the dining room of a semi-resort in a nearby town. The owner highly complimented his work, saying that he saw something within Mr. Armstrong that would lead him to great success.

From that moment, a spark of ambition ignited within him—Mr. Armstrong began to believe in himself. He grew in self-confidence. He wanted to be someone important—someone considered successful in the eyes of the world's prominent businessmen and leaders. He wanted to be a "success"!

Looking back on this event years later, Mr. Armstrong recognized this as "grossly overrated SELF-confidence and cocky conceit." However, even as a teen, he realized that most people drift through life, accepting whatever are the conditions into which they were born. Young Herbert

Armstrong took his hunger and thirst for success and used it to develop his mind—to grow in knowledge and understanding, and improve himself. This burning desire became a driving force in his life.

Little could he know where this would take him.

Improving the Self

By the time summer vacation ended, and school was back in session, Mr. Armstrong set out to apply himself. He spent many hours at the public library, studying business administration, philosophy (Plato, Socrates and other thinkers), and the autobiographies of dynamic historic figures (such as Benjamin Franklin). He yearned to develop and expand his mind.

Mr. Armstrong also worked on developing his physical strength and endurance, participating in football, basketball, and track and field.

When he was 18, he discovered the book *Choosing a Vocation*, which he used to examine himself—his natural strengths and weaknesses. Through a thorough self-analysis survey, the book revealed that Mr. Armstrong would most likely achieve success in the fields of advertising and journalism.

It just so happened that his Uncle Frank was Iowa's most prominent advertising executive. Recognizing that his uncle was a reservoir of practical experience and that he possessed "unusual insight, understanding, and sound judgment," Mr. Armstrong turned to him for guidance.

On-the-Job Training

In those days, colleges and universities did not offer comprehensive, proven courses in advertising. So Frank Armstrong told his nephew that, with initiative and drive, he could achieve a general college-level education through intensive on-the-job training. He offered to help Mr. Armstrong find the right books to study, especially in the areas of advertising, journalism, psychology, merchandising, business management, and English. He encouraged his nephew to learn and to master an effective writing style, and to study ad copy and layout.

To begin his advertising career, Mr. Armstrong was advised to get one year's experience in the want-ad department of a daily newspaper. This, his uncle told him, was the "freshman class" in advertising.

Brimming with self-confidence and drive, Mr. Armstrong went to *The Des Moines Daily Capital*. But instead of asking for a job, he boldly informed the want-ad department manager that he was entering the

field of advertising, and that he decided to join his staff, since it offered the best opportunity to learn and to advance.

Naturally, the manager was taken aback by the young man's assertiveness. But it grabbed his attention. Mr. Armstrong's self-assurance paid off, and he was able to "hire himself a job," as he put it, starting at the entry-level pay of \$6 per week. (Remember, this was 1910.)

Mr. Armstrong was just as bold, driven and resourceful in how he worked, constantly searching for the most effective ways to sell room-for-rent ads to boarding room establishments. While other want-ad salesmen made their usual sales pitches, Mr. Armstrong devised several creative and efficient methods to sell his services, and quickly became known for his resourcefulness and drive. His ingenuity served him well, and he was promoted to selling real estate ads, with a \$2 per week raise in pay.

The *Register & Ledger*, the competing newspaper, began to feel the pressure of Mr. Armstrong's salesmanship. They offered to hire him away from their competitor, at \$10 per week. Though tempting to a young man on the fast track, Mr. Armstrong turned to his uncle before making a hasty decision.

Frank Armstrong told him, "There's a good deal to the old adage, after all, that a rolling stone gathers no moss. One of the great success lessons you need to learn is persistence—to stay *with* a thing.

"Now suppose you quit the *Capital* and go over to the *Register*. You wouldn't *learn* any more about the advertising profession over there than you're learning where you are. The only advantage is the \$2 per week. You'd probably blow that...and ten years from now you wouldn't remember having had it. I think the time has come for you to pay the \$2 a week to learn the important lesson of staying *with* a thing. Every week, when you draw your \$8 at the *Capital*, remember you are paying the extra \$2 you might be getting at the *Register* as the price of that lesson, and I think you'll remember it."

Mr. Armstrong heeded his uncle's advice.

Temporarily Sidetracked

When his one-year training at the *Daily Capital* came to an end, Mr. Armstrong did accept another flattering offer—one that took him off his career track. Lured by the adventure of traveling hundreds of miles by train into the Deep South, he became the timekeeper and paymaster of a large lumber mill, The Finkbine Lumber Company, in Wiggins, Mississippi.

Before Mr. Armstrong set off on his journey, his new employer, millionaire W.O. Finkbine, gave him valuable advice: Travel the very best one can afford, riding only in luxurious Pullman cars and staying at the finest hotels, which were of higher quality, and safer than cheaper alternatives. This would put him in close contact with successful and highly important people. He encouraged Mr. Armstrong to study them and learn why they were so successful.

This advice influenced and shaped Mr. Armstrong's mindset even later in life, for he taught Church members, Ambassador College students and headquarters staff to strive for quality and excellence, to appreciate the worth of a beautiful environment, and to purchase the best that one could afford. Doing so uplifts one's thinking, inspiring him to go above and beyond in every task undertaken.

Six months of laboring in a position that did not match his natural talents and gifts led Mr. Armstrong to see that he was the proverbial "square peg" desperately trying to fit into a round hole—it simply did not work! He came to realize that the glamour of travel, being offered an important position, and earning a larger income had temporarily sidetracked him from his career.

In addition, six months of working from early in the morning to almost midnight took its toll on his body. Due to overexertion, Mr. Armstrong ended up in the hospital with typhoid fever. Following doctors' instructions, he returned home to Des Moines until full recovery.

Back on Track

On the way back home, Mr. Armstrong managed to "hire himself" another job, this time at the Mahan Advertising Agency, headquartered in Chicago. During the two weeks before he was expected to start his new position, he returned to Des Moines and told his Uncle Frank the good news.

Frank Armstrong was pleased that his nephew was finally "back on track." But when it came to the new job, he said, "No, Herbert, you're not ready for agency experience yet. Mahan is one of the major agencies, and it would be years before you'd even work up to being noticed by any of the top men, who are the only ones over there that could teach you anything. They wouldn't know you existed."

Mr. Armstrong wisely heeded his advice and "hired himself" another job—this time at the *Merchants Trade Journal*, the largest trade journal in the country at that time. It was devoted to publishing proven ideas that merchants and other businessmen were successfully using to

increase their sales, reduce costs, train personnel, improve public relations, and so forth.

This new position put Mr. Armstrong under the professional guidance of R.H. Miles and Arthur I. Boreman, experts in advertising, marketing psychology, merchandising and effective business methods.

Mr. Armstrong also gained from these two men valuable on-the-job training in writing and designing display ads. He learned how to write headlines that catch the readers' eyes, pull them in and convince them to want to read more—how to effectively use white space to make headlines stand out and grab attention—how to use lead-in text and subheads to create and hold suspense, and make readers want to read the main body of text.

He also learned to avoid trying to impress readers with scholarly language. Mr. Boreman explained, "The purpose of words is to convey facts, thoughts, ideas—a message! When 98% of the people do not understand your words, they do not receive your message. They only become confused and turn to something *interesting*."

"Use only plain, simple words. Use words that even readers of no more than a third or fourth grade education can UNDERSTAND. Try to achieve good literary quality with a *large* vocabulary of common, simple words, and by the *manner* in which you weave those words into the sentence structure."

Mr. Armstrong learned to write in a style that was distinct, fast-moving, crisp—yet *simple*, PLAIN and easy to understand, with a proper balance between quick, short, staccato-like sentences mixed with long and medium-sized ones.

After about two years of training in writing dynamic ad copy, designing effective layouts, selling advertising space, and performing certain office duties, Mr. Armstrong was promoted. He became the *Merchants Trade Journal's* "Idea Man." Armed with a reasonably liberal expense account, he set off on business trips to the east coast and to the Gulf of Mexico in search of innovative ideas and potential magazine articles. One of his missions was to ask various businessmen throughout the country why some men failed while others were successful. Of the hundreds who answered, the vast majority said, "Lack of ability."

He discovered that many farmers, tired of the harsh, grueling life of farming, sold their farms to take up the "easy" life of retail merchants. But most farmers lacked the proper education in math, and did not possess the much-needed training in interacting with customers, advertising, marketing, etc. Thus, they lacked the ability to succeed.

Meeting a Popular Author

It was during one of his "Idea Man" trips that Mr. Armstrong became acquainted with Elbert Hubbard, a famous writer, publisher and lecturer of the day. He was the author of "A Message to Garcia," a classic essay about initiative. Following his Uncle Frank's instruction, Mr. Armstrong had been reading Mr. Hubbard's writings for years, studying his writing style, delivery, use of vocabulary, and his philosophical ideas. (However, his uncle warned him not to blindly accept the author's musings.)

With his trademark longish hairstyle, wide-brim hat and artist's bowtie, Elbert Hubbard, popularly referred to as the "Sage of East Aurora" and "The Fra," had a knack for standing out from the crowd. As a believer in rugged individualism, Mr. Hubbard was his own best promoter.

Tragically, his life was cut short in the historic attack on the *Lusitania*, which was sunk by a German submarine on May 7, 1915.

Last "Idea Man" Tour

In November 1914, Mr. Armstrong began what came to be his last idea tour. He was set to travel as far west as Nebraska, and then journey to Houston, Texas, over to Birmingham, Alabama, north to Detroit, and then back home.

During this tour, he accomplished some "firsts"—*The Journal* published his first magazine article, and Mr. Armstrong conducted his first "opinion poll" business survey.

In spite of these, Mr. Armstrong was shocked to receive a letter from Mr. Boreman, stating that he was not pleased with the young man's progress. Though he constantly drove himself, Mr. Armstrong worked in "spurts." When he was "on," he was red hot!—but during his "off" days, he could not seem to accomplish much. (Years later, Mr. Armstrong would learn to overcome this obstacle, teaching others to do the same.)

Mr. Boreman's letter frightened Mr. Armstrong into believing that he was about to be fired—and it made him work much harder.

Even so, the letter continued to gnaw at his mind. He was haunted by humiliating thoughts of being fired once he returned home. His fear grew so large that he made another hasty decision and "hired himself" a job. He became the Assistant Secretary of the South Bend, Indiana Chamber of Commerce, and then mailed his resignation letter. By the time he arrived home, Mr. Armstrong discovered the truth—that Mr.

Boreman had no intentions of firing him. His letter was only meant to motivate Mr. Armstrong to work harder. Once again, his career got “off track.”

Sidetracked...Again!

Unlike today, there were no national or state highways crisscrossing America in the early twentieth century. When people drove their cars outside the paved streets of the city, they had to travel along the same roads used by horse and carriage. Getting stuck in the mud or ditches was inevitable. Only the most adventurous would attempt to drive into the country.

In order for their towns and cities to be connected, county and township governments decided to combine their resources and build roads. The South Bend Chamber of Commerce had endorsed the Dixie Highway project, which was designed to build a highway that extended from Canada to the Gulf of Mexico. Mr. Armstrong was designated to sign up farmers and other property owners so that the project could be built through their lands. However, one county refused to cooperate, putting the entire plan in jeopardy. In solving the problem, Mr. Armstrong came in personal contact with several of South Bend’s millionaires, gaining invaluable insight from them. He helped to devise an ingenious plan for designating land for the highway project.

Though his endeavor was successful, Mr. Armstrong decided to improve his financial situation by moving on to Danville, Illinois, where he sold a unique, in-depth marketing survey to the local newspaper’s advertising department. The results of his report were so revealing that it caught the attention of several businessmen. This led to various doors of employment opportunities opening to him. Mr. Armstrong took the one he considered to be the most promising: selling pianos.

However, he quickly learned that there are two kinds of effective salesmen—those who sell products, and those who sell ideas. Mr. Armstrong was a dynamic *idea* salesman. He never sold a single piano.

Once again, his Uncle Frank offered sound advice, telling Mr. Armstrong that he had allowed himself to get sidetracked from a promising career. Frank Armstrong intervened, and lined up a temporary advertising job for his nephew back in Des Moines.

Northwestern Banker magazine was planning to publish a special advertising section showcasing many new bank buildings. Mr. Armstrong was hired to sell to these banks as much advertising space as possible. He discovered that it was far more effective to sell ad space by

designing attractive, eye-popping layouts *before* calling on potential clients.

This temporary position was only to last one month, but quickly turned into a steady job—which developed into a profitable business. Before long, Mr. Armstrong’s advertising career was “back on track” and booming.

At only 23 years of age, he had become the publishing representative for nine of the leading national bankers’ magazines. He decided to open his own advertising office in Chicago, one of the two capitals of advertising (along with New York), in the heart of the Loop. He worked only about half a block from LaSalle Street, where the city’s most prominent banks and investment houses were headquartered. Mr. Armstrong’s work opened the door to gaining personal contact with the vice-presidents (and, in some cases, presidents) of the nation’s many leading financial institutions, as well as with the presidents and board members of several corporations, such as Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company and John Deere & Company.

Meeting Loma Dillon

In January 1917, Mr. Armstrong visited Des Moines to renew contracts and search for potential clients. At his mother’s request, he visited his Aunt Emma (his mother’s twin sister), who was sick with pneumonia. She lived on a farm about 30 miles away, a mile outside a tiny crossroads town called Motor. Upon his arrival, he was relieved to find that his aunt was already quickly recovering from her illness.

That afternoon, he met two young ladies who were also visiting Aunt Emma—sisters Loma and Bertha Dillon. They were Mr. Armstrong’s distant relatives (third cousins). Around the same age as he, Loma Dillon was a local school teacher.

Like a lightning bolt, Mr. Armstrong was struck by her natural energy and zest for life. Describing her, he wrote, “I hadn’t seen such fresh, joyous, ‘zip and go’ in a long time. She literally exuded energy, sparkle, good cheer, the friendly warmth of a sincere, outgoing personality...She was even prettier than her sister. There was something *different* about her—something wholesome that I liked...She seemed to be a girl of sound-minded good sense and high ideals. She had superior intelligence. There was a mental *depth* most girls lacked...There was none of the haughty social veneer—none of the acquired artificial mannerisms of the eastern ‘finishing school’ products or the social debutante. Indeed, I perceived she was a bit naive. She was completely sincere in trusting and

believing in people. She had not seen or learned much of the rottenness and evils of this world. She had that innocent, completely unspoiled freshness of a breath of spring...She was full of fun, yet serious—with the unspoiled wholesomeness of an Iowa country girl. And, most important of all, strength of character! I observed quickly that although she was alert and active-minded, hers was not one of those flighty surface minds, active but shallow. She was able to discuss serious and deep things intelligently. She was very much an extrovert, but not a shallow, gossipy chatterbox.”

The two began to spend time together, slowly getting to know each other. Yet, Mr. Armstrong made a conscious effort not to rush things. Like many, he thought that love was some “mysterious force” that struck unsuspecting men and caused them to “fall” for someone. Mr. Armstrong feared being romantically caught off guard, rushing off into a marriage with the wrong woman. So he deliberately took his time in dating.

Resuming his work back in Chicago, he and Loma Dillon sent letters to each other almost daily. And he “discovered” that Iowa just happened to have potential business opportunities that required him to make frequent trips there.

Later, when he became serious about her, Mr. Armstrong asked a doctor if there were any reasons why third cousins should not marry. The doctor assured him that, when it came to marriage, third cousins were so far apart from each other in the family tree that they were not truly cousins.

Getting Married

Dating eventually led to courtship, and courtship soon led to marriage. Herbert W. Armstrong and Loma Dillon were married on July 31, 1917.

Their wedding date was moved up due to America’s entrance into World War I. Since the U.S. army was in dire need of military officers, Mr. Armstrong planned to enlist and serve his country. He wanted to postpone the wedding until after the war was over, but his fiancée and peers convinced him that it was better to get married before going off to war.

Mr. Armstrong applied to Officers’ Training Camp, and, armed with written statements of prominent business leaders who verified that he possessed a college-level education, he was accepted. However, just as he was prepared to be shipped off to war, Mr. Armstrong was turned away at the last minute due to an over-abundance of applicants with military experience. This happened to him twice.

He proceeded to get married, expecting to be drafted soon after. But the call never came.

The newlyweds lived in the heart of Chicago. Mrs. Armstrong, who was born and reared an Iowa country girl, was shocked and disturbed by the harsh, suspicious, self-centered, fast-paced lifestyles of the big city.

The Armstrongs had to move from apartment to apartment several times, often subleasing. Chicago’s booming metropolitan area was undergoing a massive population explosion, growing from 2.2 million people in 1910 to 2.7 million in 1920—an increase of about 516,000 in just ten years! A 50,000-plus annual growth rate of residents meant that housing—especially *quality* housing in a *safe* environment—was hard to come by.

From the very start, Mr. and Mrs. Armstrong’s marriage was a close-knit partnership, with Mr. Armstrong taking the lead, and his wife assisting him. For example, when Mr. Armstrong conceived of opinion surveys or produced display ads to win over potential clients, he listened to and valued his wife’s opinion and insight. Their partnership would later prove invaluable in Mr. Armstrong’s ministry to take Christ’s true gospel to the world. He wrote, “From the time of my conversion Mrs. Armstrong has always studied with me. We didn’t realize it then, but God was calling us *together*. We were always a team, working together in unity.”

Mr. Armstrong came to understand that a wife is fully one-half of a man’s ministry. She stands as a support to all of the many aspects of his responsibility to serve the people of God and do God’s Work. He was to reiterate this many times in later years.

A Growing Family

The Armstrongs soon became a family, with the birth of Beverly in May 1918. Two years later, they had their second child, Dorothy Jane.

It was during this pregnancy that Mrs. Armstrong fell sick with toxemia eclampsia and was hospitalized. A medical specialist helped her to recover and she was able to have a healthy delivery. However, the illness had prematurely turned Mrs. Armstrong’s golden blonde hair to white! Far worse, medical experts informed her that another pregnancy would mean certain death for her and the baby.

BEING CALLED BY GOD

While Mrs. Armstrong maintained a steady interest in religion, her husband had stopped regularly attending church when he turned 18. Like many in the world today, Mr. Armstrong's mind was focused on pursuing a successful career. From 1918 to 1920, his personal annual income grew to today's equivalent of a six-figure salary. His pursuit of material success left little time for religious interests, other than occasionally attending Sunday services at the corner church.

About a week or so after their wedding, Mrs. Armstrong experienced a dream so vivid—so extraordinary—that when she woke up, it seemed as though nothing else was real for the next two to three days.

Here is how Mr. Armstrong described the mysterious events within his wife's dream:

"In her dream she and I were crossing the wide intersection... Suddenly there appeared an awesome sight in the sky above. It was a dazzling spectacle—the sky filled with a gigantic solid mass of brilliant stars, shaped like a huge banner. The stars began to quiver and separate, finally vanishing. She called my attention to the vanishing stars, when another huge grouping of flashing stars appeared, then quivering, separating, and vanishing like the first.

"As she and I, in her dream, looked upward at the vanishing stars, three large white birds suddenly appeared in the sky between us and the vanishing stars. These great white birds flew directly toward us. As they descended nearer, she perceived that they were angels.

"Then,' my wife wrote a day or two after the dream... 'it dawned on me that Christ was coming, and I was so happy I was just crying for joy. Then suddenly I thought of Herbert and was rather worried.'

"She knew I had evidenced very little religious interest, although we had attended a corner church two or three times. Then it seemed that, from among these angels in her dream, that, 'Christ descended from among them and stood directly in front of us. At first I was a little doubtful and afraid of how He would receive us, because I remembered we had neglected our Bible study and had our minds too much on things apart from His interests. But as we went up to Him, He put His arms around both of us, and we were so happy! I thought people all over the world had seen Him come. As far as we could see, people were just swarming into the streets at this broad intersection. Some were glad and some were afraid.

"Then it seemed He had changed into an angel. I was terribly disappointed at first, until he told me Christ was really coming in a very short time.'

"At that time, we had been going quite regularly to motion-picture theatres. She asked the angel if this were wrong. He replied Christ had important work for us to do, preparing for His coming—there would be no time for 'movies'... Then the angel and the whole spectacle seemed to vanish, and she awakened, shaken and wondering!"

She immediately told her husband about the dream.

In his autobiography, Mr. Armstrong warned readers that of those who think God has personally spoken to them in dreams or visions, the overwhelming majority—"about 99,999 times out of 100,000"—actually have deceived themselves. Most dreams mean nothing, he wrote, and false prophets have misled people with false dreams, just as God warns in Jeremiah 23, verse 32: "I am against prophets who recount lying dreams, leading My people astray with their lies and their empty pretensions, though I never sent them, never commissioned them; they are no help whatever to this people, says the Eternal" (Moffatt translation).

Mr. Armstrong did not rush to the conclusion that this had to be a dream from God. As a matter of fact, he was *embarrassed* by it. He did not want to think about it—yet, the dream was so unusual that he could not dismiss it. So he settled on advising his wife to ask the minister at the corner church if her dream had any real meaning. Satisfied, he put the matter out of his mind.

It would only be a handful of years later that God would get Mr. Armstrong's full and undivided attention.

Flash Depression!

In January 1920, Mr. Armstrong attended an important business luncheon and listened to guest speaker Roger Babson give a startling speech. To the surprise of the leading Chicago bankers and business executives, Mr. Babson, a well-known statistician, proclaimed that they were about to enter the worst business depression of their generation. “I advise you all to set your houses in order,” he said.

Mr. Armstrong glanced around the room and saw that many of these prominent business leaders smirked and looked amused. Because the demands of World War I had artificially inflated the price of food and supplies, the postwar economy was riding a wave of prosperity. Bank clearings, business activity, stock car loadings and stock market quotes were all booming. Therefore, these men did not believe or bother to heed Mr. Babson’s warning.

Yet, by the end of that same year, Mr. Babson’s prediction came true. The economic wave gave way to the flash depression of 1920, which came crashing down, sweeping away many American businesses—including Mr. Armstrong’s. All of his clients went into receivership, and his large advertising contracts were cancelled.

Again, Mr. Armstrong and other businessmen met for a luncheon to listen to Roger Babson, the guest speaker. Mr. Babson explained that he was able to know a depression was coming by looking at the way people *lived*—how they dealt with one another as a whole.

He said, “I looked to the *SOURCE* which *determines* future conditions. I have found that the *source* may be defined in terms of ‘RIGHT-EOUSNESS.’ When 51 percent or more of the whole people are reasonably ‘*righteous*’ in their dealings with one another, we are heading into increasing prosperity. When 51 percent of the people become ‘*unrighteous*’ in their business dealings with their fellows, then we are headed for BAD TIMES ECONOMICALLY!”

Mr. Armstrong never forgot this sobering and insightful explanation.

Though his advertising business had been swept away through no fault of his own, Mr. Armstrong was determined to build it back up again. However, with so many other businesses having been crushed and destroyed, those which struggled to survive were not ready to spend advertising money as they had before.

Some business executives, lacking the strength and determination to cope with their sudden loss of wealth and influence, turned to suicide.

But Mr. Armstrong was no quitter. “I had been knocked down, stunned, made groggy—but not knocked out,” he wrote. “Desperately I clung on, hoping to climb back on top.” He was determined to once again reap the fruits of success. For the next two years, he fought and struggled to revive a dead enterprise.

Standing Up for Integrity

In February 1921, the secretary of the National Implement and Vehicle Association asked Mr. Armstrong to attend an important meeting held by its board of directors, seven corporate heads. The chairman was Mr. Wallis, president of J.I. Case Plow Works, Mr. Armstrong’s largest client.

The mood of the meeting was sober. The flash depression was destroying their businesses. Each man faced financial ruin.

The meeting’s agenda was to find a way to stimulate the farm tractor industry. Mr. Wallis explained that the industry would not survive the depression unless sales were brought back to life.

Since Mr. Armstrong did business with the editors of the national bank journals, these top corporate leaders wanted him to pressure the editors into writing strong editorials urging bankers to advise farmers to start buying tractors again.

An entire industry was at stake! Here were seven of the leading corporate executives asking 28-year-old Herbert W. Armstrong to help them save the national farm tractor industry from bankruptcy!

“What an appeal to my egotism!” Mr. Armstrong would later write. “What a temptation to think of personal importance!”

The unspoken implication was that if he could come through for them, an abundance of advertising contracts would be his. This was a hard temptation to resist.

But no matter how tempting the offer, Mr. Armstrong knew the cold, hard facts. Since his business had put him in constant contact with numerous bankers, he was well aware of the farm tractor situation at the grassroots level.

“Bankers know that one tractor replaces six horses,” he explained. “Tractors have to be fed gasoline, which is expensive right now. Horses are fed on 18-cent corn and oats and hay that have skidded likewise in price. Country bankers know their farmer customers would think they were fools to recommend buying tractors and feeding them on high-priced gasoline, when they have their horses being fed on grain they can’t sell.”

Convincing these farmers to buy tractors they did not absolutely need went against Mr. Armstrong's conscience. He considered it an act of dishonesty. He told the men at the meeting that he could not help them.

The next day, J.I. Case Plow Works cancelled doing business with Mr. Armstrong. It was his last remaining tractor account.

Mr. Armstrong feverishly stayed the course for another year and a half to bring his advertising business back to life, but things went from bad to worse. By July 1922, his income had dropped tremendously—too low to even support his family. The financial crunch forced Mr. Armstrong to give up their apartment and sell the bulk of their furniture in order to survive. He then entered three of the bleakest, most discouraging months of his life.

That fall, he and his family moved back to Iowa to temporarily live on his father-in-law's farm. Mr. Armstrong did the best he could to help around the farm, but he was the proverbial "fish out of water." He lacked farming experience, and could not keep up with shucking corn alongside his father-in-law. Mr. Armstrong felt even more demoralized and defeated.

Back in Iowa

Mr. Armstrong went to the town of Ames, home of Iowa State College, and sold the idea of conducting an opinion survey to the owner and manager of the local newspaper, the *Ames Daily Tribune*. The survey revealed little known facts about customers' shopping habits. It also changed business practices for the better, and increased sales. Everyone benefited.

Mr. Armstrong then visited an old friend who was the advertising manager of both the *Des Moines Register* and the *Evening Tribune*, and offered to conduct a thorough survey of department stores across the state. The friend and his superiors loved the idea, and were willing to hire Mr. Armstrong's services. But there was a catch. They needed to hire a full-time advertising manager, and they believed that Mr. Armstrong was the right man for the position.

Mr. Armstrong was surprised by the offer. However, he was not confident that he had the ability to direct the work of a small staff and carry out other administrative duties. Mr. Armstrong knew that he could work *with* or *under* men, but he did not believe that he could *direct* others.

He told them, "But that will kill everything. I am not an executive. I can't manage the work of others. I'm like a lone wolf. I have to do my

own work in my own way. I often work in streaks. When I'm 'on' I know I'm good. But on the 'off' days I couldn't sell genuine gold bricks for a dime. I'd have daily reports to make out, and that's one thing I just never have been able to do. I'd get way behind on the reports."

Despite his friend's plea, he refused to take the position.

Many years later, Mr. Armstrong did become an executive. Upon founding Ambassador College, he went on to successfully direct the work of thousands of employees, as well as write, edit and publish magazines, lead an expanding worldwide church, give sermons, produce radio and television broadcasts, and meet heads of state around the world.

Though he may have been a "lone wolf" during his advertising career, Mr. Armstrong grew to be a leader. He was a man who constantly prodded himself to learn, develop and achieve.

Another Advertising Business Swept Away

In 1924, the Armstrong family embarked on an adventurous road trip to Salem, Oregon, to visit Mr. Armstrong's parents, who had moved there several years earlier.

Along the way, a Vancouver, Washington newspaper hired Mr. Armstrong to conduct an opinion survey. They also temporarily hired him to be a merchandising specialist for a six-month period.

Afterward, he moved his family to Portland, Oregon. There, Mr. Armstrong discovered a profitable niche market for his services, where there was little, if any, competition. He started a successful advertising and efficiency-management service for the leading laundries in Oregon and Washington. In only six months, Mr. Armstrong's business had doubled. His career was about to skyrocket.

And then suddenly, everything came to an abrupt halt!

The *Laundryowners National Association* began a \$5 million nationwide cooperative advertising campaign, which took away virtually all of Mr. Armstrong's clients, except one. Once again, through no fault of his own, his advertising business was swept out from beneath him—and there was nothing he could do to stop it.

With his morale beaten and worn, he concentrated on leading and helping his family struggle to survive through more rough financial times.

Religious Fanaticism?

While visiting her in-laws in Salem, Mrs. Armstrong became friends with a Mrs. Ora Runcorn, an elderly neighbor. Their frequent religious dis-

cussions led Mrs. Armstrong to see the Bible in a completely new light.

One day, Mrs. Runcorn asked Mrs. Armstrong to turn to a certain Bible passage and read it. Then to another passage, and then another, for about an hour. At no time did Mrs. Runcorn comment on the scriptures Mrs. Armstrong read. She simply let the Bible speak for itself.

Mrs. Armstrong was amazed by how often God's Word said the *opposite* of what the world's churches taught—especially when it came to the seventh-day Sabbath. The scriptures clearly revealed that God's Sabbath is on Saturday, *not* Sunday! She rushed to tell her husband about the good news of her awesome discovery.

But Mr. Armstrong was far from pleased!

"Are you CRAZY?" he asked. The seventh-day Sabbath was only for Jews, he reasoned, while Sunday worship was for Christians.

"Now *look*, Loma! I simply am not going to tolerate any such religious fanaticism in our family. You have to give that up, right here and now!"

But Mrs. Armstrong refused. No matter how many arguments her husband came up with, she was determined to follow the truth.

Mr. Armstrong was desperate. He began to worry about what his former business acquaintances and peers might think. This news hit his pride and vanity harder than anything he had ever experienced before. He felt that it was more than he could take.

He said, "Loma, you can't tell me that all these churches have been wrong all these hundreds of years! Why, aren't these all CHRIST's churches?"

Back and forth they debated—yet his wife would not budge.

Finally, she said, "If you can prove by the Bible that we are commanded to observe Sunday instead of the seventh-day Sabbath—yes, *then* of course I will obey what I see in the Bible."

Mr. Armstrong knew very little about God's Word, but his marriage and reputation were at stake. He accepted his wife's challenge.

The Double Challenge!

Around the same time, Mr. Armstrong's sister-in-law accused him of being ignorant about the theory of evolution. "One is uneducated and simply ignorant," she said to him, "if he has not studied evolution. All educated people know it's true."

To Mr. Armstrong, this felt like a slap in the face. It stung his pride. So he took on his sister-in-law's biting remarks as a challenge. For the next six months, he researched and studied day and night to understand

and gather undeniable proof that God's Sabbath was on Sunday and that the theory of evolution was false.

He searched through various texts on biology, paleontology and geology. He read the works of the chief authorities of science—Darwin, Haeckel, Huxley and others. He learned the facts about radioactive elements—that there was a time when physical matter did not exist. Mr. Armstrong also learned about the law of biogenesis: LIFE can only come from LIFE.

He also plunged into the study of history and discovered that every single Bible prophecy that was ever foretold (except for those scheduled to be fulfilled in the future) came to pass, *and* on schedule. This proved the Bible's divine authority.

These six months of daily in-depth, intensive study involved Mr. Armstrong waiting for Portland's public library to open its door early each morning, leaving the library at 9 p.m. (closing time), and working at home, many times late into the night.

Eventually, Mr. Armstrong's studies enabled him to chop down the trunk of the tree of evolution. If evolution was true, he reasoned, then the simplest fossil records would be found at the oldest strata levels in the earth. Likewise, the more complex fossils would be found near the top.

But this was *not* the case!

Mr. Armstrong learned that what was considered the most recent strata sometimes lay *below* the most ancient levels. The age of strata was not determined by stages of depth, *but by the fossils found in them!* Holding fast that the evolution theory was indeed fact, scientists *assumed* the age of certain strata by estimating how many millions of years ago certain fossils may have been deposited. Evolution was based on assumption—blind faith! (Ironically, this is the same thing atheists accuse of those who believe God exists.)

Mr. Armstrong quickly wrote a short article summarizing his discovery, and showed it to the head of the library's technical and science department. She was amazed by his proof—yet she confessed that she had been so steeped in the world of academia that she could not give up believing in evolution.

"What a pitiful confession," he wrote, "from one so steeped in 'the wisdom of this world.'"

God's Sabbath—An Identifying Sign

Next, Mr. Armstrong turned his full attention to learning about the Sabbath. He studied every piece of literature he could find—both for and

against the seventh-day Sabbath. He examined exhaustive concordances, which revealed that nowhere in the Bible does it say, “Thou shalt keep Sunday.” God Word’s revealed to Mr. Armstrong that our Creator measures days from sunset to sunset, instead of from midnight to midnight—and that there was not a single example in the Bible of God’s servants holding weekly religious services on Sunday (midnight Saturday to midnight Sunday, as men measure time).

Not only was there no command to observe Sunday as God’s Sabbath, Mr. Armstrong also discovered that Jesus kept the Sabbath on the seventh day of the week. And so did the apostle Paul, who routinely preached to the Gentiles on the Sabbath—NOT on Sunday! This was the same Paul who commanded all Christians, both Jew and Gentile, “Be you followers of me, even as I also am of Christ” (I Cor. 11:1). God’s Word also revealed to Mr. Armstrong that, as Creator, God made the Sabbath holy by resting on that day. And only God has the authority to make things holy—men cannot!

Mr. Armstrong then discovered the truth about the special Sabbath covenant, found in Exodus 31:12-18. In it, God set apart the weekly Sabbath as a sign—a special mark of identity—that identifies the one true God and His people. This Sabbath covenant was never “done away,” as so many erroneously believe. It is binding upon God’s people *forever*.

Unconditional Surrender

After six long months of studying day and night, Mr. Armstrong gave in. He accepted the truth that God’s Word revealed to him—that the Sabbath was indeed on the seventh day of the week (from sunset Friday to sunset Saturday), and that God expects people to “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy” (Ex. 20:8).

In addition to accepting this truth, along with disproving the theory of evolution, Mr. Armstrong was able to prove that God exists—that the Bible is His inspired instruction book for mankind, and that it carries divine authority!

He came to learn that the wages of sin is death (Rom. 6:23), not eternal life “roasting” in hell fire—that eternal life is God’s gift (same verse)—that the annual holy days and festivals of the Old Testament are still in effect and must be kept by God’s people—that the United States, Britain and other nations of the West descended from the “lost” ten tribes of ancient Israel—the pre-existence of angels at the creation of earth—and several other doctrinal truths.

Mr. Armstrong also came to accept the fact that God had been calling him (John 6:44), knocking him down and sweeping away his businesses in order to get his full attention. God wanted Mr. Armstrong to redirect his life’s focus to the most important goal in the universe: being born into the kingdom of God.

Ever since Mr. Armstrong was 16 years old, he had unknowingly practiced six of the SEVEN LAWS OF SUCCESS. When it came to this world’s version of success, he had the right goal (the FIRST LAW)—in this case, to be a dynamic, innovative business leader in the advertising profession.

To accomplish this goal, he had put himself through extensive on-the-job training and gained real-world experience. He had studied marketing, advertising, psychology, business management, journalism and writing, acquiring a solid and valuable education—the SECOND LAW of success.

Mr. Armstrong also had learned to keep his body and mind healthy. He discovered the benefits of physical fasting. He learned to limit the amount of eggs he ate, because they made him sluggish. He limited how much alcohol he consumed. He had also made it a point not to be obsessed with the escapism of motion pictures and fiction novels. In maintaining good health, Mr. Armstrong practiced the THIRD LAW of success.

He also prodded and drove himself. He worked against his natural tendency to slow down and lay back and, instead, pushed forward and ahead—especially when most men would take it easy. In constantly pushing and driving himself, Mr. Armstrong followed the FOURTH LAW of success.

Experience taught him that things do not always go as planned. At times, opportunities will arise from seemingly nowhere. Sometimes, trials, troubles and other problems suddenly erupt. Decisions must be made—many times on the spot! Mr. Armstrong experienced such circumstances many times, and it taught him to think on his feet—to *solve* the problem, not just identify it—to be resourceful, the FIFTH LAW.

But even practicing these first five laws was not enough to guarantee success. Mr. Armstrong knew that in order to be successful, he had to be able to weather the storm—to never give up, never give in—to keep moving forward, despite every trial and obstacle that presented itself. This was perseverance—*stick-to-it-iveness*—the SIXTH LAW of success. Those who fail to practice this law usually give up at the first sign of trouble. When things get tough, when problems pile up, most people give up, and doom themselves to failure.

Mr. Armstrong obeyed these first six laws—yet, at best, he could only achieve worldly, material success. God, through His inspired Word,

revealed to him that true and lasting success was eternal, something men know nothing about. This SEVENTH and *all-encompassing* LAW of success—contact with, guidance from and continuous help of God—meant focusing one’s life on mankind’s awesome human potential: to be born into the kingdom of God!

Because of this seventh law, Mr. Armstrong changed his life’s goal (the first law) of being a prominent and successful advertising executive. He now wanted to center his life on obeying and serving the true God of the Bible.

The seventh law also changed the way he observed the second law (having the right education). Instead of concerning himself almost exclusively with advertising, psychology and other business topics, Mr. Armstrong plunged into daily Bible study with a relentless interest.

In fact, by observing the seventh law of success, his focus in practicing the other six laws changed.

With his successful businesses twice swept out from beneath him, his wife’s amazing dream, and then having proved that God does exist and that the Bible is His inspired Word, and learning that the teachings and practices of traditional “Christianity” originate from the pagan traditions of men (Mark 7:6-7, 9), Mr. Armstrong came to realize that God was dealing with him. He came to recognize that God had been knocking him down, sweeping away the idols of vanity and self-importance, and the carnal desire for material success.

Mr. Armstrong faced an important crossroads in his life. One path led to rejecting God’s revealed truths, turning his back on these precious nuggets of knowledge and deep understanding. The other path led to accepting the truth of God’s Sabbath—which meant living contrary to all of his former friends, acquaintances and business associates, who rarely (if ever) concerned themselves with religion. (Those few who *were* religious blindly followed after the popular pagan customs of traditional Christianity.)

Concerning this monumental decision, Mr. Armstrong wrote, “To accept this truth meant—so I supposed—to *cut me off from all former friends, acquaintances and business associates*. I had come to meet some of the independent ‘Sabbath-keepers’ down around Salem and the Willamette Valley. Some of them were what I then, in my pride and conceit, regarded as backwoods ‘hillbillies.’ None were of the financial and social position of those I had associated with.

“My associations and pride had led me to ‘look down upon’ this class of people. I had been ambitious to hobnob with the wealthy and the cultural.

“I saw plainly what a decision was before me. To accept this truth meant to throw in my lot for life with a class of people I had always looked on as inferior. I learned later that God *looks on the heart*, and these humble people were the real salt of the earth. But I was then still looking on the outward appearance. It meant being cut off completely and forever from all to which I had aspired. It meant a total crushing of vanity. It meant a total *change of life!*”

Mr. Armstrong’s vanity and pride gave way to humility and defeat. Beaten, worn, frustrated, abased, he came to see himself the way God saw him. And despite all his unique talents, gifts, skills, training and experience, he humbly acknowledged that he was “nothing but a burned-out old hunk of junk.” From that moment on, Mr. Armstrong humbled himself and set his mind to serve God.

It was humiliating for him to admit to his wife that she had been right about the Sabbath. However, Mr. Armstrong was overjoyed to know that Christ, the living Word (John 1:1, 14), was revealing His truth to him through His written Word, the Holy Bible (17:17; II Tim. 3:16-17).

SEARCHING FOR THE TRUE CHURCH

Upon unconditionally surrendering to God, Mr. Armstrong found that he no longer resented Mrs. Runcorn, the elderly woman who had revealed the truth about the Sabbath to Mrs. Armstrong. Instead, he and his wife came to look up to Mr. and Mrs. Runcorn as their spiritual parents.

The Runcorns were members of the Church of God, Seventh-Day, which was headquartered in Stanberry, Missouri. Through this couple, Mr. and Mrs. Armstrong became acquainted with a small group of Church of God people scattered in Salem and down south in Oregon's Willamette Valley.

Mr. Armstrong believed Christ's promise that He would not let His true Church die out (Matt. 16:18)—*but where was it?* He knew that true Christians faithfully kept all of God's commandments, including the seventh-day Sabbath. To Mr. Armstrong's knowledge, the only Sabbath-keeping churches were the Seventh-Day Baptists, the Seventh-Day Adventists and the Church of God, Seventh-Day.

Mr. Armstrong's daily Bible studies revealed that Christ promised to keep His disciples in His Father's name (John 17:12), and that the Bible lists the name of God's Church 12 times—"Church of God." This ruled out the Seventh-Day Adventists and the Seventh-Day Baptists, who were named by human beings.

Some have believed that Mr. Armstrong was once a member of the Seventh-Day Adventists—but this was never the case. In fact, he never

attended any of their services. Since that organization was not named after God, Mr. Armstrong determined it could not be the same Church Christ built in A.D. 31.

Mr. Armstrong's search for the true Church had narrowed to the Church of God, Seventh-Day. And yet, he wrote, "They were so small, so uneducated, except for their limited amount of 'Sabbath-keeping' Bible knowledge—and their work, as I found, so ineffective and unproductive, I could not believe they could be God's one and only true Church" ("History of the Beginning and Growth of the Worldwide Church of God," *The Good News*, May 1980).

At that time, the Church was small and scattered, with less than 2,100 members, most living in rural areas. There were very few local congregations, and none as large as 100 members, and its ministry consisted of men who had little education. Though its elders preached with zeal, they lacked the power to attract sizeable audiences—the kind of preaching that moves people to action, stirs them up, and leads them to *want* to change their lifestyles.

Mr. Armstrong understood that "No person is even a member of the true Church unless he has received, and is filled and led by, the Holy Spirit—and the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of POWER! This little church seemed to be powerless—comparatively impotent! It was not stirring up the world! It was not making the whole world conscious of its existence and its power! I failed to see where it was bearing much if any fruit! Could a fruitless church be the ONE AND ONLY true Church of GOD on earth?"

"I was deeply perplexed," he wrote.

How could such a tiny, scattered, virtually dead organization be God's one true Church? This question constantly troubled Mr. Armstrong's mind: "I could not then reconcile myself to believing a church so small, so fruitless, with an uneducated ministry, could be God's one and only true Church" (Ibid.).

Because he could not reconcile this in his mind, Mr. Armstrong associated with its membership, but never became an official member of that organization.

Jesus Christ foretold that, from its birth on Pentecost, A.D. 31, His Church would exist through seven distinct eras over a 2,000-year time span—Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea (Rev. 2 and 3). Mr. Armstrong would later come to understand that the ministers and lay members he had been associating with were of the Sardis Era, whom Christ warned, "I know your works, that you have a *name* ['Church of God'] that you live, and are *dead*. Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die:

for I have not found your works perfect before God” (Rev. 3:1-2). This passage reveals the condition of the Sardis Era of God’s Church and of its brethren.

“Baptized Into Jesus Christ”

Mr. Armstrong no longer wanted to live his former way of life, that of putting material, worldly success first and foremost in his mind. His initial six months of study had led him to fear and to believe God. Now, he wanted to obey Him, to unconditionally surrender to God’s rule. Instead of following the way of vanity and self-importance, he decided to seek God’s way of love—outgoing concern for the well-being of others.

He learned that upon repenting of going the way of vanity and self-importance, he had fulfilled the first of two conditions to receiving God’s Holy Spirit: “REPENT, and be *baptized*” (Acts 2:38).

Mr. Armstrong knew he had to be baptized, but he wanted to do it God’s way. But how?—through immersion?—through the sprinkling, or pouring, of water? While he sought the counsel of several ministers to help him thoroughly understand water baptism, Mr. Armstrong determined to base his decision solely on the Word of God.

First, he approached a Church of God, Seventh-Day minister who was visiting from Texas, and asked him about water baptism. But this man was gruff and impatient. He let Mr. Armstrong know that he did not want to “waste” his time on answering the many questions of someone who was not baptized. Mr. Armstrong could not rely on this man for help.

So he went to three other men: a Quaker minister, a Seventh-Day Adventist pastor and a Baptist preacher. And, in the meantime, Mr. Armstrong studied the subject in the Bible.

The Quaker religion (which Mr. Armstrong and his parents and ancestors were reared in) did not teach water baptism—being immersed in water. After Mr. Armstrong peppered him with several questions, the Quaker minister admitted that he too had questioned his church’s teaching. But the man resolved his crisis of conscience by ignoring what the Bible taught about baptism, and following the traditions that the esteemed leaders of his church taught. Mr. Armstrong came away from this discussion both amazed and disappointed. Like so many have done throughout the centuries, the Quaker minister had rejected the laws of God to follow after the commandments of men (Mark 7:6-9).

Mr. Armstrong spoke with a preacher from the Seventh-Day Adventists, but he found his explanations to be cold and legalistic.

However, his counsel with a Baptist minister was different. Not only did he give the clearest and best explanation of water baptism, but he was also warm and friendly. He sincerely wanted to help. Though this man’s church observed Sunday worship and other pagan traditions, his knowledge about water baptism and the laying on of hands was in line with what the Bible actually taught. (Mr. Armstrong knew that the churches and denominations of traditional Christianity teach customs and traditions rooted in paganism—Christmas, Easter, birthday celebrations, etc. But many of these churches of the world did correctly teach one or two doctrines as taught in the Bible.)

Convinced that the Baptist minister would baptize according to the way God’s Word instructs, Mr. Armstrong asked him to perform his baptism. However, he stressed that he did NOT want to be baptized into that man’s church, denomination or religion. Instead, he asked that he be “baptized into Jesus Christ” (Rom. 6:3).

(Today, during baptismal ceremonies conducted by God’s Church, just before the ceremony is to take place, the person to be baptized is told that he is *not* being baptized into any sect or denomination of this world.)

Mr. Armstrong had to appear before a board of trustees to see if they would authorize their pastor to fulfill his request. The board was so impressed by his understanding of the scriptures that they unanimously agreed in his favor.

And so, in the spring of 1927, Herbert W. Armstrong was baptized into the body of Christ.

Learning That God Heals

The Armstrongs continued living in Portland, frequently visiting with Church of God brethren in neighboring Oregon City, and down in Salem, Jefferson and other towns.

It was the practice of one small, leaderless group to ask its visitors to give a sermon. Mr. Armstrong received such a request, but he quickly declined. Being a preacher was the *last* thing he wanted to be.

However, when he received another invitation, he accepted it, because he was anxious to tell them about God’s special Sabbath covenant (Ex. 31:12-18), of which he knew they were unaware.

As he grew in biblical knowledge and understanding, and continued to come out of the traditions and customs in which he had been reared,

Mr. Armstrong learned the truths of God one doctrine at a time. That August, he learned that God heals.

Mrs. Armstrong had been suffering from a series of health problems (a swelling in her throat that kept her from eating and drinking, blood poisoning, etc.), and a doctor determined that she had only 24 hours to live. Also, having gone without sleep, food and drink for three days, Mrs. Armstrong was near exhaustion.

At that time, a neighbor visited her and asked whether Mr. Armstrong would permit a man to come with his wife for the purpose of anointing Mrs. Armstrong and praying for her healing. Though he feared that the couple might turn out to be religious fanatics, Mr. Armstrong reluctantly agreed.

When they arrived, Mr. Armstrong asked the man if he would answer a few questions before praying for his wife. This man welcomed his questions, and all of his answers came directly from the Bible. Mr. Armstrong was familiar with the passages the man quoted, but had never before thought of them in regard to healing. He began to understand and believe in God's promise to heal—and Mrs. Armstrong also agreed.

When the man anointed Mrs. Armstrong with oil, he prayed in a quiet, positive tone with earnestness and sincerity. It was unlike any prayer that Mr. Armstrong had ever heard. In it, the man boldly approached God, reminding Him of what He had promised to do. The man acknowledged that people deserve nothing from God, but can claim promises because of Christ's sacrifice and God's boundless mercy. He then asked God to completely heal Mrs. Armstrong, stressing that he was holding God to His promise to heal.

Mr. Armstrong had never heard anyone talk so boldly to God as did this man. It was a short prayer, lasting only a couple of minutes, but the words were heartfelt. Mr. Armstrong *knew* God heard them—both he and his wife had complete faith that she was healed.

After the prayer, the man's wife assured Mrs. Armstrong that she would sleep well that night. And she did. She awoke at nearly noon the next day, arose and dressed as if she had never been ill. This healing was a powerful new lesson in faith for the Armstrongs—that whatever God has promised, He will do. The Bible is filled with thousands of promises, and they are there for us to claim.

Although some evangelical groups try to make healing their centerpiece (like a disreputable circus sideshow seeking to deceive the public for money), Mr. Armstrong learned that healing in the first-century Church was intricately tied to preaching the gospel—the good news of

the kingdom of God. He came to understand that the Church, from its start in A.D. 31, always looked to God for healing.

Steady Opposition

Naturally, Mr. Armstrong wanted to share this wonderful revealed knowledge of truth with others. The next time he visited brethren in the Willamette Valley, he received another invitation to speak, and that Sabbath morning, he preached that God is our Healer, and still heals today.

However, during the afternoon services, a visiting minister attacked Mr. Armstrong's sermon, twisting scriptures to drive his point home. This was the first of *many* attempts by ministers to accuse and attack him. Yet, in spite of this attack, the lay members liked Mr. Armstrong and appreciated his message.

Due to his training in writing advertising copy and magazine articles, Mr. Armstrong routinely transformed his daily Bible studies into articles for his own benefit. He then submitted several of them to *The Bible Advocate*, a magazine published by the Church of God, Seventh-Day, and his articles began appearing on the front cover.

However, after a (seemingly) friendly visit with a minister from headquarters, Mr. Armstrong's article submissions were soon rejected.

Mr. Armstrong began to regularly meet with a small group of Church of God brethren who assembled every Sabbath in Oregon City, just outside Portland. Lacking a local minister to guide and teach them, they studied their "Sabbath-school lessons" from quarterlies published by Stanberry headquarters.

Almost immediately, they asked Mr. Armstrong to lead them in studying their lessons, and—because of his drive, growing knowledge of God's Word, and his ability to organize his thoughts and explain ideas in plain, easy-to-understand language—he was soon delivering "sermons" (more like informal talks) every Sabbath.

G.A. Hobbs, an elderly pillar of the congregation, learned that *The Bible Advocate* had stopped publishing Mr. Armstrong's articles. Mr. Hobbs wrote a scorching letter of protest to Stanberry. The editor of the magazine explained that Mr. Armstrong's articles were being rejected at the request of that visiting minister. Since Mr. Armstrong was not a member of their organization, the minister felt threatened and reasoned that it was dangerous to give him such standing and prestige in the eyes of the local brethren. Mr. Hobbs sent back a fiery response—and Mr. Armstrong's articles were immediately reinstated.

A Lesson in Humility

At this time, with only one laundry account to rely upon, the Armstrongs went through very difficult financial times, often going hungry and not having enough money to pay their electric and gas bills. Many times, lacking carfare to take his family, Mr. Armstrong had to travel alone to Sabbath services in Oregon City. There were even times that he had to walk the entire trip.

His family's situation became so desperate, Mr. Armstrong fervently prayed for God to open a door and provide them with money or a way to earn it.

About an hour or so later, a woman they had never seen before came to their home and told Mr. Armstrong about an opportunity to make money. It involved throwing two truckloads of wood into someone's basement. In Portland, this was the kind of odd job that was given to people who were "down and out"—the poorest of the poor. To be seen doing this kind of work was a humiliating blow to someone who had once run a successful Chicago advertising business.

But Mr. Armstrong did not allow pride to get in the way. His family's survival was far more important. He also realized that God was teaching him a valuable lesson in humility. Mr. Armstrong determined to do the best job he could—striving to do it GOD's way.

As he stacked the wood into a neat and orderly pile, Mr. Armstrong winced every time someone passed by, for he knew they thought he was nothing more than a bum.

"Each passerby knocked off a little more of that vanity. But I just prayed silently to God about it, and thanked Him for the lesson, and asked Him to help me to be humble and industrious."

When Mr. Armstrong was finished, he was paid *double* for doing such fast and orderly work.

Looking back years later at these and many other humbling lessons, Mr. Armstrong recognized that God had been preparing him to fulfill a great commission—a role that required someone of outstanding talent and training, but also of great meekness and humility. He knew that every human being has an idol that must be torn down before God can use him. In Mr. Armstrong's case, God was tearing down "an egotistical sense of self-importance—a cocky self-assurance—a passion to become successful in the eyes of the material world."

As He does with all His servants, God was developing *His* holy, righteous character within Mr. Armstrong, which could only be done

through time and experience. While Mr. Armstrong grew in the *spiritual* riches of biblical knowledge and understanding, God withheld *material* blessings from him. For 28 years, Mr. Armstrong's *self*-confidence was being replaced with total reliance and dependence on God.

Family Additions

Back when Mrs. Armstrong had been healed of her near-deathbed illness in August 1927, she and her husband had claimed God's promise to *completely* heal her of *everything*, including her inability to bear more children.

And so, walking by faith, they had another child—a baby boy. Richard David Armstrong was born on October 13, 1928. "That day," Mr. Armstrong wrote, "was the happiest day of my life. I was simply filled to overflowing with gratitude to a merciful, loving God who so richly LAVISHES on us His grace and blessings completely beyond all we can anticipate or hope for—IF we yield our lives to Him and do those things that are pleasing in His sight—IF we seek *first* God's Kingdom and His righteousness!"

The Armstrongs were so grateful to God that they dedicated young Richard to His service. And, 15 months later, God gave them another son—Garner Ted.

The Oregon Conference

Near the end of 1930, the Oregon members of the Church of God (half of whom were opposed to the leadership at Stanberry, Missouri) formed the Oregon Conference. Like other state conferences, its purpose was to create a local treasury and keep their tithes and offerings in the state, instead of sending them off to headquarters. It also established a democratic form of church government: Ministers were employed by, and under the authority of, lay members—in other words, government from the bottom up.

Similar to the question of "Where is God's true Church?", Mr. Armstrong was perplexed about Church government. Without the clear understanding that would come to him several years later, he went along with the Conference's idea of "bottom up" government.

Even though he was not a minister, the newly elected officers asked Mr. Armstrong to hold an 11-night evangelistic campaign in Harrisburg, Oregon. This was the first time he ever preached before the general public, and it yielded fruit: Four new converts asked to be baptized.

Since he was not ordained, Mr. Armstrong consulted with a visiting Stanberry minister, who was confined to his bed due to a broken leg. Both men examined Matthew 28:19-20, Acts 2:37-41, and the example of the deacon Philip in Acts 8, who baptized those to whom he preached in Samaria. Both men concluded that Mr. Armstrong had God's authority to baptize these four new converts. So he baptized them.

This brought him criticism from certain church leaders at Stanberry because the Oregon Conference had paid for Mr. Armstrong's expenses, even though he was not a member of the Church of God, Seventh-Day. This was only the beginning of much more opposition to come.

The campaign stirred things up in the local religious community, and got the attention of a pastor in neighboring Junction City, who invited Mr. Armstrong to hold a campaign there as well.

Ordained Into Christ's Ministry

In the spring of 1931, the Armstrongs moved to nearby Salem. In the summer, the Oregon Conference asked Mr. R.L. Taylor, a minister visiting from California, to hold an evangelistic campaign down in Eugene. The board members were impressed by his preaching style. Mr. Taylor gladly accepted, but on one condition: that Mr. Armstrong be put into the full-time ministry and join him in the campaign.

Again, when God first called him, the very *last* thing Mr. Armstrong wanted to become was a minister. However, after having preached a great deal for about three and a half years, he was zealous to serve God in whatever role He determined.

In June 1931, Herbert W. Armstrong was ordained by the Oregon Conference of The Church of God (which was separately incorporated from Stanberry headquarters). Mr. Armstrong was never a member nor under the ministerial authority of Stanberry.

Employed as evangelists at \$20 per week, Mr. Armstrong and Mr. Taylor set off to hold their campaign. Yet, contrary to the success he had during his first campaign, Mr. Armstrong was surprised that this one bore no fruit. People came to hear the preaching, but were not moved to do anything about it. He was perplexed.

Then came one stormy, water-soaked night that kept people from attending—everyone except for Elmer and Margaret Fisher, successful farmers who lived seven miles west of Eugene. Since no one else had shown up, services were cancelled. Mr. Taylor decided to go home, but Mr. Armstrong stayed to conduct a Bible study for the Fishers. Upon their request, he revealed to them and explained the New Testament passages



From a portrait of Mr. and Mrs. Herbert W. Armstrong

about the Sabbath. And, because of his patience, hospitality, and ability to make things plain, Mr. and Mrs. Fisher decided to keep God's Sabbath.

During the Eugene campaign, the Oregon Conference hired another minister, Elder R. Dailey. He and Mr. Armstrong were assigned to conduct a campaign in St. Helens, about 25 miles north of Portland. Despite newspaper ads and advertising circulars, the campaign was a failure.

With the Conference's permission, they switched to Umapine. After two weeks of campaign meetings, Mr. Taylor rushed off to attend a Conference business meeting, fearing that he was about to be laid off. But Mr. Armstrong chose to stay behind and continue the campaign—which, when he worked alone, had produced a small congregation of five local members, including four new converts.

They did not have a trained and experienced local minister to lead them, so Mr. Armstrong organized this small group into a local Sabbath school, and appointed one of them to act as superintendent and teacher. The tiny flock lasted for a while after Mr. Armstrong left. However, without a faithful shepherd to lead and protect God's flock from "grievous wolves" (Acts 20:29), they scattered into the wind.

These and other events would lead Mr. Armstrong to understand two things:

(1) When he teamed with ministers of the Sardis Era, no fruit was borne. But whenever he worked alone, God blessed him with growth. (Years later, Mr. Armstrong asked Mrs. Runcorn and others if there had ever been a single true convert resulting from the efforts of any of the Stanberry ministers. They all answered no.)

(2) God's people need faithful, loyal ministers to teach, protect, feed and guide them—otherwise, they cannot spiritually and doctrinally survive. Many unsuccessful attempts to start and maintain thriving congregations would prove this point time and again.

A Fifteen-Month Detour

At this same time, the nation was in the midst of the Great Depression, affecting everyone. Low on funds, the board of the Oregon Conference could no longer afford the salaries of three full-time ministers. So Mr. Armstrong and Mr. Dailey were temporarily laid off, while Mr. Taylor was kept on.

Mr. Armstrong reluctantly took a temporary advertising job with *The Morning Messenger*, a fledgling daily newspaper in Astoria, Oregon. He knew that God had called him to the ministry, so Mr. Armstrong intended to keep this job only for a month. However, "Human reason is usual-

ly faulty," he wrote. "But this did *seem* like the right decision. I was to pay a high price over the next 15 months to learn that lesson."

Mr. Armstrong's one-month job turned into 15 months. God waited until the end of February 1933 to give him another opportunity to return to His ministry. And afterward, Mr. Armstrong made sure to never again detour from the Work of God.

Tithing Works

During the 15 long months from the ministry, Mr. Armstrong studied the subject of tithing. He learned that God owns the earth and everything in it (Psa. 24:1), and that He only requires man to pay ten percent of his income, plus offerings: "Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed Me. But you say, Wherein have we robbed You? In tithes and offerings. You are cursed with a curse: for you have robbed Me, even this whole nation. Bring you all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in My house, and PROVE ME now herewith, says the LORD of Hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and *pour you out a blessing*, that there *shall not be room enough to receive it*" (Mal. 3:8-10).

This is a test command—with many benefits for obedience.

Mr. Armstrong recognized his mistake, and began to tithe, along with giving offerings. That same day, a door of opportunity opened and the Armstrong household was able to reasonably stock up with food—including a thick steak dinner! Though they experienced another 14 years of poverty, never again did they go hungry from lack of food. Since they obeyed God's tithing command, God kept His promise to provide for their every need—and more.

Over the years, Mr. Armstrong's writings revealed the doctrine of tithing to countless people, many of whom sent reports of how God had wonderfully blessed them for their faithful obedience.

Back Into God's Ministry

In late February 1933, God answered Mr. Armstrong's prayers and led him back into the full-time ministry. Small amounts of tithes and offerings had trickled in to the Oregon Conference, adding up to enough funds to hire another minister—but only at \$3 per week. However, the local membership, most of whom were farmers, agreed to supply the minister and his family with vegetables, grains and so forth, along with a limited supply of foodstuffs (sacks of whole wheat flour, beans, raw sugar, etc.). The congregation would also pay the house rent.

Mr. A.J. Ray, former president of the California Conference, was maneuvering to get his close friend, Elder S. Oberg, the position. But Mike Helms, a friend of Mr. Armstrong's and president of the Oregon board, swiftly intervened and Mr. Armstrong was hired.

Sometimes, the Conference was unable to pay the Armstrongs' rent, so Mrs. Armstrong would occasionally have to earn money by washing the landlady's laundry.

Bearing Fruit

Mr. Armstrong followed the practice of thinking big. He wanted to hold a large city-wide campaign, along with Mr. Oberg.

But Mr. Oberg did not see the big picture. Instead, he and Mr. Ray wanted to hold a small campaign limited to a local Salem neighborhood. They had their way, and, as had always happened when Mr. Armstrong teamed with Sardis ministers, their tiny campaign bore no fruit.

Four months of meetings largely attracted "Pentecostal" and "holy roller" types, who only came to have a "good time," not to hear the inspired preaching of God's truth.

This, along with constant plots and backstabbing from Sardis ministers, frustrated Mr. Armstrong. On top of this, he had to deal with the death of his father, which happened that same year.

Finally, the fruitless campaign came to an end. Mr. Fisher, the chairman of the school board, asked Mr. Armstrong to start a campaign in the one-room, 36-seat Firbutte schoolhouse, out in the countryside west of Eugene. Mr. Armstrong agreed, and, working alone, maintained an average attendance of about 40 people during the six-week campaign. A sizeable number became members of the Church.

Meanwhile, the Conference had rented a 150-seat church in Harrisburg and assigned Mr. Oberg to minister there. His campaign yielded a much smaller audience. This fueled even more jealousy over Mr. Armstrong's ministry.

Continuous Attacks

Mr. Oberg and Mr. Ray were warm and friendly to Mr. Armstrong's face, but they constantly plotted against him, seemingly at every turn. They secretly spoke against him and his wife, sowing seeds of hatred toward him among certain brethren. These two preachers desperately wanted to get Mr. Armstrong thrown out of the ministry and take his meager salary and the other money used for his rent and food supplies.

In one of their plots, they planned to discredit him by falsely accusing Mrs. Armstrong of not being a neat housekeeper—supposed "proof" that Mr. Armstrong did not rule his household well, and therefore that he failed to meet one of the biblical qualifications of a true minister of God (I Tim. 3:1-7).

Their plan, however, backfired.

In another plot, Mr. Oberg and Mr. Ray spread the word that, while the brethren toiled and labored on their farms, Mr. Armstrong was living the "easy life." They used innuendo to subtly suggest that he was lazy, and that the "only" work Mr. Armstrong had to do was preach sermons, visit and counsel with brethren and prospective members, conduct Bible studies, publish church announcements, and so forth. Incredibly, some were gullible enough to believe these attacks.

Milas Helms warned Mr. Armstrong of what was being said, and offered a way to counteract the plot: If Mr. Armstrong would chop down a large tree on the Helms farm, and split the wood, he could keep it for his household—a year's worth of fuel. Mr. Armstrong gladly accepted. News of his hard labor spread and another plot came to nothing.

In yet another attack, Mr. Armstrong was accused of not preaching to prospective members the doctrine of avoiding unclean meats. To address this, he calmly explained in writing that he was aware that God forbids people to eat unclean meats, such as pork, lobster, crab, etc., and that these and other animals were not created for man's consumption. To eat of their flesh was a *physical* sin. Mr. Armstrong pointed out that eating unclean meats does not directly violate the Ten Commandments, unless someone lusts for it, breaking the Tenth Commandment (which, we could add for purposes here, would almost always be the case). Then, pointing to Romans 14:17—"For the kingdom of God *is not meat and drink*; but RIGHTEOUSNESS, and PEACE, and JOY in the Holy Spirit"—Mr. Armstrong explained that he was commissioned to preach the gospel of God's kingdom to the general public, while teaching the details of doctrine to God's flock, including clean and unclean meats.

Then he asked his accusers to show him from the Bible where he was wrong, or where the Bible teaches that God's ministers *must* preach about unclean meats to those who are *not* being called.

The only answer Mr. Armstrong received was silence.

Double-Crossed!

About a week before the end of his campaign at the Firbutte schoolhouse, Mr. Armstrong baptized Elmer Fisher's brother Ernest. Mr. Oberg

and Mr. Ray used this and other recent baptisms that Mr. Armstrong had performed, and proceeded to attack. They accused him of baptizing people before preaching to them the laws of clean and unclean meats.

Mr. Armstrong had to silently sit through an all-day, inquisition-like trial at a Conference business meeting in Harrisburg while his detractors preached against him. Yet, he was only allowed 15 minutes to speak in his defense.

He clearly explained his position, and then, due to circumstances that needed his presence back at the schoolhouse, Mr. Armstrong asked the board members and ministers to postpone making a decision until he could attend another meeting with them. All agreed.

However, the minute he and those who supported him (about half) had departed, Mr. Oberg and Mr. Ray broke their promise. They swayed the remaining people to establish a resolution requiring Mr. Armstrong to baptize people *their* way.

Learning of their decision, Mr. Armstrong wrote them back, telling them to keep the \$3 per week salary. He neither resigned from the Conference nor was he removed from it. In fact, he continued his friendship and brotherhood with these people. However, Mr. Armstrong knew that he had to obey God rather than men. Unlike most preachers, he was determined not to bend to the will of the people over the will of God. He stepped out in faith and relied on God—not men—to supply his needs.

In the June 24, 1985 special edition of the *Worldwide News*, Mr. Armstrong wrote, “I continued to work with and fellowship with West Coast members of the Sardis era until 1942, when the rapidly growing work of the fledgling Philadelphia era required my full time. The present era was officially begun in October, 1933.”

“I HAVE SET BEFORE YOU AN OPEN DOOR”

Mr. Armstrong had come to a crucial crossroads. He knew that he had to preach the truth God’s way—not the way men wanted it done. If he chose to bend to the will of the people, God could not use him. Mr. Armstrong had known of preachers who held back from preaching the truth of the Bible, because they knew it would upset some people, perhaps even causing some to stop supporting their ministry. Fear of losing financial support caused such men to be more concerned with preaching what people *wanted* to hear instead of what they *needed* to hear.

But Mr. Armstrong was different. Like Paul and other faithful servants of God, he was driven to preach what *God* wanted him to preach (I Cor. 9:16). To serve God, Mr. Armstrong knew that he would have to rely solely on *Him* for support, not people. So he rejected his \$3 per week salary, choosing to trust God instead to provide for his every need (Phil. 4:19).

Even after severing direct ties with the Oregon Conference brethren, Mr. Armstrong continued to be friendly and cooperate with them. And many of them often attended the services he conducted at the Firbutte schoolhouse. The Sardis membership had, for the most part, always been friendly toward Mr. and Mrs. Armstrong. It was their ministers who attacked and persecuted them. They were jealous at his success in attracting followers, while their campaigns were fruitless. They did everything they could to attack his ministry and stop God’s Work.

“Bible Form of Organization”

Andrew Dugger, the leading minister of the Church of God, Seventh-Day, had a falling out with his organization, and started his own church group in 1932, headquartered at Salem, West Virginia. Mr. Dugger and his new offshoot claimed that their form of government came directly from the Bible—“12 apostles,” “70 elders” and a board of seven. In turn, this new group accused the organization it had splintered from of having an unbiblical form of Church government.

This puzzled and confused all the brethren as to what was actually the right form of Church government. Even Mr. Armstrong was uncertain:

“But in my days of trying to work with them, between 1927 and somewhere around 1941 to 1947, there was so much controversy over what constituted God’s CHURCH GOVERNMENT that I, myself, became completely confused on that point. I could see that their systems were so wrong that I assumed that God’s Church is a SPIRITUAL ORGANISM, and not a church ORGANIZATION. I did not want to assume any rule or authority that I ought not, and consequently when troublemakers and wrong attitudes came into our little Church in Eugene, Oregon, I wielded no authority whatsoever, and the result was a church split in two” (“Personal,” *The Good News*, August 1969).

Since God had not yet revealed to him what kind of government should function in the true Church, Mr. Armstrong went along with what the brethren were practicing at the time—a form of democracy, or congregationalism.

The Sardis brethren in the Willamette Valley were divided. One faction remained loyal to Stanberry, while the Oregon Conference was attracted to Mr. Dugger’s group and its “Bible form of organization.” Elders Ray and Oberg tried to steer the Conference into joining Mr. Dugger’s offshoot.

But Mr. Armstrong and those under him decided to leave it up to God to show them what to do. For about three years, they fellowshipped and cooperated with the Salem, West Virginia group—regularly sending minister’s reports, for example—but neither officially joined its membership nor came under its authority. Neither did Mr. Armstrong accept a salary or expense money from them. He was not fully convinced that Mr. Dugger had the “Bible form of organization,” as he had claimed. However, Mr. Dugger listed him as one of the “70 elders,” despite the fact that Mr. Armstrong had never joined them or worked for them.

Physically Poor—But Spiritually Rich

In these early years of the Great Depression, Mr. Armstrong and his family struggled to stay afloat in the turbulent financial waters of the times. Mrs. Armstrong wore hand-me-downs from her younger sister. Mr. Armstrong often had to walk or hitchhike to Church services, eight miles away. He owned only one pair of shoes—and they had holes in them. He only possessed one suit, which he wore virtually every day of the week as he conducted Church services and Bible studies, and counseled with people. The brethren were moved to take up a collection, and bought him a new suit.

But what Mr. and Mrs. Armstrong lacked in material possessions, they made up for with growing faith and increasing trust in God. Time and again, they learned through firsthand experience—through numerous miraculous answers to fervent prayer—that God provides for those who put *His* will and interests first.

Rejecting the Truth

With the exception of two or three families, none of the Sardis brethren would accept the truth God had revealed to Mr. Armstrong early in his calling: the observance of God’s annual feasts and holy days, the identity of the Anglo-Saxon peoples of the United States and Britain as descendants of the ten “lost” tribes of Israel, and other biblical teachings. The people of Sardis were content with the small number of doctrines they possessed and were not willing to change.

Mr. Armstrong had even tested Stanberry headquarters with biblical proof that they were teaching error. Privately, they admitted that he was right, yet they refused to correct their errors. They were too afraid of upsetting tithepayers, fearing that they might leave. Even the top leader privately admitted that new Bible truth had been revealed to Mr. Armstrong—but that minister, like the others, publicly rejected the truth, and even attacked Mr. Armstrong for preaching it.

And so, Mr. and Mrs. Armstrong kept the Feast of Tabernacles and the other annual festivals and Sabbaths of God by themselves. Seven years would pass before God revealed to them the true meaning and significance of His days. But, like the patriarch Abraham, Mr. Armstrong did not wait for an explanation before following God’s commands. Whenever God revealed His will to him, Mr. Armstrong obeyed without question.

A Door Is Opened

Immediately after Mr. Armstrong rejected his salary from the Oregon Conference, God opened a door to preach the gospel to a wider audience.

In October 1933, Mr. Armstrong learned that KORE, a local 100-watt radio station, offered 15 minutes of free daily broadcasting as a public service. This was an opportunity to instantly reach several hundred listeners at once! Mr. Armstrong immediately went down to the station, and was given free airtime the following week.

Looking back years later, he was amazed that “The ministers of the churches in Eugene had not considered the opportunity to get a Gospel message on the air of sufficient importance to rise early enough to be at the radio station at 7:45 weekday mornings. But to me, it was the most important OPPORTUNITY to proclaim God’s TRUTH that had so far come to me” (“The History of the Beginning and Growth of the Worldwide Church of God, Chapter Four,” *The Good News*, August 1980).

Mr. Armstrong spent that week preparing extensive notes. For all he knew, this might have been a one-time opportunity. He was determined not to waste it.

Having never done a radio broadcast before, Mr. Armstrong worried that he would be struck by “mike-fright.” On the morning of the first broadcast, the program announcer did not arrive until 15 seconds before it was time to go on the air. Mr. Armstrong asked him for instructions, but all the man said was “Just stand up there in front of the mike, and start talking as soon as I announce you.”

During the brief announcement, Mr. Armstrong felt calm and secure. “Well,” he thought, “I don’t have any ‘mike-fright.’ I’m sure glad of that!”

He confidently spoke into the microphone: “Greetings, friends!”

And then he froze!

With all his might, Mr. Armstrong struggled to control his grasping for breath and fought to ignore the wild, heart-pounding fear that shot through his body. He forced himself to focus on his notes, and then he spoke carefully, deliberately, while trying to sound as calm and as natural as he could. After two or three minutes, his breathing was under control. Fear gave way to zeal—and for the rest of the program, he boldly preached the truth of the Bible, making it plain and easy to understand.

His 15-minute message struck at the heart of the gospel of the kingdom of God. Beginning with Genesis 12, Mr. Armstrong revealed that

God had promised THE ENTIRE EARTH to Abraham and his descendants for an everlasting possession—not *heaven*, as is commonly believed in the churches of traditional Christianity.

During the next morning’s broadcast, Mr. Armstrong knew that his case of “mike-fright” was a thing of the past. Throughout that week of radio broadcasts, he confidently preached about the world tomorrow and God’s soon-coming kingdom.

Birth of the Radio Broadcast

That Thursday after the morning broadcast, Frank Hill, the owner/manager of KORE, had some news for Mr. Armstrong—both good and bad.

First, the good news: The messages Mr. Armstrong had given were unlike anything radio listeners had ever heard before. They wanted to learn more—they made phone calls and sent in letters to the radio station, asking for literature, even though Mr. Armstrong did not offer any.

Next was the bad news: Mr. Armstrong’s listeners had confronted their pastors and asked them why they were preaching the opposite of what the Bible taught. Embarrassed, these local ministers got together, and informed Mr. Hill that they did not want Mr. Armstrong preaching on the air anymore. And to make certain of this, one of them would be at the station every morning thereafter and take up the free 15-minute airtime.

Mr. Hill could no longer give Mr. Armstrong free air time, but he liked the listener response, and he thought highly of Mr. Armstrong’s broadcasting voice. So he suggested to Mr. Armstrong that they work out a half-hour radio program, broadcasting it as a public service every Sunday. Mr. Hill offered to sell him a half-hour segment on Sunday mornings for less than half of what it would cost the station—\$2.50 per half hour.

Mr. Armstrong sent a letter to a small mailing list of Church members and past contributors, asking them for pledges to finance the broadcasting of the radio program. Preaching the true gospel cost money, yet the brethren were not of the rich and famous, the “movers and shakers” of society. They were mostly farmers and country people, who scrimped and saved to regularly pay tithes and give offerings. In order to spread Christ’s gospel beyond the walls of Church services, the brethren had to sacrifice above and beyond their regular contributions—not an easy thing to do during the Great Depression. However, following Mr. Armstrong’s lead, they took up pledges and were able to

raise half the amount to finance the weekly broadcast: \$1.25 per week. Deciding to step out on faith and trust God to provide the other half, Mr. Armstrong arranged to begin broadcasting the radio program every Sunday, beginning January 1934. This was the birth of the *Radio Church of God* radio program—and the start of many amazing, awe-inspiring things to come.

The cost seems insignificant by today's standards, but \$2.50 per week during the Great Depression seemed like a huge obstacle—especially after Mr. Armstrong had rejected his \$3 per week salary. But he knew that God had opened this door, and he was determined to walk through it. He decided to rely on God to provide the money, which had to be paid *in advance* of each broadcast.

And God did provide.

For instance, one Sunday morning when Mr. Armstrong did not have the money to pay for the broadcast, he and his wife fervently prayed for God to intervene. As they prayed, a man knocked on the door and handed them his tithe payment—which paid the radio time for that morning. On another Sunday morning in which Mr. Armstrong did not have the money, he started walking to the radio station, believing that God would intervene—and on the way, a stranger handed him the funds that were needed.

These and similar events increased Mr. Armstrong's faith even more, and inspired him to be even more urgent in proclaiming the good news of Christ returning to bring world peace and universal happiness.

From Small Beginnings

By the end of Mr. Armstrong's six-week nightly campaign at the Firbutte schoolhouse, a congregation of 19 had been established, including the Armstrongs, the Fishers and others. These early brethren were the pioneers of what became the Philadelphia Era.

The members were organized as The Church of God at Eugene, Oregon, and met at the Jeans schoolhouse, about four miles west of their former location and 12 miles west of Eugene. With Mr. Armstrong as pastor and Mr. Fisher as deacon, the Church met three times a week—Tuesday and Thursday nights, and afternoon services on the Sabbath. The average attendance was 22 people.

In addition to doing radio broadcasts, Mr. Armstrong began holding evangelistic campaign meetings three times a week at an old Masonic Temple building in downtown Eugene, which had an auditorium on the second floor, with retail stores on the first floor.

These meetings, held every Sunday, Wednesday and Friday night for almost six months, were Mr. Armstrong's first attempt at holding campaigns three times a week. He advertised them through the radio program and mimeographed handbills. About 100 people attended per meeting, with only about 15 being baptized during this time period.

At these meetings, Mr. Armstrong had trouble dealing with "Pentecostal" types—people who were more concerned with getting emotional "highs" than with learning God's truth. They were turned off by any sermon that taught obedience to God and His laws. Ironically, whenever these people needed a minister to pray for their healing, they rushed to Mr. Armstrong.

One "Pentecostal" church, which also broadcast a radio program on KORE, told its listeners that it was acceptable to visit any other churches—just as long as they stayed away from Mr. Armstrong's campaign meetings.

The converts produced from Mr. Armstrong's efforts were organized into a local congregation, meeting at his home for morning Sabbath services in Eugene.

Mr. Armstrong began another campaign—this time six nights per week for six weeks—at the two-room Alvadore schoolhouse, 15 miles northwest of Eugene. About three or four Seventh Day Adventist families attended, but one man among them came only to find out what Mr. Armstrong was preaching so that he could discredit him. Yet, the others would not listen to these attacks.

Desperate, the man heckled Mr. Armstrong during his sermon, which was about Christ being in the tomb three days and three nights, proving that the crucifixion was *not* on Friday, and that Christ was *not* resurrected on Sunday morning. The heckler tried to embarrass Mr. Armstrong—so Mr. Armstrong had no choice but to embarrass *him*. He told the young man to spend the rest of the sermon looking up biblical proof for his claims, and to be ready to read it aloud to the whole audience. When the sermon concluded, Mr. Armstrong called on his heckler to read aloud his proof—but the man could not answer. He fumbled through his Bible, looking for verses to refute what Mr. Armstrong had just proven from the scriptures. The heckler stood helpless and confused as people sitting around him began to laugh. Finally, Mr. Armstrong put the man out of his misery and told him to sit down. This was the only time Mr. Armstrong had ever done this, and he did so because, in that circumstance, he felt it was the best way to defend God's truth and keep people from being deceived. (Notice Proverbs 26:5.)

These meetings also yielded 15 baptized members.

“A Magazine of Understanding”

As early as 1927, Mr. Armstrong had envisioned the creation of a magazine that would be like no other publication on earth, without commercial advertising or a subscription price. In the spirit of Mark 13:10 and Matthew 24:14, he would publish and proclaim the gospel, or good news, of the kingdom of God. It would explain why man cannot solve the troubles, ills, evils and problems that continually plague him. It would reveal the true meaning of biblical prophecy, which had been concealed in the murky waters of false prophetic teachings. This unique magazine would be called *The Plain Truth*.

Relying on his extensive advertising training and experience, Mr. Armstrong created a mock-up version. He also had a professional letter-artist design its front cover. However, it was not God’s timing to publish *The Plain Truth* in 1927.

Now that God had opened the door for him to proclaim Christ’s gospel on the radio, Mr. Armstrong believed that the time was ripe to publish *The Plain Truth* magazine, which Mr. Armstrong decided should carry the subtitle of “a magazine of understanding.” He announced it to listeners of the *Radio Church of God* program, offering it free of charge. Mr. Armstrong knew that this Work had to be of God—that it could not be of men. He relied on God to inspire those who requested the magazine to contribute donations, tithes and offerings. Yet, Mr. Armstrong never asked the general public for contributions. He only asked this of regular contributors, whom he called “co-workers”—human instruments God had called to contribute to the spreading of the true gospel, the most important message in the history of mankind—people who voluntarily wanted to spread this message, who wanted to share with others the spiritual knowledge and understanding with which God had blessed them.

The first issue of *The Plain Truth* was published on February 1, 1934, and began with about 350 subscribers. Without extra funds to fall back on, Mr. Armstrong employed the fifth law of success—resourcefulness. He borrowed a typewriter and bought some mimeograph stencils and paper, and, having free, temporary access to a mimeograph machine, he produced and published the inaugural edition.

Afterward, the magazine was published on a used \$10 Neostyle, which predated the mimeograph. It had to be operated by hand, with paper being fed into it one sheet at a time. Articles were created on a secondhand typewriter, which also cost \$10.

The Plain Truth was always intended to be written for the general public, and not exclusively for Church members or religious people. Its purpose was to take the gospel to non-religious people and make God’s truth plain to them.

Years later, Mr. Armstrong wrote, “It is doubtful whether any institution in human history started from as humble and small beginnings. When GOD starts something on His power alone, it is BIG from the beginning. For example, the creation of the UNIVERSE—the creation of the earth. But when God starts something through humans, it usually, like the grain of mustard seed, starts the very smallest and most humble, and then grows as the spiritual character of the humans develops” (“Now It Must Be Revealed How the Worldwide Church of God Began,” *The Good News*, May 1979).

The Plain Truth was part of what Mr. Armstrong called a “Three-Point Campaign”: The radio broadcast brought in listeners—the magazine gave readers greater details of what the Bible actually teaches—and these were followed and reinforced by nightly evangelistic campaigns.

Radio Program Format

Mr. Hill suggested that the *Radio Church of God* program be like a Sunday morning church service in a 30-minute format. Mr. Armstrong agreed. The format involved: singers (at first, it was a duet of Claude and Velma Ellis; then it became a mixed quartette of Mrs. Armstrong singing alto, daughter Beverly soprano, Mr. Ellis tenor, Alfred Freeze bass, and Mrs. Ellis on piano) singing church hymns. Then Mr. Armstrong would give his message.

Over the years, the format was eventually changed in order to attract a much wider audience of both the religious and non-religious.

Since he had remained puzzled as to what form of government should function in God’s Church, Mr. Armstrong went along with the status quo—democratic government, in which the lay members had at least as much a voice in things as the ministry did. For example, when Mr. Armstrong was first offered radio time, he brought the decision before the Church, which unanimously approved.

God did not reveal to him His true form of government until the winter of 1952-53—after many trials, tests and acts of persecution forced Mr. Armstrong to see that democracy never worked in God’s Church. In order to feed, protect and lead the flock most effectively, he would learn that God’s government must be administered from the top down by loyal, faithful ministers and leaders, beginning with one leader.

Government is just one of many truths that God revealed to Mr. Armstrong one step at a time.

Purchasing a Church Building

The Work of God started small and slowly grew—but grow it did! Mr. Armstrong knew that this was *God's* Work, not his. He understood that he was only an instrument in God's hands.

By the spring of 1935, morning Sabbath services were alternatively held at the Jeans and Alvadore schoolhouses, with afternoon services at Mr. Armstrong's house in Eugene. The three groups needed to be combined into one local congregation. This reality led Mr. Armstrong and the brethren to buy a small church house (for \$500, with a \$100 down payment), which had been built by Elder Taylor four years earlier. The building was in much need of work, so Mr. Armstrong asked the membership to contribute to a special offering fund to supply lumber and paint. Then he and the other brethren made all the necessary repairs. When it was finished, the Church of God at Eugene, Oregon held its first Sabbath service there, on June 1st of that year.

Soon after, Mr. Armstrong held an evangelistic campaign at this location, attracting a sizeable audience every night. At the close of one service, a young woman spoke with Mrs. Armstrong. She said that she was an atheist, and had come with two other friends in order to laugh at how “ignorant” and “backward” ministers were. But this young lady was amazed by Mr. Armstrong's explanation of the prophecy of Daniel 11, showing its biblical fulfillments through history. This woman—who was the secretary of the local Communist Party—continued attending the meetings, and eventually repented and was baptized! (Of course, she resigned from the Communist party.) Her example led her mother to be baptized also.

Establishing Headquarters Offices for God's Work

Following the campaigns he held at the old Masonic Temple in downtown Eugene, Mr. Armstrong used one of its smaller rooms as an office, free of charge. But when the owner found a tenant for the entire building, Mr. Armstrong had to move. The owner offered him a room in the Hampton Building, which was across from the Post Office. This new office cost \$5 per month. It had no windows, only a transom over the door to the hall, and one over the door leading to the Labor Union Hall. Mr. Armstrong and the other office staff could only work two hours at a

time before having to retreat for about an hour due to stale tobacco smoke that drifted in from the Labor Union Hall.

A few months later, they were able to afford a small fan, which circulated the stale air. The office did have a skylight, but it was so filthy with dirt and grime that sunlight could barely filter through.

There were not enough funds to buy desks, so Mr. Armstrong used a table for his office desk, while other tables were used for printing, folding and mailing the magazine. Instead of filing cabinets, they acquired cardboard cartons from grocery stores, using them to store correspondence folders and records. The cartons had to be pasted with plain wrapping paper to cover up their whiskey labels.

Mr. Armstrong wrote articles on a used typewriter, and then cut the stencils for headlines. Mrs. Armstrong hand-cranked sheets of the magazine on the Neostyle, assembled the pages, folded them, and then addressed them in pen and ink. She also maintained *The Plain Truth* mailing list. Before carrying them across the street to the Post Office, Mr. and Mrs. Armstrong always knelt down, prayed and laid hands over the magazines, asking God to put His blessing on the copies and their readers.

Beverly Armstrong worked as office secretary. Many others volunteered their time in the office on various occasions, wherever there was a need.

For a time, Mrs. Helen Starkey worked as an unpaid secretary. She later received a salary of \$5 per week. In 1937, Mrs. Starkey sent a letter to co-workers, without Mr. Armstrong's prior knowledge, asking them to contribute to buying the Armstrongs a car. (Their previous car had just “given up the ghost.”) Without a reliable car, Mr. Armstrong could not make the weekly circuit to and from Portland—the radio program would die out. The co-workers responded by sending in enough money for Mr. and Mrs. Armstrong to buy, on monthly payments, a 1934 Graham.

A Test of Faith

In December 1934, Christ opened the door for the gospel to be preached, via radio hook-up, from KORE in Eugene to Portland's KXL and Salem's KSLM. Mr. Armstrong wrote a letter to co-workers, asking them to pledge enough money—\$50 per month for both 100-watt stations—to finance this wonderful opportunity. Portland had the potential to expand the listening audience tenfold!

However, as before, only half of the amount needed could be guaranteed (at least, humanly). Unfortunately, like other servants of God

before him, Mr. Armstrong wavered in faith and did not walk through the door Christ had opened to him. To teach His servant a lesson in faith, God withheld other opportunities to expand the Work for two years. Mr. Armstrong and the *Radio Church of God* program remained limited to one tiny 100-watt radio station.

In addition, *The Plain Truth* ceased to be published for 2½ years! After July 1935, not another issue of the magazine was published until January 1938. Mr. Armstrong knew that this was because he had walked by sight instead of by faith. After 2½ years of witnessing the Work being affected by that decision, Mr. Armstrong was determined to never again doubt where God was working.

Despite these two setbacks, Mr. Armstrong's estimated listening audience grew to 8,000 every broadcast. And, by August, the radio audience grew to about 10,000 people.

In late 1936, Mr. Armstrong tried to get the program on Portland's most powerful station—50 times more powerful than KORE—reaching throughout Oregon, Washington and Idaho. The cost was \$110 per month, and the pledges fell short by more than half. It was obvious to him that this door was closed. Mr. Armstrong had to learn to wait on Christ to open each door according to *His* time schedule.

In the meantime, after being on the air for almost two years, the monthly income of the Work grew to about \$40 to 45.

In November, the door was opened in Portland—but only on KXL, a tiny 100-watt station. Salem's KSLM was added to this hook-up, creating the Work of God's first radio network.

In early 1937, mail response indicated that the program's audience had leaped to 40,000-50,000 listeners, and by spring, 60,000. In November, this mushroomed to 100,000 weekly listeners! (And yet, the Philadelphian Era of God's Church only had a membership of a relatively small number of people, with a few co-workers. Just like today, God was using a tiny flock to reach an audience many, many times its size.)

In September 1937, the radio program left KXL to step up to 500-watt station KWJJ, also in Portland. Along with an increase in broadcasting power, this meant an increase in travel. Mr. Armstrong would broadcast live from KORE each Sunday at 10 a.m., simultaneously broadcasting over KSLM. Then he would drive north to Portland for the 4 p.m. broadcast—a roundtrip of 200-plus miles every week. Combine this with conducting two Sabbath services, weekly Bible studies, magazine writing and publishing, answering letters, running an office, holding evangelistic campaigns, visiting and counseling with the brethren, raising a family—Mr. Armstrong was a very busy man!

He decided to launch a few short campaigns—a two-week campaign at the Clear Lake schoolhouse, between Eugene and Alvadore, and at another schoolhouse near Globe, Oregon, about 40 miles north of Eugene. There was also a three-week campaign held at the Eldreage schoolhouse, 12 miles north of Salem. It maintained a nightly turnout of 50 to 70 people.

Back in Operation

Finally, *The Plain Truth* magazine was back in operation, beginning January 1, 1938, with a mailing list of 1,050 subscribers. With that many copies to make, the magazine was becoming too large to mimeograph. *The Plain Truth* had to be reduced to only three pages per issue—and only seven could be sent out that year.

By early 1939, the old, worn-out Neostyle was ready to be “put out to pasture.” A new mimeograph had to be obtained or the magazine would cease to exist. *The Plain Truth* was being read by several thousand people, and the *Radio Church of God* program was being heard by 100,000 people—yet only a few took the next step and contributed to God's Work. (Remember, at no time did Mr. Armstrong ever ask for money from the general public, only from those who gave regular contributions.)

By this time, Mr. Armstrong was driving 600 miles a week in order to get out Christ's true gospel—a message that had not been preached to the world at large since the apostle Paul's ministry!

The February-March 1939 issue of *The Plain Truth* featured an article about the coming final resurrection of the Roman Empire under a unified European government. It also warned that God would use that resurrected government as His instrument of punishment against the modern-day descendants of the “lost tribes” of the house of Israel—largely the American and British peoples.

The following month, about 1,000 extra subscription requests came in for the magazine.

Not long after the article was published, Italian dictator Benito Mussolini emerged on the world scene, with Hitler, culminating the prophesied sixth “head” of the beast of Revelation (Rev. 17:9-10).

By March 1940, the magazine, though still mimeographed, reached a circulation of 2,000.

Struggling With Persecution and Attacks

In between holding evangelistic campaigns, writing and publishing *The Plain Truth* magazine, broadcasting the radio program, and leading the

Church at Eugene, Mr. Armstrong somehow made time for visiting new converts and prospective members. However, lacking local ministers to feed, protect and lead the flock—to counsel with them about their personal problems, and keep them from being deceived by “grievous wolves...speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them” (Acts 20:29-30)—many brethren gave up. Only a tiny few kept themselves from being conquered by man’s three deadly spiritual enemies: the world, the god of this world (II Cor. 4:4), and the self.

In May 1937, the three-station radio program, in association with high schools across Oregon and southwestern Washington, targeted high school students. This led to a youth camp meeting held in cooperation with the Salem, West Virginia Church of God group.

The son of one of the “twelve apostles” of that group told Mr. Armstrong that the Salem leaders were plotting against him. They planned to discredit him at the camp meeting and thus destroy the *Radio Church of God* program.

Mr. Armstrong boldly told his attackers that there would be no camp meeting. When one of the “apostles” protested, Mr. Armstrong reminded him that he had rented the campgrounds in his name, and that he also controlled the mailing list. And the vast majority of the attendees were of the congregations he pastored in Eugene and Jefferson. They would follow his lead. “On next Sunday, I shall announce to the radio audience that the camp meeting, to start that night, has been cancelled. NOBODY WILL COME! Now tell me, please—how are *you* going to stop *me* from stopping the camp meeting, and saving the broadcast?”

Though he was reluctant, the man gave his personal guarantee that Mr. Armstrong would not be attacked at the camp meeting. And yet, whenever Mr. Armstrong preached at the meetings, the preacher speaking after him would do everything in his sermon to distort, undermine and rip apart whatever Mr. Armstrong had talked about.

Then came a ministers’ meeting, in which Mr. Armstrong was craftily betrayed by a man he thought was a friend. Speaking before everyone, this “friend” sadly announced that, since Mr. Armstrong was so over-worked, the ministry was going to “help” him by relieving him of some of his “burdensome” duties and appoint one of their elders—one who happened to be hostile to Mr. Armstrong—to take over as pastor of the Jefferson congregation.

That was the last straw! Every member of the Eugene church and half the members of the Jefferson congregation, including the local elder and deacon, severed all ties with the Salem, West Virginia group. All cooperation with that organization came to a halt.

Over the many years, that group and its ministers dwindled into numerous, tiny splintering groups. “Then they split and re-split,” Mr. Armstrong later wrote, “until I lost all knowledge of HOW MANY splintering groups there are” (“Personal,” *The Good News*, August 1969).

Sacrificing for the Work

The Armstrong family was under continual scrutiny by some in the Church. Though the Armstrongs were poor, reduced to wearing hand-me-downs, some actually criticized how they used their income, which came from the tithes and offerings of the lay members, as the Bible instructs.

One woman stopped tithing because she did not want “her” tithes (which actually belong to God—Mal. 3:8-10) to be used to buy silk stockings for Beverly and Dorothy Armstrong. The woman thought that cotton stockings were good enough. (Nylon stockings were not yet invented.) The Armstrong girls were in high school at the time, an awkward age for most who were growing into adulthood. To wear cotton stockings to school at that stage in their young lives would have made them social misfits, dooming them to all kinds of cruel taunts and ridicule. Mrs. Armstrong was determined to keep this from happening, so she humbly accepted worn silk stockings from other women, sewing up the runs in them.

In his autobiography, Mr. Armstrong wrote, “It was incidents like this that soured and prejudiced our children against God’s truth. Through the years most of the members of the church in Eugene lived better, economically, than we.”

In an April 1940 letter, Mr. Armstrong had to inform co-workers that funds were becoming so scarce that he had to take money intended for his family’s needs and use it for God’s Work. They were on the verge of losing their home. One of the Armstrong girls had to quit school. For quite some time, they had gone without much-needed clothing. He wrote, “I could tell you more, but do not want to talk about ourselves—our heavenly Father knows. We are willing and glad to make any sacrifice. BUT THE POINT IS, WE HAVE NOW COME TO THE END, UNLESS SUBSTANTIAL HELP COMES AT ONCE. The work cannot be held up by this method of personal sacrifice any longer. As long as it was only us who suffered, I said nothing. But now the Lord’s WORK will stop unless substantial help comes quickly. For the work’s sake I must appeal to our helpers. I would starve, before I would ask one cent as charity for myself. But I’m willing to humiliate myself in any way for the gospel’s sake.”

When he first began the radio program, he only envisioned taking the gospel throughout the Willamette Valley and maybe Portland. After getting on the air in Portland, he set his sights on Seattle, and then the Pacific Northwest. But it was in May 1940 that he began to think in terms of a national—even worldwide—Work.

The heart-rending sacrifice of one particular married couple, listeners of the KWJJ broadcast, led to the Work being able to afford to broadcast from Seattle. Their offering was followed by three separate offerings of \$100 each—the largest sums the Work had ever received. Besides these, three \$50 contributions were sent, along with other offerings. The radio program came on the air Sunday, September 15, 1940, at Seattle's KRSC, a 1,000-watt station. By November, more than 500 subscription requests came from the Seattle market, and overall mail response indicated a listening audience of 150,000, while the magazine had 3,000 subscribers. It took several days of volunteering from the brethren to write or type each mailing address.

With radio stations in Eugene, Salem, Portland and Seattle, copies of *The Plain Truth* reached 4,000, with letters from housewives, laborers, farmers, office workers, businessmen, professionals—people from all walks of life.

As the leader of the Work, Mr. Armstrong sacrificed his time and energy to labor under a grueling routine: Leaving Eugene Saturday afternoon, he would travel 320 miles all night to Seattle. That morning, he would go to his hotel and sleep for a few hours. He would be awakened at 5 a.m., shower, shave and dress, and then go to the corner drugstore and buy a newspaper, where he would browse for prophetic news events, while drinking orange juice and coffee. He would finish a 30-minute radio script and make two copies (one for himself, the other for the station owner). Then he would check out of the hotel, and drive to KRSC, scan for last-minute news bulletins, clip them and write out comments, and then go on the air promptly at 8:30 a.m. At nine, he would rush back to his car and drive to Portland, stopping off for breakfast and lunch. He would arrive at Portland by 3 p.m., giving him one hour to check again for last-minute news. Then he would be on the air at 4 p.m., and afterward head for Eugene, arriving at 7:30 p.m. That evening, he would hold a campaign meeting, preaching a sermon every night of the week. During the day, Mr. Armstrong would work in the office answering letters and writing magazine articles, or he would go out and counsel with people, speak with prospective members, etc. On the Sabbath, he would conduct morning and afternoon services, and so the routine started all over again.

THE EARLY YEARS

During the early years of proclaiming the gospel through the *Radio Church of God* program, Mr. Armstrong drove a tiring weekend circuit he called “a grind”—traveling all night from Eugene to Seattle, then back to Portland, returning to Eugene.



Watchman Warning the House of Israel

By mid-May 1941, *The Plain Truth* reached 5,000 subscribers, and with the August-September issue, it went from being mimeographed sheets of paper to a 16-page printed magazine, published every two months.

For the last seven years, the Work had to be produced from a smoky, windowless, one-room office—and without desks or mailing equipment. Then God opened another door for the Work: an office with large windows, plus the ability to afford a desk, which Mr. Armstrong used in God's service for many years. They were also able to buy a used, foot-operated addressing machine and Mr. Armstrong's first filing cabinet. "If anyone doubts that this work started the very *smallest*, let him realize we had to wait *seven years* for this cardboard file cabinet—and then we could afford ONLY THE ONE."

It was around this time that the significance of the Ezekiel Warning (Ezek. 33:1-19; 3:17-21) was impressed on Mr. Armstrong's mind:

"So now I saw Ezekiel was set a WATCHMAN—to *watch* international conditions as well as God's prophecies—and *when* this invasion is preparing, and near, shortly prior to Christ's coming to RULE THE WORLD, the watchman is to WARN the people who had migrated, in Ezekiel's day, to northwestern Europe and the British Isles! But Ezekiel never carried that warning! It was not for HIS TIME! He was used *merely to write it!* It now became plain to me that God was to use a modern 20th-century 'Ezekiel' to shout this WARNING."

America was on the verge of being pulled into World War II, which had been raging across Europe for almost two years. Mr. Armstrong wondered: Could *this* be the prophetic "time of Jacob's trouble" (Jer. 30:7), the divine punishment of military invasion, famine, pestilence and slavery that God would unleash and use to chastise the modern descendants of Ephraim and Manasseh? If so, then they had to be warned! Mr. Armstrong did not see himself as a modern-day "Ezekiel" chosen by God to cry out and boldly tell the American and British peoples of their sins—on the other hand, he saw that no *other* man was taking this strong warning to Israel.

"...I did see, plainly, that God said: 'IF the watchman see the sword come, and blow not the trumpet, and the people be not warned' that God would require the blood of the people—and now *whole peoples*—at the watchman's hand!

"That was a stern warning to *me*. At least I was *one* of the watchmen who *did* see it coming! God had already placed the broadcasting facili-

ties of three radio stations at my disposal. A quarter of a million people now heard my voice weekly. Possibly ten or fifteen thousand people read the 5,000 copies of *The Plain Truth*.

"Of course I had been sounding this warning all along—but only in the Pacific Northwest. Now I began to see that God intended to send it to ALL ISRAEL. And He had revealed to me that that meant, today, the United States, the British Commonwealth, and the nations of northwestern Europe. The idea of *my* being used, personally, in reaching Britain and these other countries did not yet take sharp focus in my mind. But I *did* now, for the first time, begin to *think actively and definitely* about this work expanding to the entire United States!"

Soon after Mr. Armstrong came to this conclusion, his sister-in-law and a friend decided to go on a road trip to Detroit. They asked Mr. and Mrs. Armstrong to go with them. The Armstrongs drove their car, their first "new" one (bought from a DeSoto dealer, whose wife had only used it for six weeks; it only had 1,700 miles on it).

But it was more than just a pleasurable road trip. Mr. Armstrong intended to get the radio program to air over WHO, in Des Moines, his hometown. This was a 50,000-watt radio station that transmitted not far from the middle of the United States, broadcasting across the nation.

As he had done decades ago, Mr. Armstrong sought the help of his uncle Frank, who used his influence to arrange a meeting with WHO's general manager. Three Sundays a month were cleared for Mr. Armstrong for about \$60 per half hour. It was definitely an incredible opportunity, but it was one the Work at that time could not afford.

On the way home to the West Coast, Mr. Armstrong headed for Los Angeles to look for potential radio stations there. Hollywood was America's radio headquarters, producing most of the top programs. This meant that the *Radio Church of God* program could get quality recordings for its transcription disc. At that point in time, Mr. Armstrong had been limited to producing homemade transcriptions that lacked the tell-tale sign of professionalism. Having been in advertising for several years, Mr. Armstrong knew that the more professional a product was, the more that product would command respect and be taken seriously. The recordings he made back in Oregon would not be accepted at larger-watt stations.

Though Los Angeles had religious programs on the air, the stations there were beginning to turn away their business. Mr. Armstrong did speak with the station manager of KMTR, who seemed to be open to having his program on their airwaves. Though he was not ready to broadcast over their airwaves at that time, Mr. Armstrong would inquire about it later when the time was right.

A Memorable Plane Ride

Mr. Armstrong had worked virtually day and night nonstop for the past 7½ years—and he was in dire need of rest. So he, along with his family, rented a small cabin along the Oregon Coast, and fasted for 18 days. After being recharged, both physically and spiritually, Mr. Armstrong resumed his work back in Eugene, ready to spread the gospel further than before.

To cut down on the strain of driving all the way to Seattle and back every weekend, he decided to leave his car in Portland, and then take a train to Seattle. But the train was running late—too late to do the Seattle broadcast on time. Mr. Armstrong decided to ride the train to Tacoma, Washington, and then he caught a taxi to Seattle, arriving there on schedule. Not wanting to chance being late again, after the broadcast he caught a plane back to Portland so he would be on time for the 4 p.m. broadcast there.

For Mr. Armstrong, this plane ride was memorable for two reasons. First, it was the first time in his life that he had ever flown. Second, during the flight, the captain of the plane exited the cabin and spoke to each passenger, breaking bad news: That morning, December 7, 1941, the Japanese fleet had just attacked Pearl Harbor and other U.S. military bases and airfields in the region. Thousands of soldiers were killed, missing or wounded—hundreds of military aircraft were damaged or destroyed—eight battleships, three cruisers, three destroyers and several auxiliary vessels were either damaged or sunk. The United States Pacific Fleet was virtually destroyed.

America had been pulled into World War II!

The World Tomorrow Program

Mr. Armstrong's 4 p.m. broadcast from Portland was driven by this devastating news. In it, he explained to his listeners the prophetic meaning behind these earth-shattering events. Mr. Armstrong's future broadcasts came to analyze the war, combining his biblical knowledge and prophetic understanding with his business training in analyzing and processing the news. The listening audience grew. The radio station managers noticed the changes to the program and encouraged Mr. Armstrong to continue. For some time, they suggested that he drop the program's church format altogether. Mr. Armstrong did not want to do this at first, but he had gradually reduced the live hymn singing. Finally, he changed

the radio program to an all-talk format, examining world events in the light of Bible prophecy.

Another change was made: The *Radio Church of God* program took on a new name, becoming *The World Tomorrow* radio program. It still proclaimed the good news of the kingdom of God, but in a way that appealed to the non-religious as well as churchgoers.

By the spring of 1942, Mr. Armstrong believed that the Work was ready to branch out in Southern California. He drove to Los Angeles and got *The World Tomorrow* program on the air at Hollywood's KMTR. Though only a 1,000-watt station, its transmitter stood above an underground river—which, through a quirk of nature, produced a radio signal equivalent to 40,000 watts! Its programs could even be heard over the mountains in Bakersfield.

Two weeks after debuting on KMTR, Mr. Armstrong was offered a timeslot of 5:30 p.m., Mondays through Saturdays. Mr. Armstrong knew that Christ was opening this door, the biggest one to date. It was a tremendous opportunity to expand God's Work even further—yet it cost *six times more* than what it cost to broadcast only once a week. There was no time to send out Co-Worker letters, asking for pledges. Mr. Armstrong had 24 hours to take the timeslot or turn it down.

Back in Portland, he had learned the lesson of not walking through the doors Christ opened to him—two years of being limited to a tiny 500-watt station and 2½ years of *The Plain Truth* shutting down for lack of funds. Mr. Armstrong did NOT want to repeat this! He telephoned his wife back in Eugene to find out the total balance of what they had in the bank—which happened to be exactly one week's worth of radio airtime. Mr. Armstrong took every cent he had in the bank and committed to air six times a week on KMTR. He trusted in God to provide the rest.

Mr. Armstrong was not disappointed, for not only did a huge mail response result from this, more tithes and offerings came in, too! Week after week, just enough money was sent in to Eugene headquarters to purchase a week's worth of airtime. Mr. Armstrong recognized that God was providing for their every need. And the size, span and power of the Work were doubling.

From 1942 to 1947, Mr. Armstrong used several different men as the radio program's announcer. But the one who was to hold the job for many decades was Art Gilmore. His voice was well-known as the announcer for popular national radio shows of the day, like *Amos 'n' Andy*, *Red Ryder*, *Dr. Christian*, *Stars Over Hollywood*, and *Murder & Mr. Malone*.

In June 1942, Mr. Armstrong invited his listeners to attend a campaign meeting he was holding at the Biltmore Theater, the largest theater in downtown Los Angeles. At the meeting, Mr. Armstrong addressed 1,750 people, and talked about events in the war, tying in biblical prophecy. At the close of the service, instead of passing collection plates and asking for donations like most preachers did, Mr. Armstrong merely mentioned that there were two offering boxes at the rear of the lobby for those who wanted to leave a contribution. And many of the attendees did leave offerings. In fact, there was exactly—to the penny—enough money to pay for the theater, the janitor, the electrician, the lobby signs and other expenses.

Mr. Armstrong's stay in Los Angeles lasted for months. Before heading back home to Eugene, he was able to get the radio program over the air at San Diego's KFMB, whose signal could be picked up more than 100 miles away.

Next, Mr. Armstrong traveled back to Des Moines and, now being able to afford it, bought daily airtime on WHO. He first broadcast from there at the end of August 1942. *The World Tomorrow* program had finally gone nationwide!

However, that following January, WHO gave Mr. Armstrong notice that the program would be cancelled. Mr. Armstrong moved into action. He contacted the listeners of the WHO broadcasts, who listened from every state in the continent. This led to 2,200 letters flooding the radio station. The sales manager was not pleased. However, he and Mr. Armstrong worked it out so that the radio program could stay on the air until their contract was up.

Mr. Armstrong then arranged to have *The World Tomorrow* air at WOAI, in San Antonio, Texas. It, too, was a 50,000-watt station. In this way, he could establish a large audience with WOAI before going off the air at WHO 6½ months later.

Time to Move?

From 1941 to 1943, Mr. Armstrong had been holding evangelistic meetings in downtown Seattle and in Everett, Washington, resulting in a local congregation. The tithes and offerings of this small church led to going on the air at 5,000-watt station KVI, in Tacoma. Its signal was enhanced to about 25,000 watts, due to the station's transmitter being sent from an island in Puget Sound. Meanwhile, the program continued to be broadcast from Seattle's KRSC.

As more radio stations were added in 1943, the program's audience grew to hundreds of thousands of listeners and *The Plain Truth* went to

35,000 copies, reaching every American state and every English-speaking province in Canada.

Mr. Armstrong made several trips to Hollywood, broadcasting from there several weeks at a time, while continuing to hold campaign meetings in Los Angeles. The baptisms resulting from this led Mr. Armstrong to form a small congregation of 23 people. This happened in the fall of 1943. Mr. Armstrong also decided to set over them a former minister, a man whom he had become acquainted with during his visits to Southern California. This man appeared to be friendly, had a good personality and seemed liked by all. Mr. Armstrong even had this minister visit Eugene, paid for by the Work, to help him in holding the Feast of Tabernacles there.

But one year later, Mr. Armstrong discovered that the little flock in Los Angeles had been destroyed. Of those he was able to contact, Mr. Armstrong learned that this minister was not so well liked after all.

At the next Feast of Tabernacles, in 1944, the man attended the Eugene services, and then gained the affection of the brethren from the Seattle/Everett congregation. He soon became their local pastor.

It turned out that this "minister" did not believe the truths of God's Word, as he had proclaimed to Mr. Armstrong so many times previously. As soon as he made a following for himself out of the Seattle/Everett brethren, he preached against tithing. The brethren under him stopped sending in tithes to Eugene headquarters—and about 25 percent of the Work's income was suddenly taken away!

Then, their new pastor proclaimed that tithing was okay after all. So the brethren resumed paying tithes—only now the money went directly to him.

This man's treachery was a huge setback to the Work.

Due to low funds, the 1944 January-February issue of *The Plain Truth* was cancelled. Ten thousand requests for one of the earlier versions of Mr. Armstrong's *United States and Britain in Prophecy* booklet went unfulfilled. The Work was getting behind in paying its broadcasting bills, and the radio program was in danger of being taken off the air. Co-workers did not send in enough money to avert this financial emergency. So Mr. and Mrs. Armstrong went the extra mile, selling their home to put the money back into God's Work.

The March-April *Plain Truth* was published, as were extra copies of the booklet. The program continued broadcasting. The Work continued forward.

But Mr. and Mrs. Armstrong's sacrifice meant putting their furniture in storage, and moving from motel room to motel room every three days,

and sometimes living in motor courts up to a week or two at a time. It meant being refused by motel owners, who reserved their rooms for out-of-towners only. It meant eating out at restaurants every night, which was both costly and unhealthy, while struggling to raise two teenaged boys (the girls had since married and moved out). And it meant, months later, finally being able to at least rent two rooms in a boarding house, while still having to share a bathroom with other renters.

Meanwhile, *The Plain Truth* had grown too large for the local printing company to continue publishing it. Since Mr. Armstrong visited Hollywood to use its quality recording facilities as often as he could, he began to investigate potential large-scale printing operations in Los Angeles. The idea of permanently moving to Southern California was taking shape.

FOUNDING A COLLEGE

It was early 1945. America's President Franklin D. Roosevelt was dead. Nazi Germany was all but defeated. Representatives from nations around the world met in San Francisco to form the United Nations. As editor and publisher of *The Plain Truth* magazine, Mr. Armstrong received full press credentials from the U.S. State Department for himself and his wife. And then, on that historic April 25, the Armstrongs watched as men delivered speech after speech, proclaiming that this manmade global organization would be mankind's last hope for world peace.

But Mr. Armstrong knew what the Bible said—that the only chance for lasting world peace would not come from any of the governments of men, but from the soon-coming, world-ruling government—kingdom—of God.

At the Conference, Mr. and Mrs. Armstrong met and interviewed several dignitaries from various nations, such as Sheik Hafiz Wabba of Saudi Arabia.

Room to Grow

Toward the end of 1945, God opened two huge doors for His Work: daily broadcasts at 100,000-watt station XELO, and debuting daily at 150,000-watt station XEG. Both reached all across America. Meanwhile, *The Plain Truth* reached 75,000 in circulation.

Mr. Armstrong was beginning to see that the Work was becoming a worldwide organization—and yet the headquarters in Eugene did not reflect this. For the past 12 years, he had assumed the roles of business manager, editor, printer and office clerk, and had taken on other various duties.

By mid-February, his son-in-law Vern Mattson, who had married daughter Dorothy, joined the growing staff and became office manager, handling the bills, financial records, budgeting, etc.

In late May, Mr. Armstrong's other son-in-law, James Gott, who had married daughter Beverly, headed the new printing department, which was used to publish booklets.

The publishing and mailing of 75,000 magazines and the producing of top-quality broadcast recordings were causing the Work to outgrow its facilities in Eugene, Oregon. This led to a need to acquire larger office space. Moving office headquarters to Southern California went from an idea to a necessity. But neither Mr. Armstrong nor Mrs. Armstrong wanted to live in Hollywood or Los Angeles, so they set their sights on the city of Pasadena, whose pace of life was more traditional and conservative than Los Angeles or Hollywood.

In Need of a College

In December 1945, during one of his visits to Hollywood for recording the radio program, Mr. Armstrong began his search for office space in Pasadena, as well as a place to live. Weeks turned into months. The Work continued to explode. There was a growing need for trained help.

In the past, Mr. Armstrong had held nightly evangelistic campaigns in various towns and cities in Oregon and Washington. His efforts yielded newly baptized members, who were then organized into local Church of God congregations. However, without a trained minister to spiritually feed, protect and lead them, these new converts got pulled back into the world, or were deceived by false leaders bringing false doctrines. Not one of these small congregations survived more than six months.

Mr. Armstrong took note of what a large denominational church in Eugene did to prevent this same problem from happening to its followers. That church established a school to train ministers, which became its headquarters. With trained pastors to establish, maintain and nurture each new congregation, these tiny churches grew.

In Old Testament times, servants of God such as Samuel and Elijah led schools or colleges that trained men to preserve true, godly values in

rebellious ancient Israel. Mr. Armstrong began to realize that God wanted a college once again—an institution of higher education founded on *His* principles and *His* teachings. This college would educate and train young people to become leaders. Some would become ministers and lead congregations that would continue to be established. Others would serve in the ever-growing Work, which would be headquartered on campus.

However, Mr. Armstrong knew that God's college should not be a "Bible school" or theological seminary. In the world, people choose to be ministers, treating it like any other profession. But the Bible reveals that no human being can *choose* to be an ordained minister of Jesus Christ. That man must be *called* into the ministry. And, just as Christ chose which disciples would be His apostles, a true minister of God is chosen by Christ (John 15:16). No man can *choose* to be ordained into God's ministry.

Mr. Armstrong knew that it was imperative that no student come to God's college *expecting* to become a minister. Only one's fruits can reveal if that is God's will.

Rather than specializing in theology alone, this new college would provide students with a balanced, well-rounded liberal arts education—with biblical and theological training offered as just one of several fields of study.

God's college would also be coeducational, training young women to take on vital roles in the Work. This new college would develop the character and personality of young, teachable minds, providing poised, properly cultured, well-rounded individuals who would, upon graduation, in some cases, return home to local congregations and set right examples among the brethren.

The schools, colleges and universities of this world have rejected God and His divine revelation—the foundation of true knowledge. As a result, mankind's modern educational system has embraced a deadly mixture of truth and error. Ambassador College's basic purpose was to mold young, fresh teachable minds and teach its students *how to live*—not just how to make a living.

This is how Mr. Armstrong envisioned Ambassador College's purpose and goals:

"Ambassador College knows and teaches the PURPOSE and true meaning of life—the TRUE VALUES that pay off—and THE WAY to peace, happiness and abundant well-being."

"The Bible is the world's biggest seller, but also the book almost nobody knows. It is the FOUNDATION of all knowledge, and the *approach* to acquirable knowledge.

“Ambassador College is pioneering the educational system of the WORLD TOMORROW. A foretaste of that peace, happiness and abundant well-being is radiated by Ambassador students.

“Ambassador students learn HOW to live—THE WAY to happiness—but the ‘how to EARN a living’ *is not neglected*.

“Ambassador students are taught the MISSING DIMENSION in education—the underlying PURPOSE and the real meaning of life; the worthwhile values; the basic laws of success, not only in economic fields, but in life as a whole. They are given individual attention in the development of character, poise, culture and personality. Ambassador is a unique character-building institution” (*The ‘86 Envoy – An Annual Pictorial Record*).

At first, Mr. Armstrong only envisioned a small college campus, just one building with three or four classrooms and an auditorium, as well as office space to conduct the Work.

Then he and Mrs. Armstrong searched day after day for a suitable location in Pasadena. They found a vacant lot, about 250 feet by 100 feet, that closely matched what Mr. Armstrong had in mind. Next, he hired two architects to come up with design concepts for the college building. Then, to purchase the land, he planned to set aside a certain amount of money each week until there would be enough for a down payment.

First International Baptizing Tour

Letters from listeners of *The World Tomorrow* continued to pour in from all over the nation. Many of them asked to be baptized. So, in the summer of 1946, Mr. Armstrong, with his wife accompanying him, set off on a baptism tour through the United States and Canada.

Their long journey took them to Texas, the bayous of Louisiana, Mississippi, Tennessee, back down through Alabama, into western Florida, up the East Coast through Georgia, the Carolinas, Virginia, Washington, D.C., and then New York and up to Maine. Then they crossed over to New Hampshire, Vermont, then up to Montreal, Canada. From there, they visited prospective members in Ottawa, Toronto, then over to Windsor. They crossed back over into the U.S., visiting Detroit, Chicago, Des Moines, then down into Oklahoma, west through Kansas and back to Colorado. After this, they traveled across the Rocky Mountains, and headed back to Eugene, Oregon.

Many people were baptized. Lives were being converted—changed. The need for trained ministers to pastor local congregations became even more evident.

Where God Wanted His College Established

Mr. Armstrong was unable to carry out his plan to save for a down payment. And even if they could purchase land for the college, the Radio Church of God that Mr. Armstrong had started was a nonprofit organization, not a profitable commercial business. This meant that it was impossible for them to borrow the money needed to construct even a small college campus.

But Mr. Armstrong was determined not to give up. In November 1946, he called upon the services of Mrs. C.J. McCormick, a real estate broker, who showed him a small, 18-room mansion in Pasadena’s “millionaire row.”

It was obvious that the property had, at one time, been magnificently landscaped, though it had not been kept in good condition for several years. In addition to the main building, there was a four-car garage with two servants’ apartments, fountains, beautifully sculptured landscapes, an ornamental retaining wall, lower gardens, a large square pool and other architecturally pleasing garden schemes. With extra work, such as clearing out weeds and re-landscaping to restore its former magnificence, the space held promise.

But the owner, whom Mr. Armstrong referred to as “Dr. B.” (a doctor of law) in his autobiography, wanted \$100,000—and he wanted it in cash.

The Work did not have the funds available, but Mr. Armstrong thought more and more about the space. It had the potential for several classrooms, a library and assembly room. The adjoining large dining room could serve as an additional library room, administrative offices, and offices for Church headquarters, including a large mailing department.

Mr. Armstrong asked his architects to inspect the property. They confirmed that it was ideal for a small, but beautiful, college campus. Mrs. Armstrong felt the same way.

It seemed like God wanted the college to be founded there, but where would the money come from?

On Mrs. McCormick’s recommendation, Mr. Armstrong hired Pasadena attorney Judge Morton to draw up a lease-and-option contract of 25 monthly payments of \$1,000 each. The contract provided for taking occupancy of the property the following July 1, 1947. Once the monthly payments reached \$25,000, this would be used as the down payment. The Church would then exercise its option to buy, and then be given the deed to the property. Dr. B. would retain a trust deed until fully paid.

Would God perform a miracle?

“Then I prayed earnestly,” Mr. Armstrong wrote. “I asked God to reveal His will respecting His college by causing Dr. B. to accept if that were God’s will, but to cause him to reject it, if this was not the place God had chosen for His college. I realized there did not appear to be one chance in a thousand that a man who wanted \$100,000 cash would let his property go for only \$1,000 per month, with no down payment at the start whatever—and taking two whole years and one additional month to build up a 25 percent down payment.”

About three days after submitting his proposition, Mrs. McCormick told Mr. Armstrong that she had the contract “signed, sealed, and delivered”! This was November 27, 1946.

Hiring Ambassador College’s New President

In December 1946, the idea of founding a college immediately led Mr. Armstrong to contact his brother-in-law, Walter E. Dillon (Mrs. Armstrong’s brother). Mr. Dillon held a Master’s degree in education from the University of Oregon, and was a teacher, and later the principal of one of the largest public schools in Oregon. Between 1922 and 1924, Mr. Armstrong coached and helped his brother-in-law win speech contests at Iowa’s Simpson College, and to go on to also win the state contest. Since then, the two men had been closer than their own brothers.

Mr. Armstrong was convinced that Walter Dillon, due to his extensive background as an education administrator and experienced teacher, was the man he needed to be president of the college. After giving it much thought, Mr. Dillon accepted the position.

Next, Mr. Armstrong published a special edition of *The Plain Truth* (the January-February 1947 issue), using it to recruit students by announcing the fall start of their new college—Ambassador College.

Planning a Second College

On December 31, 1946, Mr. Armstrong stayed as an overnight guest of Dr. B., who, along with his sister, was still living in the building that was to become Ambassador College.

During a friendly discussion, Mr. Armstrong expressed his concern for the need to train students in several foreign languages so that the gospel could spread to all nations. He wanted them to be able to speak these languages like a native—without a foreign accent. Therefore, the average college foreign language course was insufficient. To achieve what Mr. Armstrong wanted, students would need to live in these foreign

countries and learn their languages through everyday experience. This led to the idea of starting a second college, in Europe. Dr. B. said he knew of a villa in Lugano, Switzerland, that would be ideal.

Mr. Armstrong gave the idea extensive thought, then further discussed it with Dr. B., who suggested they both travel to Europe and see the property. Switzerland was a nation of several languages, so it seemed ideal for students to learn various languages. Mr. Armstrong decided to go immediately.

With Mrs. Armstrong accompanying them, they booked passage aboard the Queen Elizabeth cruise ship, which was to leave port on February 19. At almost a quarter mile long, 14 decks tall, about twice the weight of a large battleship, and carrying 3,500 passengers, the Queen Elizabeth was, at the time, the largest passenger liner ever built.

Six days later, the Armstrongs arrived in England, docking at Southampton.

Attending a Royal Reception

Mr. and Mrs. Armstrong checked in at London’s Dorchester Hotel. The next day, when Mr. Armstrong noticed several Arab officials in the hotel lobby, he asked the reception desk if Sheik Hafiz Wabba was in the hotel. He was not, but the sheik did come to this hotel quite often.

The next day, the sheik’s private secretary telephoned him. She told Mr. Armstrong that His Excellency had heard that he was in London, and wished to invite him and Mrs. Armstrong to attend a royal reception to be held that evening in the hotel’s ballroom. The sheik desired to speak with Mr. Armstrong again, as they had done two years previously in San Francisco. The reception—which was in honor of His Royal Highness, the Crown Prince, Emir Saud, who later became King Saud of Saudi Arabia—would be the only opportunity to chat, since the sheik planned to leave the next morning.

At the reception, the Armstrongs mingled with an international crowd of lords, ladies, earls, dukes, admirals, commodores, ambassadors and other dignitaries. Later, they were given a private talk with the sheik, who offered a statement that was later published in *The Plain Truth*.

A Property With Potential

Resuming their trip, Mr. and Mrs. Armstrong caught a sleeping car from France and made their way to Switzerland, where they inspected the potential campus site there. Mr. Armstrong described Lugano as “the

Swiss Riviera...*different* from our mountain or lake scenery,” and called the villa “the most beautiful and elegant interior” he and Mrs. Armstrong had ever seen. He saw that it could house 40 to 50 students and offer six classrooms, a library, a lounge and a dining hall. It certainly appeared that the second campus of God’s college should begin there.

Mr. Armstrong was so impressed with the property’s potential, he wrote, “I have decided DEFINITELY and FINALLY on the Swiss branch of Ambassador. The idea is right. But the PLACE is still open for investigation.”

But it was not to be. God was not ready to start a European campus—at least not at that time. And Mr. Armstrong eventually found out that the place God would choose, over a decade later, would not be in Switzerland.

Having ended their European adventure, Mr. and Mrs. Armstrong traveled back to America aboard the Queen Elizabeth, docking in New York in late March, and returning to Eugene, Oregon a few days later.

Putting aside further plans regarding a European branch of the college, Mr. Armstrong focused his attention on making Ambassador College in Pasadena a reality.

Receiving Applications

The special January-February edition of *The Plain Truth*, which announced the future college in Pasadena, brought in many applications from prospective faculty members. All were well-educated and had previous teaching experience.

One application came from Dr. H.O. Taylor, chairman emeritus of Wheaton College’s department of physics. He held a Ph.D. from Cornell University, had taught at Cornell, Harvard, and MIT, and was a U.S. naval consultant. Dr. Taylor professed to be a Christian. He was appointed dean of instruction and registrar of Ambassador College.

Another applicant was a high school English teacher who held Ph.D. degrees from Columbia University and the University of Oregon. She was hired as the English instructor. The French instructor was born and educated in France. The history and Spanish instructor held an M.A. from Colorado University. The head of the music department was a graduate of Chicago Musical College. The woman who became Ambassador College’s librarian had served on the staff of the Library of Congress and held degrees in music. The director of physical education had an M.S. from the University of Southern California and had been in charge of the U.S. Navy’s physical fitness program.

These, along with Mr. Armstrong and Mr. Dillon, were Ambassador College’s first faculty.

Buying a New Home

Returning to Pasadena on March 27, Mr. Armstrong turned his attention to finding a home. Mrs. McCormick, the real estate broker, had three places lined up for him to inspect. The first two were not suitable, but the third was just right, and only three miles from the campus. The owners, Mr. and Mrs. Williams, were only willing to sell it to those who would lovingly take care of the property. They took an instant liking to Mrs. Armstrong, and agreed to sell their home for half the listed price. With no down payment or interest, the Armstrongs were to make quarterly payments. The Williams would take a trust deed, while giving possession and the deed in 90 days, when the second payment was to be made.

This was an unbelievable deal! Even Mrs. McCormick said, “It’s like a miracle.”

Mr. and Mrs. Armstrong figured out that the money they had been forced to spend eating out at restaurants, due to living in motels, was almost the same amount as the payments. By buying the house and eating economical home-cooked meals, their new home would not cost them any more than what they had already been spending.

Mr. and Mrs. Armstrong rejoiced to receive this grand blessing, signing the contract on April 1, 1947.

Trouble From Dr. B.

Though he appeared to be a friend to Mr. Armstrong, Dr. B. actually had a secret agenda. His plan was to keep the monthly lease payments *and* keep the property. Mr. Armstrong soon became aware of his scheme, and, turning to God rather than relying upon himself, was able to thwart his efforts. But this did not happen overnight. It involved many trials, obstacles and headaches—which, if God had not intervened, would have ensured that Ambassador College never got off the ground.

For example, Dr. B. had assured Mr. Armstrong that the property he was purchasing was of solid concrete, fireproof construction. The two architects Mr. Armstrong had hired said the same thing.

However, a month before the school’s inaugural opening, Pasadena building inspectors bored inside the outer layer of hard concrete and found that the structure was actually a frame building—one that did not meet the codes to qualify as a classroom building!

Before they could officially use the building as a college, all walls and ceilings had to be torn out and replaced with fire resistant construction! When the walls were being torn out, the inspector ordered that new electric conduits were required throughout, along with all new plumbing pipes! This extensive work added up to be a \$30,000 nightmare!

Mr. Armstrong sent a letter to the brethren and co-workers, explaining this desperate situation. They were moved into action, many sending in thousands of dollars. One man—a farmer who wanted others to receive the type of higher education he had been denied growing up—sent most of his life’s savings. Another radio listener mortgaged his home, loaning the money to Mr. Armstrong, without requiring security.

The people who responded to this emergency letter had taken Christ’s teachings to heart. They were doers, not just listeners, of God’s Word, and believed that it is more blessed to give than to receive. Their hearts, as well as tithes and contributions, were in God’s Work.

Forced Off the Air

What Mr. Armstrong called a “\$30,000 headache” not only threatened the college, it also led to the Work getting behind making airtime payment to XELO, the now 150,000 watt clear-channel station at Juarez, Mexico. Together with XEG, these two stations transmitted the radio program over most of the U.S. and into central Canada.

The World Tomorrow was forced off XELO. At XEG, the program had to cancel its weeknight broadcasts, airing only on Sunday nights, until the following October.

Other bills began to pile up. Persistent creditors hounded Mr. Armstrong, demanding payment. The Work even got behind in paying the faculty—which obviously did not go well with the instructors.

Added to this was the constant pressure of naysaying and complaints from within the Church and the faculty. Mr. Armstrong was surrounded by men and women who lacked vision—who could not see beyond the here and now. Like the Israelites in Moses’ day, many in the Church grumbled and moaned, saying that the college should not have been started the way that it did—that Mr. Armstrong should shut it down and focus just on the radio program. They could not see that the living Eternal God was actually building the college, so they constantly talked about “when this thing folds up.” This was irritating—frustrating!—to hear. Mr. Armstrong was determined that Ambassador College would *not* close its doors.

Learning “Relaxed Faith”

Though he had suffered many trials and tests, Mr. Armstrong never lost faith in God. Years of living the way that produces lasting peace and true success had taught him that God always keeps His promises. But the constant pressures of such nerve-shattering ordeals came to a boiling point. Every man has his limits—Mr. Armstrong was no different:

“It became almost impossible to sleep nights. I never lost faith—really. I never doubted the outcome. Yet I had not yet learned the total, implicit, trusting faith that can RELAX and leave it quietly in God’s hands. I was under terrific strain. It was literally multiple nightmares condensed into a super ONE!

“On one occasion, I almost snapped. I weakened to the extent that I actually prayed, one night, that God would let me die through the night, and relieve me from the almost unbearable agony. But next morning, I was deeply repentant for that, and prayed earnestly for God’s forgiveness. Twice I did give up, on going to bed at night. But next morning was another day, and I bounced back, repentant for having given up—if only momentarily.”

Mr. Armstrong did learn how to relax in faith and quietly place the burden of worry in God’s hands.

Ambassador College Opens Its Doors

Mr. Armstrong received about 40 applications from young people who wanted to attend Ambassador College. However, due to the emergency reconstruction, he had to notify each applicant that the college’s opening would be delayed until further notice.

When it finally did swing open, on October 8, 1947, nearly all applicants had enrolled in other colleges. Including Mr. Armstrong’s son Richard, this left only four students to begin the first year of Ambassador College.

Mr. Armstrong always taught that whenever God does a work through human instruments, that work starts off small like the proverbial mustard seed. In this case, no other college could have started off smaller. At first, there were no dormitories for students to live on campus. There was no real college library—just a room with some books and encyclopedias on shelves, which served as a library, music room, assembly room, study room and lounge. There was no gymnasium, track or athletic field. Some of the living rooms were turned into business offices.

The central garage space was converted into a general mailing room. A small printing shop for producing booklets occupied the rear ground-floor room.

These four first-year students were truly pioneers. They had to live off campus to rough it through sparse economic times. The college supplied part-time janitorial work for them, at \$40 per month. But their off-campus rent was \$31.50 per month! In order to have enough to eat, they often had to go out and pick lamb's-quarter (wild spinach) growing along certain streets and in vacant lots. And there were times when they went hungry.

Yet they never grumbled or complained, for they hungered even more for the right kind of education. They were of a generation that grew up during the Great Depression. The harsh realities of life had taught them how to go without and make due with whatever was on hand.

Like Mr. Armstrong, they heard people talk about the college in terms of “when this thing folds up.” But these four pioneering students never doubted that this was God's college—that not only would God keep it alive, He would make it grow!

Dealing With the Talented and Gifted

As stated, Ambassador College was founded to provide a general liberal arts education based on true values, as found in the Bible. Yet finding college instructors who shared this vision was next to impossible. Initially, Mr. Armstrong had to hire instructors who had been educated by man's educational system, which was founded on human reasoning and pagan traditions. The men and women who became the college's first faculty members were not the “foolish” or “weak things of the world” (I Cor. 1:26-29). They were highly educated, experienced and talented—but they did not realize that “every man at his best state is altogether vanity” (Psa. 39:5). Since their personal training and education had not been founded on God's Word, the foundation of true knowledge, they sometimes did things that went against everything Mr. Armstrong was striving to accomplish.

For example, when he had left the planning of the school curriculum, class schedules and the other academic issues in their hands, Mr. Armstrong discovered that his own theology course—the real foundational course of the college—had been reduced to a two-hour minor subject! And it was too late to change the schedule. Classes were under way—all schedules were fixed—all records had been set. He would have to wait a whole school year before making any changes.

Mr. Armstrong sensed an undercurrent of hostility from the teaching staff. They wanted things done their way. *After all*, they reasoned, *we are the experts here*.

To steer the college the way it was meant to go—God's way—Mr. Armstrong required all faculty members and students to attend his classes. This gave him a sounding board, enabling him to constantly keep the biblical foundation of knowledge before the faculty and student body. Mr. Armstrong did his best to make his lectures so logical and fact-based that no one could refute what he taught them.

When the second year began, he made certain that the theological courses were three-hour class periods per week.

Making Tough Decisions

That summer of 1948, after much counsel, meditation, prayer and much thinking, Mr. Armstrong was forced to make a tough decision. In the face of all the doomsayers who thought the college was dead in the water, he decided to reduce the school schedule to half-time for one year, along with reducing salaries to half, as well as reducing the number of faculty members. And so, Ambassador College's second year offered classes only three days a week.

Yet, despite making no efforts to recruit additional students, three new students enrolled that year.

Dr. B. Strikes Again

Another crisis appeared on the horizon:

“While we had paid the \$25,000 as rent (to be converted into a \$25,000 down payment via the lease option), we had, of course, paid no interest. Neither had we paid the taxes or insurance. These accumulated amounts were all to come due on December 27, 1948. They amounted to several thousand dollars. Taxes had to be paid, retroactive for the twenty-five months. Also, interest on the unpaid balance, starting at \$100,000, less \$1,000 each month for the twenty-five months. Insurance for the twenty-five months also became due in one lump sum on December 27.

“*HOW*, in our strained circumstances, were we going to raise that large sum of money by December 27? It was a frightening dilemma.”

This came to be a \$17,000 problem. Mr. Armstrong did everything he could to solve it, relying on God to save His college. And, once again, God inspired the co-workers to move into action.

At that time, the Work's normal daily income was about \$500. When the tax problem was made known to the co-workers, about \$3,000 came in one day—then, the next day, another \$3,000 came in—and the next day—and the next day—and the next day! By December 15, the Work had received more than \$50,000!

Mr. Armstrong *knew* that this could not be mere coincidence. No human explanation could explain away what happened. This was a miracle.

"It seemed like God had sent us a great deal more than we needed!" Mr. Armstrong wrote. "But we were soon to see that He had not. The college could not have been saved, had there been less. It turned out we needed considerably more money by December 27 than we had realized. Dr. B. had a \$17,000 mortgage on the property that he had to pay off in order to transfer the deed to us. He was several years behind in paying taxes. Under the circumstances, the way he acted—and considering that he was planning to prevent allowing us to exercise our option—unless we had some \$15,000 to \$20,000 to temporarily loan him, IN ADDITION to the money we had to pay him, he could have beaten us and we should have lost the property, after all!

"But God knew precisely what we NEEDED—and HE SENT IT!"

But Dr. B. was not yet finished trying to retain ownership of the property. Even though Mr. Armstrong had the full amount due him in escrow on December 15, Dr. B. and his sister made no effort to sign the papers for the transaction.

Mr. Armstrong discovered through the escrow company that the mortgage had been long, long past due. He made an arrangement that, if Dr. B. refused to sign the papers, the man who held the mortgage would willingly sell it to the Work. Mr. Armstrong did not want to take this route, but it was good to know that, if push came to shove, God had worked it out so that he could force Dr. B.'s hand.

Dr. B. agreed to sign—IF he was loaned a few thousand dollars on top of the money that was deposited to pay for the interest, taxes and insurance. Mr. Armstrong tried to work with the man. He agreed to loan him the money, arranging to deduct \$250 from the \$1,000-monthly lease payments until the loan was repaid.

Still, Dr. B. and his sister made no move to sign the papers. He claimed that she was too ill to be disturbed. The deadline drew dangerously near. Mr. Armstrong's back was against the wall. He had no choice but to force their hand. He gave Dr. B. and his sister an ultimatum: Sign now or the lease money would be withdrawn from escrow that afternoon, and placed with a judge. Then Mr. Armstrong would seek for every delay

the law allowed—even if it took years. Dr. B. and his sister would not receive a single payment. Meanwhile, the college would still take possession of the property.

"All right, Dr. B.," Mr. Armstrong said. "Either your sister signs in the next thirty minutes, or I'll tell you what's going to happen. I have exhausted my patience on you. I have suffered your harassment now for two years. I'm going to end it HERE AND NOW!

"Unless I telephone my attorneys that your sister has signed, before 1 o'clock, it will be TOO LATE—they will be on the way to file suit in Superior Court. All the money will be withdrawn from escrow yet this afternoon, and placed with the judge. We know you NEED that money to live. We will then seek for every delay the law allows. My lawyers tell me we can delay action on the suit for years. Meanwhile we remain in possession of the property. The college will go right along. You will receive NO PAYMENTS whatsoever.

"But that is not all. I have negotiated with Mr. Blank to purchase the trust deed on this property which you owe him. I have the money on hand to purchase it. Then, because you have violated the terms of the mortgage, by not paying taxes, I shall immediately FORECLOSE on you. In that manner we will take complete ownership of the property by paying only the amount of this mortgage. We will freeze you out completely. Once this is done, we can withdraw our suit, and recover all the money."

Mr. Armstrong pleaded with him not to let this happen. Reluctantly, Dr. B. and his sister gave in, went to a notary public and signed the deal.

Ambassador College was now set for an incredible rollercoaster ride into the future.

AN EXPLOSION OF GROWTH!

Ambassador College had survived its first two years, and was set to expand. Added to the original two and one-quarter-acre campus was “Mayfair,” a stately, 28-room, Tudor-style mansion. This addition expanded the campus to four acres. Used as on-campus housing, most of its re-landscaping was done by students.

In the fall of 1949, the student enrollment grew to 12, with Richard Armstrong as the first student body president.

That same year, *The World Tomorrow* program was still being heard on only nine radio stations. Yet, ratings agencies revealed that the program was the second highest rated in Chicago during its half-hour time-slot. Also, during this period, the Work continued to grow at its usual—yet extraordinary—rate of 30 percent each year, which was to continue for 35 years, beginning from 1935 and continuing through 1969, inclusively.

The College's Fourth Year

The year 1950 saw a tight financial crunch for the Work, with only four issues of *The Plain Truth* being published—and these had to be reduced to eight pages each.

That fall, ten new students had enrolled, and the school acquired its third piece of property—a camellia nursery, which became a small athletic field.

Also, for the first time, Ambassador College had freshman, sophomore, junior and senior classes. This meant that the school's first commencement ceremony was held in May 1951.

Snapshot of the Church

Even though the gospel was being spread across the nation and into Canada, the Church was still small, with only about 150 people and about four congregations, helped by many co-workers. The Work was basically being done by a “one-man ministry.”

In the years that Mr. Armstrong had been away—acquiring airtime on radio stations, making quality recordings for the program, writing all of *The Plain Truth* articles, moving headquarters offices to southern California, founding and running a college, and teaching classes—the Eugene congregation had dwindled from approximately 100 people to about 30. Most brethren lacked the vision Mr. Armstrong had. Without his constant, reassuring presence before them, many simply could not endure. The result was that they were led astray by three would-be leaders.

Even the thirty who remained had split into two opposing factions.

Meanwhile, the Portland, Oregon and Vancouver, Washington congregations combined into *one* congregation, with only about 12 members total.

The Church needed trained ministers and leaders to stabilize congregations—*fast!*

Mr. Armstrong was forced to scrap *The Plain Truth* mailing list and start from scratch. (The magazine had grown to 50,000 copies.) This solved part of the financial problem of not having enough money to publish so many issues.

Then he decided to publish a magazine for brethren and co-workers, offering practical, spiritual food—*The Good News*. He would train certain students to write articles for that magazine, giving them the necessary training and experience that would prepare them to eventually write for its sister publication, *The Plain Truth*.

Having His Picture Published

For years, many listeners of the radio program and readers of the magazine sent letters to Mr. Armstrong, requesting that he show a photograph of himself. Naturally, they wanted to see the face of the man who spoke and wrote so boldly.

Mr. Armstrong loved to preach the gospel message, and he wanted people to focus on *it*—not on himself. This is why, for many years, he did not send photographs of himself to brethren and co-workers.

However, one letter finally changed his mind. “I can’t quote that letter word for word,” he wrote, “but it said, in effect: ‘What have you got to *hide*, Mr. Armstrong? Why do you refuse to let us listeners know what you look like? Are you trying to cover up something? Suppose you attend a church service, and the pastor *HIDES* behind the pulpit. Suppose he lets the congregation hear his voice, but he hides his face. Wouldn’t you get suspicious? Wouldn’t you think he was covering up something? When I go to church, I want to *SEE* what the preacher looks like, as well as to listen to his sermon. A man’s character shows in his face. Are you ashamed of yours? *WHY WON’T YOU PUBLISH YOUR PICTURE?*’”

Mr. Armstrong did just that, publishing his picture in the November 1951 issue of *The Good News*. Over the years, as he increasingly became a public figure, Mr. Armstrong allowed more photos of himself to be published.

Yet, here is the irony: Because he finally, reluctantly did this, he was falsely accused of promoting himself!

A Zest for Languages

The August 1952 issue of *The Plain Truth* was the first issue offering articles written by people other than Mr. Armstrong. One was written by his son Richard, with a dateline from London, England.

He was overseas in order to pursue his dream of visiting Paris. Richard Armstrong had a natural gift for learning languages. He was so proficient that he could speak French as fluently as a natural-born Frenchman.

Meanwhile, for the first time in years, the Church added two new congregations: Big Sandy, Texas, and San Diego, California. With the overall addition of 300 people, the Church of God grew by 200 percent!

Restoring God’s Government to His Church

Now we come to a monumental event that affected the Church and caused the Work to explode in growth. Since first being called into the understanding of God’s truth in 1927, Mr. Armstrong had been perplexed about how the Church should be governed. God was not ready to reveal

the towering truth of this most important doctrine until Ambassador College was first established, providing a team of teachable, dedicated and trained leaders.

In his May 2, 1974 letter to brethren and co-workers, Mr. Armstrong explained why the Church abandoned the inefficient, chaotic, manmade government of democracy, and restored God’s government—administration from the top down. This longer quote tells the important story:

“Many times I have told you, dear Brethren, that when God first called me, beginning in the autumn of 1926, that the living Christ brought me into His truth a step at a time. *YOU* have not had to learn the truth so slowly—Christ used me to do it for you. And one of the very last truths He opened to me was that of *CHURCH ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNMENT!* There was a reason for this.”

“I want to give you a brief synopsis of my association with the ‘Sardis’ church...”

“Brethren, I have felt it necessary that you should know and understand these things, so you may realize *WHY* I did not yet fully understand the truth regarding church government and organization, in February, 1939—*MORE THAN 35 YEARS AGO*—when I wrote an article on church organization.

“There had been much confusion and argument among the ‘Sardis’ brethren about church organization. When the new so-called ‘Bible Form of Church Organization’ was introduced at Salem, naturally the Stanberry people argued against it. I think we all became confused on the question. It’s like being too close to one tree to see the forest. I *KNEW* that the so-called ‘12, the 70, and the 7’ was entirely misapplied, and definitely *NOT* God’s form of organization. But also I knew that the ‘General Conference’ form was not Biblical. In both of those—Stanberry and Salem—the people voted—government from the bottom like these dissenters today.

“For this reason I did write an article more than 35 years ago, in the February, 1939, *GOOD NEWS—WHICH WENT TO OUR OWN ‘Philadelphia Era’ MEMBERS—NOT* to the Salem or Stanberry membership—intended to *PROTECT OUR OWN MEMBERS WHO WERE MY OWN CONVERTS, AND NOT TO CONFUSE OR TAKE MEMBERS FROM EITHER OF THEM*—proving that this so-called ‘Bible Form of Organization’ was *NOT* Biblical.

“By that time our own churches, and the *RADIO CHURCH OF GOD* were operating separately from either of them. But I had not, as yet, come to understand *WHAT IS* the true Bible form of church organ-

ization. When the true knowledge was revealed, LATER, to those of us in the ‘Philadelphia Era’ we put it into practice and PUBLISHED THIS TRUTH.

“Brethren, do you realize THIS IS THE ONLY CHURCH on earth, so far as I know, which has consistently GROWN in grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (II Peter 3:18) as God commands. We GREW into the TRUE knowledge regarding church organization and government.

“We published an article revealing new truth about church organization in The GOOD NEWS, November, 1952, and again in August, 1953, ‘GOVERNMENT in Our Church,’ and in November, 1953, ‘JUDGING and DISCIPLINE in God’s Church.’ As God revealed truth, His Church accepted it. And long since, we came into the FULL TRUTH on church organization and government.”

“Now let’s look into New Testament teaching to see how this is POSITIVELY REVEALED.

“Take the Apostle Paul, called and chosen by Christ direct, as leader, under Christ, in getting THE WORK to the Gentiles, as well as the conducting of services in the churches, after the Work has resulted in conversions and local churches—that is, the function of ‘feeding the flock,’ after THE WORK has not only proclaimed the Gospel as a witness, but also resulted in conversions and adding members to the Church.

“I quoted from Galatians 2:7-8 about how Paul was assigned by Christ to head THE WORK to the Gentiles.

“Now notice Titus 1:4-5 and 2:15—Paul wrote to Titus (UNDER PAUL), ‘To Titus, mine own son after the common faith (even as those under me in THE WORK today, are MY own sons, directly or indirectly, in the Lord)...from God the Father (first in rank) and the Lord Jesus Christ (second in rank) our Savior. For this cause left I (next in rank—to Gentiles—under Christ) thee (under Paul’s authority in the Work) in Crete, that thou shouldst set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders (under Titus who is under Paul, who is under Christ) in every city as I had appointed thee.’

“Paul gave reason, in the following verses, for GOVERNMENT and AUTHORITY in the Church—‘For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers...whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses (even as those fighting against order and government in God’s Church are doing today), teaching things they ought not (as right now), for filthy lucre’s sake. One of themselves, even a prophet of their own, said, The Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, (lazy gluttons – RSV)...This witness is true. Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they

may be sound in the faith.’ And Paul adds, chapter 2:15, ‘...and REBUKE, with ALL AUTHORITY.’

“Yes, God’s Government is NECESSARY in His Church, and He PUT IT THERE!

“No authority in the Church? What did God MEAN when He says in His Word, ‘OBEY them that have the RULE over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account (as I know I shall) that they may do it with JOY, and not with grief for that (causing those over you grief) is unprofitable for YOU. Pray for us (THOSE OF US GOD HAS SET IN AUTHORITY TODAY) for we trust we have a good conscience, in all things, willing to live honestly’ (Heb. 13:17-18).

“No government in God’s Church? Then WHY did God inspire this to the Thessalonians? ‘And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labor among you, and are OVER YOU in the Lord, and admonish you; and to esteem them very highly in love for their work’s sake. And be at peace among yourselves’ (I Thes. 5:12-13).

“One of the things SATAN works overtime in injecting into any mind that will let it enter, is RESENTMENT OF AUTHORITY. GOD’S authority is administered in LOVE—and actually as one SERVING those under His authority for THEIR GOOD and out of loving CONCERN for them. That is the way I try to use what authority God has delegated to me, and I try to teach those under me to use it in the same manner—as a servant, not one lording it over those under him—as JESUS gave us an example. Satan DESPISES government, except as HE himself harshly and in hate employs it.”

“Notice what Jesus taught: ‘And there was also a strife among them, which of them (Jesus’ disciples) should be accounted the greatest. And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them...but ye shall not be so; but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve’ (Luke 22:24-26). This same conversation is also recorded in Mark 10:42: ‘...ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them...but so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: and whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all. For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister...’ But no one can say Jesus had no authority.

“Years ago, seeing this, and not considering the many, MANY Scriptures charging some in the Church with authority, rulership, saying to ‘rebuke’ the unruly, etc., I took the above scriptures to mean there is

no authority in the Church. I did not want to exercise authority. I was still NEW in God's truth (this was over 40 years ago). So, in the early days of the parent Church of the Philadelphia era, at Eugene, Oregon, I allowed 'wolves in sheeps' clothing' to come in and sow the seeds of discord among brethren. It resulted in splitting the church in two—possibly turning half my flock onto the way that leads into a lake of fire! God had His own way of REBUKING ME SOUNDLY, making me see this in its true light. Jesus here is talking about THE MANNER in which the authority Christ delegates is used. He is NOT saying there is NO AUTHORITY."

Mr. Armstrong learned that God's government protects the Church. It also enabled the Work to leap forward, because without the bureaucratic "red tape" that is a natural by-product of democracy, Mr. Armstrong and leaders under him were able to smoothly administer and execute vital—and often time-sensitive—decisions.

"And This Gospel Shall Be Preached"

Staffed with trained writers and editors to help him, Mr. Armstrong began to offer the magazine over the air once again. This began with the June 1953 issue.

There was even more exciting news in the Work: God had opened the door for broadcasting *The World Tomorrow* program on the most powerful station on the planet—Radio Luxembourg! Finally, Mr. Armstrong's voice was being heard in Europe!

However, Mr. Armstrong had faced an interesting challenge as the door opened for Radio Luxembourg:

"In the fall of that year [1952], time did finally open to us on Radio Luxembourg. But it was altogether different from broadcasting to an American audience. Luxembourg is a small country sandwiched in between Germany, Belgium, and France—and its powerful signal heard in several other countries. Their very commercial life depends on being careful in what NOT to allow to be said over their powerful facilities. They allow NO political propaganda not even any ALLUSIONS to anything political. And, in accepting religious broadcasts, the station obviously enforces strict rules that no offense is given to any religion or religious belief.

"In speaking on biblical prophecy, dealing with today's world events, we soon learned we had to become *very* familiar with their policies, lest our analysis of today's world news be construed as an allusion to things political.

"November 22, 1952, was a historic day for us!

"On that day I recorded the *first* broadcast for Radio Luxembourg!

"I have written many times about how Christ opened the giant DOOR of Radio Luxembourg to proclaim His gospel to Europe precisely nineteen years—one time-cycle—after the beginning of the work in 1934. The door of radio first opened on the first Sunday in 1934. Our first broadcast to Europe occurred the first Thursday in 1953—the first week in January both times!

"BUT WE DID NOT PLAN IT THAT WAY! *GOD DID!*

"My November 22 recording was rejected by the station. A second try was rejected. The third time I had finally come to comprehend clearly the station policies—and it was accepted! It went on the air the first week in January, 1953!"

Along with the magazine, this, with other stations blanketing the United States and parts of Canada, meant that Christ's true gospel was being preached to humanity at large for the first time in 1,900 years! The last time this gospel message had been widely proclaimed was in A.D. 53, by Paul. This gospel OF Christ had been suppressed and counterfeited by a false gospel ABOUT Christ. Now mankind was beginning to hear that true message of hope once again.

Speaking of the impediments to going on the air in Britain, Mr. Armstrong described the miraculous events that allowed the preaching of the gospel to continue in that country:

"The British government *would not allow* any broadcasting facilities within its jurisdiction that might be used by God's servants to proclaim GOD'S MESSAGE OF THIS HOUR to the British peoples!

"But God was determined to get His message to the British!

"So, the first week in 1953, God's message started getting into Britain *from Europe*—when *The World Tomorrow* program began going out on the superpowered voice of Radio Luxembourg!

"When Radio Luxembourg was no longer effective for this message, God raised up broadcasting stations ON SHIPS, ANCHORED JUST OUTSIDE BRITAIN'S JURISDICTION. '*The World Tomorrow*' WAS THEN THUNDERED over all of Britain DAILY, from SEVEN of these ships" (*The United States and Britain in Prophecy*).

Late 1953 saw *another* big leap in doing the Work: The radio program was broadcast over the ABC national radio network. This meant an instant audience of millions of listeners to 90 radio stations throughout the U.S.—including 50,000-watt stations in New York, Chicago, San Francisco and other metropolitan areas.

God's Work could now truly take off as never before!

LISTENERS RESPOND TO RADIO LUXEMBOURG

The following excerpts were taken from Mr. Armstrong's March 1954 Member/Co-Worker letter:

"The broadcast, and The PLAIN TRUTH, are literally shaking Britain [and Europe]! You probably have no conception of the tremendous influence this program, which is made possible by your dollars and your PRAYERS, is having on our British cousins overseas!

"Letters are pouring in by the hundreds! British leaders tell me the effect of The WORLD TOMORROW on Britain is almost beyond belief! They are being STIRRED more than you people in America ever were!

"So now look over my shoulder, as it were—here are just a FEW of the thousands of letters:"

A man in the Royal Air Force, stationed in Wales, wrote: "I am writing to sincerely thank you for your wonderful, inspired radio programme, which we hear on Radio Luxembourg, and for the January '54 issue of your 'Plain Truth' magazine. I really must tell you how much your radio programme and magazine mean to me personally and my friends in the R.A.F. who listen to your programme. We hear many religious programmes but we honestly believe that the 'World Tomorrow' is the 'Tops' for sincerity and interest...The Plain Truth is quite definitely the most forthright and down to earth magazine I have ever read. It sets out your message so clearly and distinctly and I only wish I could assist you with a contribution. But as you know, the Chancellor of the Exchequer forbids sending money out of the country. Well, Mr. Armstrong, I hope you will have many such letters as mine from Great Britain and the rest of Europe; don't ever take your programme from Radio Luxembourg—it is needed here as everywhere."

From an official of a large British religious federation: "Dear Brother in Israel: I was asked by a friend some time ago if I ever listened to you on Radio Lux.; and when I did, I came to the conclusion that you knew where modern Israel was, and the meaning of these days. Your magazine, for which I sincerely thank you is to hand today, and confirms what I thought. I have read it with great appreciation. Those who know this truth (our identity is ISRAEL) are VERY many today in these islands, and in the Commonwealth. I would like to tell you for your encouragement that you are listened to by many more people than your mail might indicate. I have been amazed at the number of people who have told me they listen to you regularly. May God's blessing rest on your witness."

From Cornwall, England: "Dear Mr. Armstrong: So many times we have intended writing you regarding your Gospel broadcast over Radio Luxembourg. Truly it is a very special time of spiritual uplift. We do thank God that He has privileged us to be amongst your vast audience to listen to your inspiring messages of the Scriptures. I'm sure, too, that your ministry will be mightily used to enlighten the intellectuals, because you can meet them on

their own ground. The Holy Spirit is truly revealing wonderful truths through you. My father and I are just ordinary simple folks, and we would surely like to say a big 'THANK YOU' to you for your profound yet simple messages."

From Genoa, Italy: "Dear Sir: Last Monday night I heard your very interesting broadcast...The programme was a rather unusual one. I should like to know something more of it. It appears to be both religious and scientific. I have never heard a programme just like yours. Thanks for the broadcast. Perhaps you would send me your magazine."

From Oslo, Norway: "Dear Mr. Armstrong: Thank you very much for your interesting programme that reached me from Radio Luxembourg yesterday. I should be thankful to receive your offered book."

From Malung, Sweden: "Dear Mr. Armstrong: I have been very glad to listen to your radio message last night over Radio Luxembourg, and I will say you my heartily thanks for that. In the same time, I will wish you God's richest blessing over your works for God in this style. I will be very thankful to you when you will send me a copy of your book."

From Paris, France: "Dear Mr. Armstrong: I heard you again last night from Luxembourg. I admire your zeal, ability, and courage. May the Lord bless you richly in bringing pure light to those who are confused...Send me please The Plain Truth and 'What is Prophesied.' When I was recently in Yugoslavia crowds of people were seeking the Lord,—something unusual. Could you do something for East Europe also?"

From Belfast, North Ireland: "Dear Mr. Armstrong: I am thrilled to hear your message of hope these past Mondays over Radio Luxembourg. I should like to have you put my name down for the booklet you offered so kindly over this station last night. I am not being greedy, but then I am sure you will understand, as this Kingdom message of hope for the future is not touched by most churches, so I would like to hear more. Once again thanking you for your hope-inspiring messages, and I trust God may bless your efforts in His work."

From Neslandsvat, Norway: "Dear Sir: I have been listening to your program over Radio Luxembourg, and I am sending you a few words to let you know that I am very thankful to God and to you every time I hear the Gospel go out in the air like that."

From Denmark: "Dear Mr. Armstrong, Yesterday I tuned in to your broadcast over Radio Luxembourg. Your powerful message attracted me, and as it was new thought for me, the wish arose in my heart to study those thoughts a little closer. Therefore, I was happy that you later on offered a little book written by you which I should be very glad to read. I must say that your message interested me very much and I am looking forward to being better acquainted with you through the printed page. Your talk yesterday was very powerful and inspiring."

Here is how Mr. Armstrong commented on these and other numerous letters:

"My, how these letters ought to warm our hearts, and encourage us to PRESS ON! Just remember, as you read these heart-touching letters, it is YOUR DOLLARS that are being turned into THE VERY WORD OF GOD, finding lodgment in the hearts of these people in MANY NATIONS."

“The Pressure Cooker”

The Church did continue to grow, and so did the Work. Meanwhile, Ambassador College continued teaching and training new leaders.

Students were not just taught how to make a living, but also how to LIVE. Their four years of study were filled with working, serving and growing. The student body remained tiny—for quite a while, less than a hundred. But this enabled everyone to get to know each other. And, when it came to activities, everyone was involved in everything.

There was Ambassador Club, a virtually mandatory once-a-week speech club that taught the men to give speeches, think on their feet and take leadership roles. There were also Women’s Clubs, which developed the cultural refinement of the young ladies.

Physical education and Bible courses were also mandatory.

There were foreign language clubs—French, German and Spanish—which helped and encouraged students to learn how to speak second languages without accents. There was also the campus newspaper, *The Portfolio*, which was a training ground for potential writers for the Work.

In the early years of Ambassador College, students had to work part-time jobs, 20 hours per week, at a minimum of two hours per day. They were all responsible for maintaining the campus grounds, and even for keeping their dorms clean.

Students were also strongly encouraged to pray, and to study their Bibles *daily*. Prayer closets were provided for them to have the much-needed privacy that shared dorm rooms did not offer.

There was the Ambassador Chorale, in addition to sports, cheer-leading, pep bands, dances, dinner functions, and more. A typical day in the life of a student began at 5 or 6 a.m. and ended at 10-11 p.m.

Students who felt overwhelmed by the constant activity were told that they were given too many things to do on purpose—so that they would get their priorities straight. True character can only be built under pressure. And Ambassador College was known as a “pressure cooker.” It was commonly said that “One year at Ambassador College was the equivalent of four years in ‘the field.’”

Stepping Into the World of Television

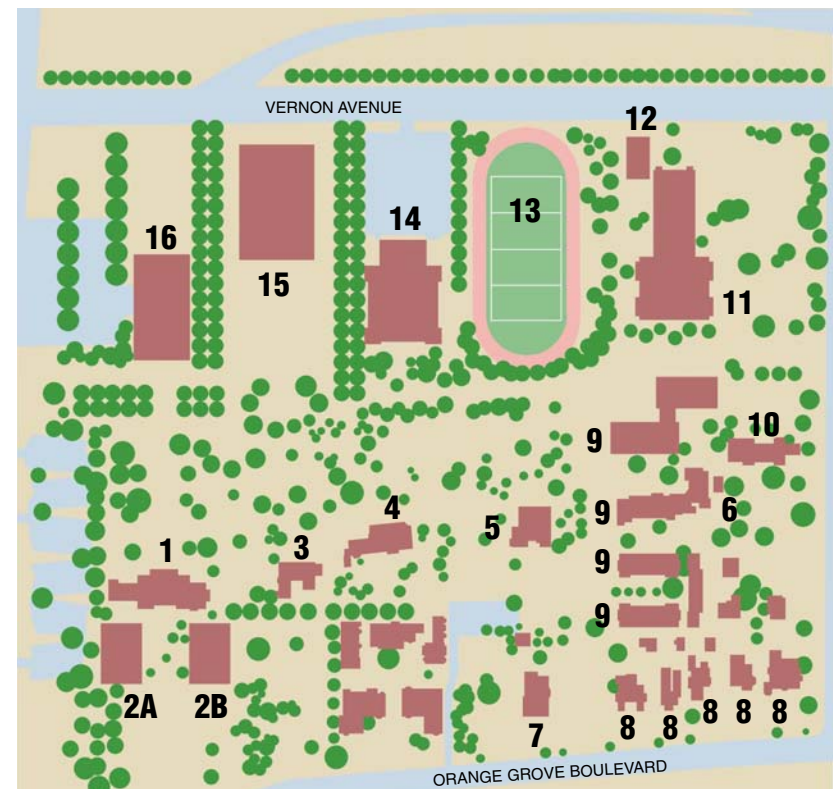
By 1950, there were 74 million television sets in America. In 1955, 7.8 million more sets were produced. It was beginning to look like radio would soon be replaced by TV.

THE MAGNIFICENCE OF AMBASSADOR COLLEGE

“Recapturing true values”—this was the motto of Ambassador College. Mr. Armstrong wanted the college to reflect the grace, excellence and magnificence of God. His hope was that the quality, beauty and elegance of the campus would inspire the growth and development of godly character and balanced attitudes in Ambassador students.

The property was in a continuous state of improvement, with special focus on horticultural projects, floriculture and floral designs, irrigation and grounds maintenance. Ambassador College was home to more than 1,000 trees, with 47 varieties of flowers and 40 kinds of shrubs. Its grounds featured formal Italian sunken gardens, a reflecting pool

Layout of the Pasadena Campus



- | | |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. AMBASSADOR HALL | 9. STUDENT RESIDENCES |
| 2A. FINE ARTS BUILDING | 10. MANOR DEL MAR |
| 2B. SCIENCE HALL | 11. PHYSICAL EDUCATION FACILITY |
| 3. TERRACE VILLA | 12. HANDBALL COURT BUILDING |
| 4. MAYFAIR | 13. ATHLETIC TRACK & FIELD |
| 5. LIBRARY | 14. DINING HALL / STUDENT CENTER |
| 6. ELECTRIC SERVICE BUILDING | 15. AMBASSADOR AUDITORIUM |
| 7. CHANCELLOR RESIDENCE | 16. ADMINISTRATION BUILDING |
| 8. FACULTY RESIDENCES | |

and a fountain with five bronze egrets.

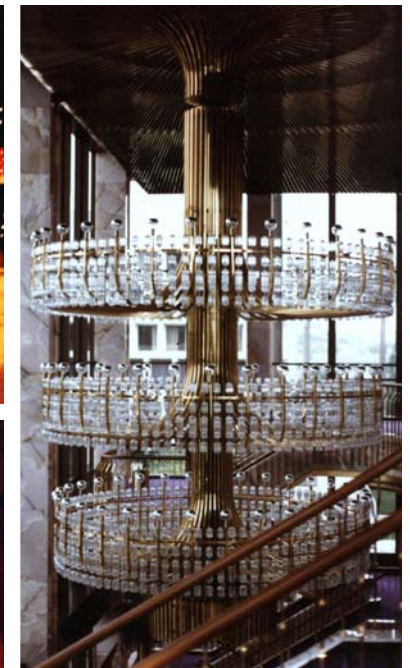
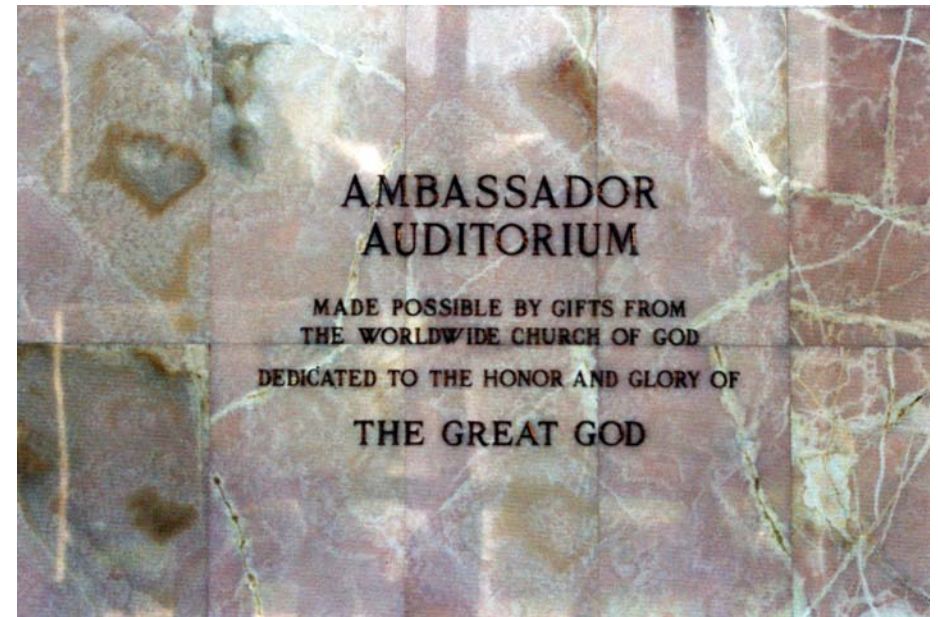
Buildings had to be periodically refurbished to maintain their unique look of quality. Many had exquisite interiors constructed of curly birch, Hungarian ash, fumed oak, maple, slash-grained Oregon pine, myrtle, redwood and Peruvian mahogany.

With the purchase of the Fowler estate in 1947, Ambassador College began, and with the purchase, in 1949, of Mayfair (a Tudor-style mansion), expansion began. Over the years, the campus grew, and received community and national recognition for its beautiful environment.



The college's crowning achievement—Ambassador Auditorium (below)—was completed in 1974. Beloved by the Church as “God’s House,” and home to the headquarters congregation, this multi-purpose concert hall seated an audience of 1,262, and, through the years, featured a variety of world-renowned artists, including Arthur Rubinstein, Beverly Sills, Luciano Pavarotti, Mel Torme, Sarah Vaughan, Pearl Bailey, Ella Fitzgerald, Victor Borge, Marcel Marceau, Bing Crosby and Dizzy Gillespie, to name a few. The theater had 16 bronze doors, each weighing 200 pounds. The auditorium’s foyer was decorated with rose onyx and a bronze, 2,500-pound, 30-foot chandelier, with 1,390 crystals from Germany. The grand lobby had a candelabra composed of Baccarat crystal from France. The lobby and lower lounge walls were covered with rose onyx from Turkey and Iran, and the stairway and balcony-level handrails were crafted from a rare African wood, selected for its grain and color, resembling rosewood.

Ambassador College truly reflected quality, refinement, beauty and grace. □



The Auditorium: These are four interior views, one of the beautiful, ornate foyer chandelier, two of the concert hall, and one of the splendid rose onyx behind the chandelier, that served as a backdrop for the Auditorium’s dedication to “The Great God.”



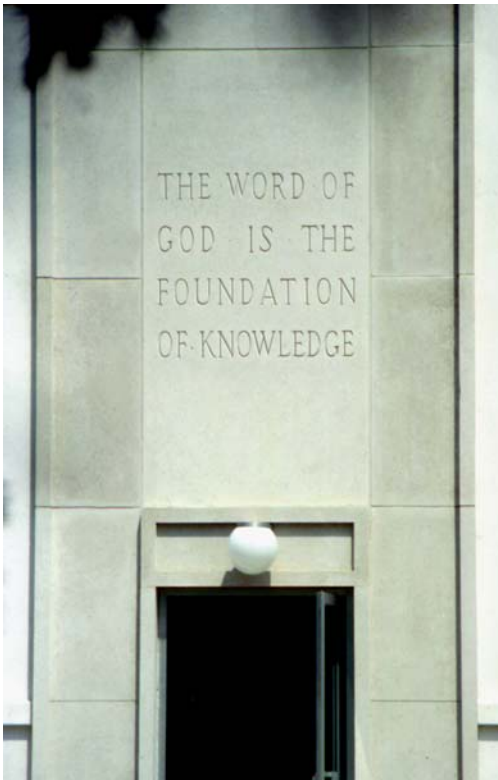
The Breathtaking Campus Grounds:

The award-winning Ambassador College grounds were renowned for beautiful buildings and landscaping, such as the stunning and stately Ambassador Hall (top). Many of the campus buildings were filled with elegance and a feeling of quality (right), as seen in this view of the central foyer of Ambassador Hall.

Mayfair (just above) was used in its earlier years as a student center and dining hall. Later, it served as a residence for female students.



The Grounds: At top is the Italian sunken gardens, with the Science and Fine Arts Buildings and Ambassador Hall in the background. At left is a sculpture of a sword being beaten into a plowshare, located on the Pasadena campus. Above is a view of a garden on the Big Sandy, Texas, campus.



Clockwise From Top: West entrance to Ambassador Hall; lower gardens—scene of many on-campus weddings, focusing on where couples stood; stairs descending from Ambassador Hall to Hall of Administration; fountain sculpture in Italian sunken gardens; fuller view of Italian sunken gardens.



Always looking to employ the latest, most efficient technology to do the Work, Mr. Armstrong and others around him felt it was time to broadcast *The World Tomorrow* program on television. He knew and understood that this emerging medium would allow the gospel message to reach even more people.

Yet, after careful review, Mr. Armstrong learned that radio was not “dead” after all. In 1955, there were about 14.5 million radios produced. Many consumers were buying two to four radios per household, while the average home had only one television.

In 1956, the radio program was broadcast to Asia and parts of Africa.

The following year, *The Plain Truth* graduated to two colors, with booklets being produced in Spanish. And the Church, with growing congregations being led by trained ministers, had increased to about 2,750 people.

Over the next few years, TV sets saturated the nation, eventually causing radio to take a back seat to this more efficient and effective medium. In 1967, God opened the door, and *The World Tomorrow* television program began to be aired in households across America.

Tragedy Strikes

Upon graduating from Ambassador College, Richard D. Armstrong was ordained into the full-time ministry. It was he who set up the London mailing address for radio listeners in Europe to send in their requests. Later, he became pastor over the Riverside, California church.

In late July 1958, Richard Armstrong and another man were on a baptizing tour, driving northward up the Pacific Coast. The road they were taking, Highway 101, was a dual highway, with one-way traffic on each side, divided by a short space. As they drove at night, the men did not notice that the highway became separated, with two parallel lanes divided by a much wider section of land.

They were driving on the wrong side of the road! Before they knew what was happening, their car was hit head-on, resulting in a three-car crash. Richard Armstrong was knocked unconscious and taken to a nearby hospital.

By the time Mr. Armstrong rushed to his bedside, his son was conscious, but in critical condition. His jaw was broken in several places. The accident had shoved his heart over to the middle of his chest. His left lung had collapsed, and his kidneys were not functioning. The doctors felt it necessary to move him to a medical center in Los Angeles, where an artificial kidney would be used to stimulate his own kidneys.

But after the ambulance trip there, Richard D. Armstrong died. He was survived by a wife and baby boy.

The following excerpts from Mr. Armstrong's autobiography reveal how the tragic loss of their firstborn son deeply affected both him and Mrs. Armstrong:

"But the great God had plans I did not know. I was perfectly satisfied with the one son. We did not plan to have another. A year and four months later, Garner Ted was born—and I then felt doubly blessed—with TWO sons.

"But when God took from me—or allowed to be taken—my firstborn son, on July 30, 1958—less than three months before his thirtieth birthday—well, it seemed that I could have some little understanding of how Abraham must have felt when he expected to have to give up his son Isaac—or even God the Father of all, in giving His Son Jesus Christ for ME as well as for the world.

"Dick's death occurred early Wednesday morning, July 30, 1958. The accident had occurred the preceding Wednesday morning. The funeral was set for Friday, August 1. The day in between, Thursday July 31, Mrs. Armstrong and I shared a very sorrowful 41st wedding anniversary.

"On Wednesday...I drove in my car to inspect cemeteries—which I had not had occasion to do before in Pasadena. I do not now remember whether Mrs. Armstrong and Lois went along. Necessary arrangements were completed."

"To say that my comparatively brief graveside sermon was an ordeal would be a gross understatement. I had learned, many years before, in conducting many funerals, to steel my nerves and remain calm, with controlled emotions. But speaking at Dick's funeral was altogether different. I found myself speaking in a louder, more concentrated voice than usual in a supreme effort to prevent emotional loss of control.

"I remember quoting a portion of Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, regarding the duty of those of us remaining to carry on the great work to which God had called us.

"My first impulse was to remain away from the Saturday afternoon college church service. I didn't want to see anybody. Nor did Mrs. Armstrong. But then I realized it was my duty to attend.

"I thought of entering at the last moment, and sitting in the front row before any could speak to me or offer condolences. But then I realized that some of the students had erroneously assumed that ministers were under such divine protection that no such tragedy could occur to one of them. Dick's accident and death might shatter this faith. I knew

I had to bring a message that would bolster and strengthen, not destroy, faith.

"These experiences were perhaps the most severe test I had ever been called on to experience. But of course I knew where to go for strength, wisdom, and help."

Incredible Growth

During the turbulent 1960s, the Work and God's Church continued to mushroom in size and power. By the end of the decade, *The Plain Truth* reached more than 2.2 million copies per year. The Radio Church of God exploded in attendance, from approximately 7,000 in 1960 to more than 54,000 in North America by 1969.

Up until 1960, there had only been one Feast site for the brethren to attend God's fall festival. But in 1961, another site was added. Another came in 1963. By the end of the 60s, there were five major (and two smaller) Feast sites in North America, ranging from 7,602 to 12,250 attendees, with additional sites located in other parts of the world.

In the meantime, with Mr. Armstrong skillfully guiding the master plan, Ambassador College was also growing, acquiring new properties that greatly expanded the scope of the Pasadena campus, including the addition of properties nearby that were not directly contiguous with the 59-acre campus. The college began to take on an extraordinary, even breathtaking, beauty that could only be likened to a very large, perfectly manicured garden. In fact, there were the lower gardens, the Italian sunken gardens, the Japanese gardens, and several others. The 1970s would see the college win national awards year after year, recognizing it as the most beautiful campus in America.

More and more people took note of this remarkable college near the intersection of Orange Grove and Colorado Boulevards, where the Rose Parade began every year. Residents from the community, and Church members visiting from around the world, enjoyed tours that were offered for anyone who wished to see the beauty of what God had placed together on just four square blocks that were eventually integrated into one magnificent campus.

In 1960, a second campus opened, this time in the United Kingdom. Once again, Mr. Armstrong was led to another magnificently landscaped property, located on a ten-acre estate 19 miles northwest of London, in Bricket Wood. With the Work growing around the world in quantum leaps, it was necessary to train more students with an international background so that they could return to serve in their own countries, either in

the ministry or in the growing number of regional offices serving an expanding Church, now with members on every continent and in scores of countries.

Mr. Armstrong held a special affection for the beauty and formality of the Bricket Wood campus, taking every natural occasion to fit a visit to this relaxing, stately campus into his schedule.

Also in 1960, Mr. Armstrong completed his first trip around the world, arranging for 39 radio stations to blanket Australia with the program.

In 1964, God inspired Mr. Armstrong to establish yet one more Ambassador College campus, this time in Big Sandy, Texas. This opportunity was presented to the Church as a result of property donated by long-time Texas members.

Because of its unique rural setting, with open fields on rolling hills, this campus allowed for agricultural studies and an experimental station. While it had already served for several years as a Feast location, this property was natural for being developed into the third and final Ambassador College campus. In later years, it included an airstrip and was used as one of the Church's North American summer camps. By that time, summer camps had to be established in various parts of the world to help in the experience and training of the large and growing number of young people being taught God's Way.

As mentioned, international offices of the Work were set up and staffed in several countries, including the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, the Philippines, South Africa, New Zealand, Germany, Mexico and the Caribbean. These all allowed for greater efficiency in serving local peoples where they lived.

In 1967, *The Plain Truth* became a four-color magazine, with 52 pages per issue. By the end of the decade, the magazine had become truly respected and well-known, and was being read by every strata of society across the world, including the "rich and famous" and various world leaders, who understood that it was an absolutely unique publication, unlike anything else they were reading.

With the growing television presence of *The World Tomorrow* and other amazing developments, and the Work continuing to increase by 30 percent each year, the Church changed its corporate name to better reflect its size and growth. In 1968, the Radio Church of God became the Worldwide Church of God (WCG).

The 1960s were truly the decade that changed the Church and its impact around the world in carrying out Christ's Great Commission of taking the gospel of the kingdom of God to the world. While the world was undergoing enormous changes in the "turbulent 60s," none of them

for the better, God's Work was fast-forwarding, enjoying unprecedented unity, peace and growth. Though this was to change later, in a dramatic way, wonderful fruit continued to be borne in virtually every aspect of the Work throughout the decade.

Throughout this period, as big, far-reaching decisions had to be made on an almost regular basis, Mr. Armstrong expressed that it was vital to always seek wide—and wise—counsel before proceeding. Of course, the Work would continue to face major decisions to walk through new doors as they opened to expand the Work. But where God was guiding, and where His servants were pleasing Him, much growth, many blessings and an abundance of fruit continued to be evident. God continued to inspire Mr. Armstrong, even though there was still the occasional persecution or seeming setback.

The following recounts another most painful event to Mr. Armstrong personally and the Church collectively.

Another Great Loss

Sadly, Mr. Armstrong had to experience another death, in this case, of the person closest to him. Loma D. Armstrong, his wife of nearly 50 years, died in April of 1967. Since the college's founding, students looked up to her, almost as a grandmother-like figure. Mrs. Armstrong had always made herself available to all the female students, who at times came to her when they were feeling homesick or just wanted someone to talk to. She had such a graceful and personable presence, brethren would sometimes write letters to her, and she would answer them. Mr. Armstrong always considered his wife to be one-half of his ministry, yet she stayed in the background, because she did not seek or enjoy attention. Theirs had been truly a wonderful marriage and partnership.

Here is how Mr. Armstrong told the Church about the death of his wife and constant companion through all that this book has but briefly described:

"...I am deeply sorry to have to announce...that my wife's critical illness has ended in the manner least expected—in her death just after midnight Saturday morning, April 15. In the next second of her consciousness she will awake in the Resurrection, completely healed—and, far more than we beseeched God in our earnest prayers, not in the corruptible body of this mortal flesh and blood, but in an immortal spirit body, in glory in God's eternal Kingdom!

"Thirty-four years ago, at this same time of year, when my father died having reached his seventieth year, I had to learn that God's prom-

ises are absolutely secure—but not always in the way we expect. For His ways are not our ways. In the ‘Faith Chapter’ of the Bible, Hebrews 11, speaking of the example of faith set by Abraham, Isaac and Jacob—‘the Fathers’—and of Sarah, we read: ‘These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them...that they, without us, should not be made perfect.’ (Heb. 11:13 and 40.)

“Had they received the promises by their faith at that time, then you and I would have been left out. But God’s promises to them are irrevocably secure! They shall receive them in the resurrection—and many thousands or millions of us also with them.

“God has promised to heal the sick, upon real repentance and faith. But God has not promised how, or when! That, we must leave to Him in faith.

“We did fully expect that God would heal her now. True, she was seventy-five and a half years of age. Even King David, who had been rescued from death, and healed from near-death more than once, ‘died in a good old age, full of days,’ at age seventy. (I Chron. 29:28). In I Kings 1:1, it is stated that ‘King David was old, and stricken with years,’ just before his death.

“God already had given my wife five and a half years more of this life than He gave David. She was just a few months older than I, though part of each year we were ‘the same age,’ as they are counted. Yet neither of us have felt or acted in any manner like ‘old folks,’ or ‘elderly’ people. We never thought of her as being anywhere near seventy!

“God had called her, and then me through her. He had chosen us for His Work. He had built His great Work through us, bearing great and rich spiritual ‘fruit.’...

“If you’ll read John 15, you’ll realize that God corrects, ‘prunes,’ or ‘purges’ every branch in Christ which is producing fruit—that they may bring forth more fruit. It is only those bearing none that He cuts off.

“This great Work of God not only has produced fruit—but right now God is opening gigantic new doors for His Work to multiply in power!

“In our human thinking, it seemed God would heal her now, that she could continue the remaining few years as my help in the closing years of God’s Work preparing the way for Christ’s coming, and the Kingdom of God, ushering in the wonderful *World Tomorrow!* But, we know now, God had intended otherwise...

“To all you who have come to a reawakening through her recent illness, let me plead: Carry on, in this spiritually rejuvenated new life!

Never slacken! Never lose courage! Now I need your help more than ever!”

A Big Door Opens

The following year, in 1968, Mr. Armstrong’s ministry entered an unprecedented new stage. King Leopold III of Belgium sent word through the Church’s German office that he would like to meet Mr. Armstrong. The two met at the king’s Belgian chateau, and started what became a long friendship. It also led to the opening of a monumental door—one that would put Mr. Armstrong in the presence of kings, prime ministers and other heads of state around the world.

THE LIBERAL YEARS

Beginning in the late 1960s, the focus of Mr. Armstrong's life, and in many ways that of the Church, changed dramatically. Previous to this time, Mr. Armstrong's sole efforts and energies were devoted to leading, administering and guiding the Church and God's Work in a very active "hands-on" way. He would periodically travel to visit campuses, regional offices or brethren in other parts of the world, but his attention was always exclusively on leading the Church and Work, largely from Pasadena.

Suddenly everything changed.

Mr. Armstrong's friendship with King Leopold III eventually proved to be a door that led to meeting many world leaders and officials, in a way that Mr. Armstrong could have never dreamed or foreseen. Nothing in the first 35 years of the Church's existence would have signaled to Mr. Armstrong what God was about to do. He could not have imagined that he would eventually meet such leaders as India's Indira Ghandi, Israel's Golda Meir, the President of Indonesia, the President of the Philippines, Prince Mikasa of Japan, Egypt's Anwar Sadat, England's Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, the King of Thailand, and a great many others—over one-third of the world's heads of state!

From 1970 until his death, Mr. Armstrong appeared before kings, queens, emperors, prime ministers, presidents and other heads of state and dignitaries. Yet he did not knock on their doors, requesting an audience with them—they requested *his* presence. These unique contacts

resulted in further arrangements for Mr. Armstrong to visit additional leaders.

Some may wonder why such dignitaries welcomed Mr. Armstrong's visits. Consider that he was in his late-seventies, and later his eighties and nineties, and was a white-haired, statesman-like figure who carried himself with dignity, confidence and poise. From his early days in advertising, Mr. Armstrong recognized and understood how to comfortably interact with the successful, powerful and influential.

Mr. Armstrong did not visit with these world leaders, pleading for them to "just accept Christ." He presented the gospel message in a way that was not syrupy or overtly religious. He simply put it in practical terms, telling them that there are only two ways of life—the way of GET and the way of GIVE. He would explain that, although mankind wanted peace, prosperity and true happiness, the only way these would eventually be achieved was through the way of giving, helping and cooperating with others.

Mr. Armstrong came to understand that these invitations were part of the fulfillment of a special commission that God had long ago foretold to occur at the end of the age: "You must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings" (Rev. 10:11)—similar to that of Paul's commission: "...for he is a chosen vessel unto Me, to bear My name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel" (Acts 9:15).

Coincidences or Miracles?

A number of "coincidences" strangely fell into place—one after the other—leading to numerous world leaders honoring Mr. Armstrong and giving him special attention and respect. At that time in his life, Mr. Armstrong's carriage and experience presented a unique dignity that even world leaders were not accustomed to seeing.

Mr. Armstrong's May 1971 Co-Worker Letter expresses how he saw these events develop: "I am able, now, to disclose to you privately and confidentially the almost unbelievable manner in which giant doors have been opening before me. As you know, one after another, the doors have opened for personal meetings with presidents, kings, prime ministers—and many other high government officials, in many countries around the world."

The first "coincidence" developed in 1968, as described by Mr. Armstrong: "The wife of our office manager at Bonn, West Germany, happened to show a copy of the 1966 Ambassador College year book—

The Envoy—to an industrialist friend in Brussels. He was much impressed by the book, and the high character of Ambassador students, reflected in their photographs and action shots. This industrialist happened to be a personal friend of King Leopold of Belgium. He asked if he might show *The Envoy* to the King. The King was quite impressed, and said he would like to meet the founder and Chancellor of this unique high-character educational institution.”

Mr. Armstrong obliged his request. Over time, a friendship developed and King Leopold became very close to Mr. Armstrong, even accompanying him on some of his international visits that followed later.

The second “coincidence” took place shortly thereafter: “In September, 1968, our Dean of Faculties wanted Ambassador College to conduct an archaeological project at a location in Israel. I was personally not interested in such a project. But I consented to visiting Jerusalem to see whether permission could be granted from the government authorities.”

As the most important archaeological “dig” at that time, the project began from the south wall of the Temple Mount. The application of three major American universities to participate in the project had been rejected. But the “dig’s” leader, Dr. Mazar, offered a fifty-fifty *joint* participation to Ambassador College.

Upon inspecting the project, Mr. Armstrong was pleasantly surprised: “It was much more impressive than I had expected. I began to realize the scientific and educational value to Ambassador College. A luncheon was held in a private dining room in the Knesset—the government’s capitol building. Present at the luncheon were five high-ranking officials of both the university and the government. It was a most memorable luncheon. The favor we were given in their eyes—the warmth of their attitude toward us—was inspiring, astonishing, and most unusual.”

Dr. Mazar and Dr. Aviram, who was Dean of Hebrew University’s College of Humanities, visited the Pasadena and Big Sandy campuses, and were impressed by what they saw. Joint participation was made official on December 1, 1968.

“So that is the manner,” Mr. Armstrong wrote, “in which this vitally important leap forward in the Work was started. We have been given very great favor in the eyes of both government and university chiefs in Jerusalem!”

The third “coincidence” occurred on the heels of Mr. Armstrong’s initial reception in Israel: “After our mid-October meeting in Jerusalem

in 1968...I caught a Pan Am round-the-world plane for Hong Kong and Tokyo, for conferences with advertising officials of *Reader’s Digest*. We had begun purchasing double-page advertising space in many editions of their magazine around the world. Arriving [at the] Tokyo airport, we were met by our...Chairman of the Department of Asian studies at Ambassador...He was acquainted with Prince Mikasa, brother of Emperor Hirohito. Unknown to me he had shown the 1966 *Envoy* to the Prince, and the Prince had expressed a desire to meet me...The Prince had asked me to be his guest at luncheon the following day...

“Also my acquaintance with Prince Mikasa led to my forty-five-minute private conference with Prime Minister Sato in December. Privately and confidentially, Mr. Sato requested me to go to Okinawa in February (the tension was too hot to go on the December trip). And I did go.”

Mr. Armstrong stressed that “private meetings with heads of state on this high level are something vastly different than a handshake with a crowd of tourists—or, for that matter, even magazine or newspaper correspondents. A magazine correspondent or editor may, on occasion, have a private conference with a head of state. But he does not meet the ruling official on an equal level.”

We are now ready to discuss “coincidence” number four, pertaining to Mr. Armstrong being given priority above senior American officials in his access to leaders:

“An interesting example of this, was an incident that occurred during a reception at the residence of the United States Ambassador of Nepal this past February...I had just returned from a visit with King Mahendra at the palace. We were hosting a dinner for important local men and their wives at the hotel that evening, but stopped off at the reception to which we had been invited.

“The Ambassador in Kathmandu [Nepal’s capital] happens to be a lady, and her husband is Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker at Saigon—U.S. Ambassador to South Vietnam. He and his four or five chief assistants were in Kathmandu for the weekend.

“On learning that we had just come from meetings with the King, and with the Crown Prince the evening before—following meetings with President Giri of India, and Prime Minister Golda Meir of Israel—and on the previous trip with Prime Minister Indira Gandhi of India—at which time King Leopold was traveling with us—and that two days later we were to have a private meeting with the King of Thailand (Siam)—this government official looked puzzled, and asked, ‘Well how in the world do you do it? We’ve been trying for six months to arrange meetings with

some of these people, and yet we haven't been able.' And they had the power and prestige of the U.S. government!

"I couldn't tell him how I arranged these meetings—because I didn't! Could you believe a Higher Power than the United States government opened these doors?"

Part of the fourth "coincidence" was that Mr. Armstrong's good friend Dr. Singh, the official Secretary to President Giri of India, arranged to have Mr. Armstrong invited to visit Kathmandu, the capital of Nepal, and to visit with King Mahendra.

Mr. Armstrong summarized these events in the following way: "And when you realize the doors have opened before me for eight such meetings in six months, you can believe it has been a series of providential or miraculous circumstances!"

Special Honor Presented by King Leopold

In November of 1970, King Leopold, with his wife, Princess Liliane, and their daughters, Princesses Daphne and Esmeralda, visited Mr. Armstrong in California:

"They were dinner guests in my home. After dinner that evening the King and Princess Liliane asked for a private talk. We excused ourselves from the other guests and retired to a private room.

"Then in subdued, solemn and hushed tone they told me that, after World War I had ended, the King's father, King Albert, had visited one of the battlefields. He was appalled, and emotionally sick at heart at the realization of the human slaughter that had occurred there. It moved him deeply. He had one of the iron cannonballs remaining on the field melted and cast into four watch cases—pocket watch size—to encase four fine watches. It was his intention to present these to the four men whom he felt had made the most significant contribution toward world peace.

"World War I was the war supposed to 'make the world safe for democracy'—the war to end all wars! King Albert therefore felt the chief generals and French Premier contributed most, and gave one watch to Field Marshal Foch, Supreme Commander-in-Chief over all allied armies. The second watch was given to General Pershing, Commander-in-Chief of all United States forces. The third went to Georges Clemenceau, Premier of France during World War I. King Albert apparently found no one he felt qualified for the fourth watch. It was passed on to his son, King Leopold to give.

"In solemn and subdued voice the King said he felt the fourth watch, in a red leather case now showing age, should go to me. Both the leather

case and the watch are embellished with a gold design with a royal crown in the center.

"I feel it was the very highest honor the King could have paid anyone. Whatever contribution to world peace I may have made you have shared with me, and it has not been through war, but through education, teaching millions worldwide the way to peace! And I believe King Leopold feels, and that he saw here, that we have set an example by the real peace that we do have on our three campuses! He has visited both the Pasadena and English campuses."

Mr. Armstrong concluded this explanation by presenting an overview of where God was leading: "Co-Workers, something very great is being accomplished through this great Work, in which you and I are both privileged to be Co-Workers. It is a greater power working through us that is producing peace, and happiness, and abundant well-being in ever-increasing thousands all over the earth! And truly, this Work is leading the way into world peace!"

This new phase of the Work eventually resulted in Mr. Armstrong having personal contact with fully one-third of the world's heads of state. This meant that, through the 1970s, Mr. Armstrong spent the vast majority of his time away from the Pasadena headquarters, furthering the gospel by taking it to world leaders.

In spite of the obvious instances in which God opened the doors for this new phase of the Work, certain senior ministers, greatly lacking in vision—including uninformed elements of the membership—privately felt that these international visits were little more than high-powered "autograph hunting."

Few, it seemed, could see and keep their focus on the big picture in the way that Mr. Armstrong *always* did!

Would-Be "Scholars"

Since the early 1950s, the Church had steadily grown under the guidance and leadership of ministers and assistants who had been trained and had graduated from Ambassador College. There was a genuine wholehearted love for the truth.

Just as had happened in the 1950s and 1960s, there were the occasional "austerity years," during which a temporary financial crunch, often related to economic conditions in the world, required the Church to undergo a "belt-tightening." Two of these occurred at the beginning of the 1970s, in mid-1970 and mid-1972. In each case, with Mr. Armstrong leading the way, the Church sought God, examined itself and times improved.

But, as the Church entered the 1970s, complacency also had set in among many members. Many thought that the fulfillment of prophecy was “dragging out” longer than they believed it would—or felt that they had been *told* it would.

Also, around 1971, some brethren got caught up in the “sacred names” movement, believing that God and Christ should only be referred to in the Hebrew language.

Mr. Armstrong commissioned a doctrinal team to do an in-depth study into the use of God’s name. The team reaffirmed that the Church had been teaching the right doctrine. As a result, some few left to join this false movement, believing that God could show individual members important truths that the Church could be unwilling or unable to see. People began to believe that there could be “good reason” to leave the Church of God.

Also, quietly in the background, a few ministers, along with a handful of Ambassador College graduates who had enrolled in other universities in pursuit of higher degrees, were seeking to become Bible “scholars.” They forgot about Ambassador’s purpose in developing the whole person, and began to see the college as intellectually and academically inferior. Many of them came together as a kind of “doctrinal committee,” eventually seeking to disprove the basic doctrines that had been restored to God’s Church over the years.

This occurred when Mr. Armstrong had been away from headquarters as many as 300 days out of the year. This had forced him to delegate leadership responsibilities to those under him, largely leaving the television and radio programs, the magazines, the college and the Church in their hands.

A One-Track Mind

Mr. Armstrong was a man of incredible insight. He had been blessed with the tremendous gift of understanding the truths of the Bible. Even well-known preachers who saw him as a competitor admitted that he understood biblical prophecy like no one else.

Mr. Armstrong often described himself as having a one-track mind. He had the amazing ability to focus his attention on something and give it his all. When having a discussion with someone, that person had his full, undivided attention.

Due to his one-track mind, by his own admission, he could generally only focus well on one thing at a time. When it came to studying God’s Word, giving sermons, writing articles, etc., this was a crucial asset.

But it also had its drawbacks. Certain people who worked with Mr. Armstrong took advantage of this proclivity by passing things by him either quickly or at the last minute, without giving him the time to fully digest whatever he was reading. Believing the best in people, he trusted them to give him all the information he needed to make an informed decision. And, as his eyesight (and hearing) grew worse with age, he had to trust others to read the fine print for him, regarding contracts and other important documents.

Like a U.S. president or the top executive of a Fortune-500 company, if one is surrounded by dedicated team players, things will generally run smoothly. But, if certain players only provide enough data to influence matters or decisions according to their own agendas, this is a formula for trouble.

During the 1970s, the latter was the case for Mr. Armstrong. He worked with, and was surrounded by, a number of key people who had the opportunity to either help in a positive way—or undermine. Some were loyal, dedicated and converted—others were politicians, opportunists, rebels, power-hungry climbers, would-be handlers and flatterers.

Desiring to give people the benefit of the doubt, Mr. Armstrong was often blinded—and blindsided—by their flattery.

While he was away visiting dignitaries, the would-be “scholars” suppressed those at headquarters who were loyal to Mr. Armstrong, and gradually demoted and removed them, usually sending them away to either pastor local U.S. congregations or to pastor in other countries.

In Mr. Armstrong’s words, “So much of what was going on in Pasadena was kept from me that I did not realize...the Church was actually traveling into controversy, liberalism and either Protestantism or total secularism” (“Recent History of the Philadelphia Era of the Worldwide Church of God,” *Worldwide News*, June 24, 1985).

A Breeding Ground for Liberalism

These liberals pushed for Ambassador College to be accredited just like the colleges and universities of the world. But this meant that the school would come under the rules, policies and curricula of secular forces. The liberals got their way, and Ambassador College became more like the world. The student body, which Mr. Armstrong had limited to a maximum of 550 per campus, was increased to 1,400.

The true values that students had been taught since the school’s founding were soon replaced by the “anything goes” spirit of the 1970s. Men let their hair grow long. Students were no longer responsible for

maintaining their dorms, and maids took care of this responsibility instead. Poor classroom attendance became the norm. Immorality and drugs soon appeared, as respect for authority and the truth of God virtually disappeared. Human nature, without rules and regulations, was allowed to roam free across the campus.

This same liberal attitude of permissiveness had permeated the Church. Referenced earlier, one such example is how some in the Church interpreted Mr. Armstrong's booklet (published in 1956) titled *1975 in Prophecy*. In it, he wrote that man's world had very little time left, and that it would soon be replaced by the kingdom of God, and addressed this in terms of "a few years." Sadly, some "hung their hat" on this timeframe.

Many members (and even a few ministers) erroneously believed that Jesus Christ would return in 1975. They had ignored Mr. Armstrong's repeated statements that no one should set concrete dates and that God could allow more time to elapse before establishing His kingdom. They were convinced that they had "figured out" and "deciphered" when Christ would return (despite scriptures such as Matthew 24:36, 42, 44 and 50).

People in the Church thought that Mr. Armstrong was setting a definite date for Christ's Return. Of course, he did not, but that did not keep them from accusing him of such. Many became disillusioned and spiritually lethargic. They allowed their zeal to grow cold. But, due to various other internal issues, the Church was also becoming a liberal breeding ground, and, for the first time in decades, the Work stopped growing. From 1973 to 1978, the Church of God decreased in size, and this could be seen occurring on an annual basis.

Like Paul nearly 2,000 years before him, Mr. Armstrong looked forward to God's kingdom finally being established on earth, believing and hoping that Christ would return in *his* lifetime. And, again like Paul, he had to come to realize that this event would probably occur after his death. But, some still blamed Mr. Armstrong anyway for "being wrong" about Christ's supposed 1975 return, even though he never set this date.

When the expectation of Christ's Return did not come to pass "on time," some were disappointed. Their disappointment soured into resentment—which ignited a rebellion largely centered on *other* issues.

In 1974, the Church experienced its first serious, organized revolt against Mr. Armstrong and the administration in Pasadena. A small but sizeable number of *liberal* dissidents, including ministers, departed from the Church, unhappy with the way the Church was being administered.

Another group, this time of "*conservative*" ministers, with a smaller number of brethren following, left as well. These were upset by *changes* to the doctrines of divorce and remarriage, and the new, correct Sunday observance of Pentecost, despite the fact that Mr. Armstrong, with much input, had given thorough examination to both subjects.

Tragically, these misguided people had let themselves become locked into believing that *every* previous action taken, and *every* belief previously accepted, by the Church had to be a virtual decree from God—and thus, never to be changed. Yet, God revealed His truth to Mr. Armstrong, and thus the Church, one truth at a time, not all at once. Many forgot that Mr. Armstrong often stated that God's apostle must be willing to "grow in the grace, and in the knowledge" of Christ (II Pet. 3:18)—not to assume that, at any single snapshot in time, he had all the truth, with no room for improvement—for growth in knowledge.

Regarding the doctrine of divorce and remarriage, Mr. Armstrong wrote the following in his February 22, 1974 letter to the ministry:

"...I not only carefully studied all reports given me from the doctrinal committee, I showed their papers to some of our best scholars on the British campus...

"I have always tried to follow the Biblical admonition that in a multitude of counselors there is safety. I have always tried to follow the principle that I learned as far back as 1915, to get ALL the facts before a decision. God called and chose me to get HIS GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM TO THE WORLD, and to be used in raising up His Church for our time to HELP get that Great Commission DONE!"

"I am sending word to Headquarters to WITHDRAW the booklet from circulation until I may have opportunity to study the position of those opposed to the present booklet. That is not to say I will agree with them—it IS to say I will study their position and facts in the scriptures WITH A COMPLETELY OPEN MIND. If there are errors in the booklet, I will CORRECT them. I want GOD'S TRUTH, and I must assume you Ministers do too! I would like to take a more liberal view—if it is God's TRUTH.

"If there is any reason I can account for, as to why God chose me and put me in the position I occupy, it is because I HAVE ALWAYS BEEN COMPLETELY FAITHFUL WITH HIS WORD as He gives me to UNDERSTAND!"

These dissidents were also upset by the handling of certain leaders. Instead of trusting God to work out various problems, they blamed Mr. Armstrong—just as the ancient Israelites blamed Moses for everything that went wrong.

It was at this time that a small number of people left the Church, moving to the “right” as part of the almost simultaneous (1975) “ultra-right-wing” rebellion led by older ministers who went on to form an offshoot that eventually fragmented and largely disappeared.

Incredibly, many people expected Mr. Armstrong to know every detail of what went on in every congregation—just like U.S. citizens who expect their President to know intimate details of every facet of the nation.

After the 1974 rebellion, and the 1975 departure of the “conservatives,” things *appeared* to stabilize in the Church. The troublesome dissidents *seemed* to be gone. Mr. Armstrong continued to carry the gospel message to world leaders. His son, Garner Ted, had gradually assumed most of the broadcast responsibilities in the early 1960s. By the middle of that decade, he had become experienced as a publicly acclaimed speaker.

He had been offered various high-paying positions as a secular radio/TV commentator. By 1974, *The World Tomorrow* radio program covered the globe. His clarity reflected the same qualities of his father. Interestingly, at the age of two, Garner Ted Armstrong had been healed from a condition in which he could not speak—his voice seemed to be a gift from God.

Yet, the attention and notoriety he received seemed to have an effect on how he perceived himself.

Meanwhile, an underground movement, seeking to water down the doctrines that God established in the Church through Mr. Armstrong, was slowly gaining momentum. It was primarily led by a variety of liberal intellectuals who did not want the Church to appear as a cult in the eyes of their respected associates in the world. Some of these men held key positions in the Church. They befriended and influenced Garner Ted, to whom had been delegated growing authority during Mr. Armstrong’s long absences from Pasadena. As a result, through the mid-1970s, these liberals were promoted to increasingly greater positions of power. Meanwhile, those loyal to Herbert W. Armstrong were transferred to remote areas or given minor assignments.

Times grew darker for the Church, especially when Mr. Armstrong had a heart attack in late 1977. For several minutes, he was clinically dead—but God revived him and he returned full-force to lead the Work once again. God still had more work for him to do.

Confronting Conspirators

In January 1978, an extensive doctrinal notebook called the “Systematic Theology Project” (STP) was distributed to the ministry at the annual

ministerial conference, held at Pasadena. The ministers were told that this was an outline of basic Church doctrines, and that no one was to preach against it.

Meanwhile, Mr. Armstrong had just embarked on a round-the-world trip, and was completely unaware of the STP. It had been concealed from him. A few months later, some older, more loyal ministers managed to get the STP into Mr. Armstrong’s hands. When he discovered what had gone on, and how the STP was an organized effort to plunge the Church into doctrinal liberalism and outright Protestantism, Mr. Armstrong roared to life! Like a shepherd protecting the sheep, he sprang into action and disfellowshipped the conspirators, beginning in June 1978 and culminating in January 1979.

Disfellowshipped by his father, Garner Ted Armstrong went his own way, and began his own church. (He died suddenly and unexpectedly in 2003.) His father, nearing his tenth decade of life, had to resume broadcasting and other administrative responsibilities.

In the fall of 1978, a group of conspirators hatched a sinister plot to attack and destroy the Church. They armed themselves with a class-action lawsuit. Mr. Armstrong explained, “This resulted in an ex parte order by a judge. Secretly without prior notice, deputies on order of the [California] Attorney General’s office swooped down on the Church on the morning of Jan. 3, 1979” (“Recent History of the Philadelphia Era of the Worldwide Church of God,” *Worldwide News*, June 24, 1985). The state dropped the case months later, and an appellate judge ruled that the lawsuit was groundless.

Mr. Armstrong later often referred to this period as “the liberal years.” It was a severe time of testing for the Church—but it also swept away many liberals who wanted to water down true doctrines. Additionally, it provided a powerful warning of what could happen if the Church took its eyes off God, His Work and the truth that all individual members and ministers should have proven before conversion.

Most would ignore or forget this powerful warning!

“BACK ON TRACK”

Many of the rebellious liberals had been removed from headquarters and from the ministry. But damage had occurred. The Church had lost many members who had been deceived in the process. *The Plain Truth* magazine had been reduced to a cheap tabloid, and had to be restored to its original quality. The Work was no longer growing by an annual 30 percent growth rate, as it had done for 35 years, but rather declining. And the brethren had been receiving watered-down doctrines, mixed with psychology and the worldly opinions of “experts” and “educators.” Thousands stopped building spiritual character, and left the Church. Ambassador College had become more like the colleges and universities of the world. Mr. Armstrong had no choice but to shut down all three college campuses and start over again.

Often called the “Liberal ‘70s” when looking back, this period was a turbulent time for the Church. In the aftermath, in the absence of the dissident leaders, peace returned, but the planted seeds of liberalism and Protestantism had become quietly entrenched among much of the ministry and membership.

The crises of 1974, 1978 (when Garner Ted Armstrong left), and 1979 (the attempted coup bringing the State of California against the Church) demonstrated that the Church was under continual attack. Remember, in 1977, Mr. Armstrong had nearly died—but was essentially brought back to life to restore the Church from the nearly successful liberal takeover.

God led Mr. Armstrong to recognize that he must “put God’s Church back on track”—in true doctrines and traditions. From that moment forward, Mr. Armstrong set out to do this. He repeatedly warned the Church of the importance of seeing the big picture. He would often exclaim, “I don’t think that most of you really get it!” He charged the brethren to “wake up!”—to put their hearts into the Work. He warned of a real danger facing them, in that many were not heeding his words, seeming to just be “putting in their time” at Sabbath services. During the last years of his life, Mr. Armstrong discerned a prevailing spirit of lethargy in the Church.

One by One

One by one, Mr. Armstrong restored doctrines *again* to the Church that had been watered down or discarded. He also set about to put the end-time Work “back on track.” This process consumed him and was the constant theme in the Church for at least 3½ years, from June 1978 until November 1981, when the use of cosmetics was again no longer permitted. During this period, the term “back on track” was used at least as often as Mr. Armstrong’s well-known reference to “the two trees.”

Here are some statements from Mr. Armstrong describing, in his own words, the process of putting the Church back on track:

“Jesus Christ moved swiftly, too, to set the RADIO and TELEVISION programs back on GOD’S track, rapidly adding more and more stations.

“Next came The PLAIN TRUTH—rooting out the secularism, and making it once again GOD’S magazine—and soon, hopefully, the finest magazine on earth, with multiplied circulation.

“And now—He has once again made God’s Feast of Tabernacles truly GOD’S FESTIVAL—the LARGEST ANNUAL CONVENTION OR CONCLAVE ON EARTH!”

“I am working diligently with The PLAIN TRUTH staff to make it the FINEST MAGAZINE published, and we want to expand our newsstand circulation, (now about 1 million in the U.S. alone—total circulation now close to 3 million copies)—and that all demands INCREASED EXPENDITURES. That’s part of the EFFORT we all must make, coming in on the home stretch to WIN THIS RACE and the PRIZE of eternal salvation in the Kingdom of God!”

“I now have plans to make The GOOD NEWS into a full color magazine like The PLAIN TRUTH, and let the newsprint tabloid paper go

back to the name ‘Worldwide News’—with Church news, personal items, and things of personal interest—and with The GOOD NEWS becoming a magazine filled with ARTICLES—both devoted to Church interest, Bible teachings, and articles containing SPIRITUAL FOOD” (*Brethren/Co-Worker Letter*, October 23, 1978).

“In place of a ‘Co-Worker letter’ this month I am sending you all—in all parts of the world—a letter I have just written to our Brethren in AUSTRALIA.

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

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

“But for two years Jesus Christ has been using me and those loyally still with and under me to SET BACK ON GOD’S TRACK God’s Church.

“AND THE CHURCH IS MOSTLY BACK ON THAT TRACK NOW.

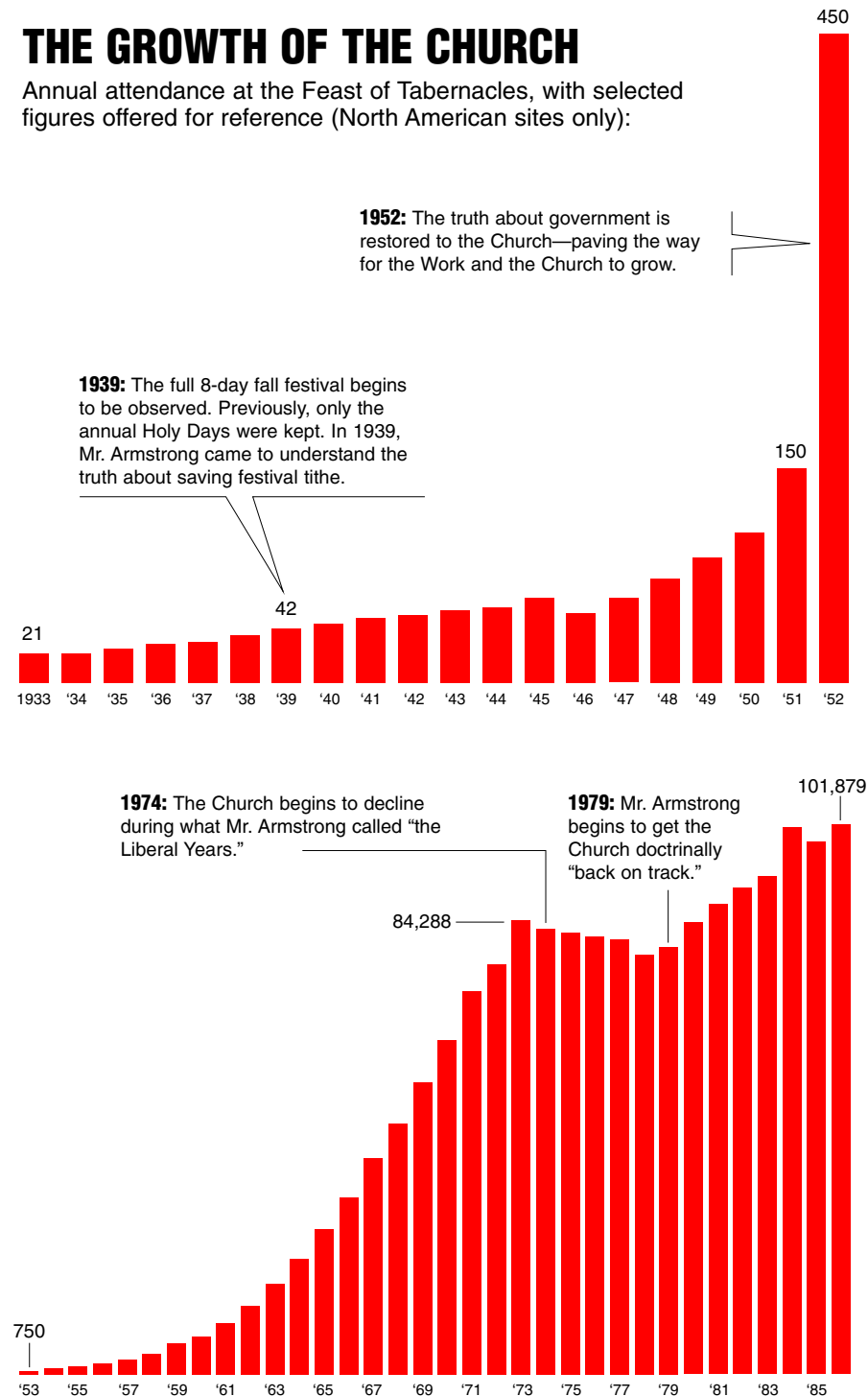
“But there STILL remains among a FEW of us a tendency to LET DOWN—to lose our zeal—and even to become LUKEWARM. In some parts of the world there has been a little tendency creeping in of a spirit of COMPETITION. A few in Australia were thinking of the Work of God’s Church as ‘the AUSTRALIAN WORK’ separate from that in America, Germany, South Africa and elsewhere.

“When we first began building up the Church in England in 1960 I remember some speaking of God’s Truth as ‘an American religion.’ They wanted only an ‘English religion.’ What we should all want is God’s Truth” (*Member Letter*, September 15, 1980).

Mr. Armstrong even periodically looked back and added powerful statements such as the following, from a long article recounting recent

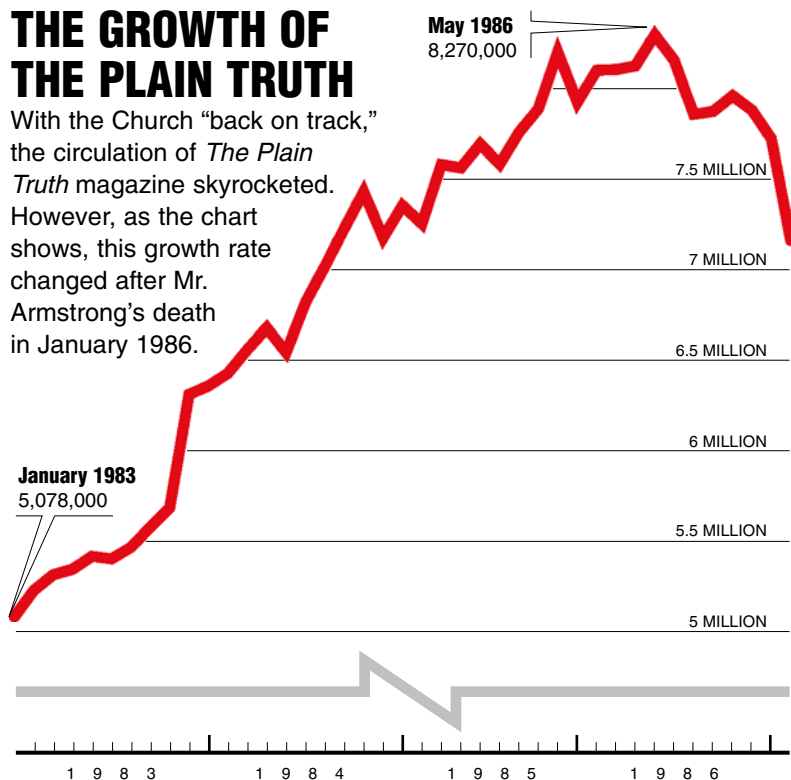
THE GROWTH OF THE CHURCH

Annual attendance at the Feast of Tabernacles, with selected figures offered for reference (North American sites only):



TRACKING THE GROWTH OF THE PLAIN TRUTH

With the Church “back on track,” the circulation of *The Plain Truth* magazine skyrocketed. However, as the chart shows, this growth rate changed after Mr. Armstrong’s death in January 1986.



MAGAZINE MILESTONES

By September 1986, *The Plain Truth* was read by one out of every 659 people on earth. Below are highlights of the magazine’s amazing history:

Feb. 1934: First issue published, consisting of 8 pages, 250 copies

Aug. 1942: 9,000 copies

March 1943: 35,000 copies

Dec. 1946: 110,000 copies

1951-55: 16 pages per issue

April 1956: Black and white covers, 24 pages per issue

Nov. 1958: 32 pages per issue

June 1961: 40 pages per issue

Feb. 1962: 48 pages per issue

Jan. 1963: 52 pages per issue, with heavy gloss covers

Feb. 1965: Full-color covers

Feb. 1966: Full-color magazine; 52 pages

1964-74: Magazine printed at Ambassador College Press in Pasadena

Feb. 1984: 50th anniversary issue

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Church history, so that no one would ever forget the lessons the Church should have *permanently* learned from the 1970s:

“It is now clearly evident that God brought me back for a vital purpose, by CPR, from death by heart failure. Had I remained dead the Church of the living God would have been virtually destroyed by the liberal element that had crept in, especially in headquarters administration during my absence from Pasadena. During those liberal years, much of what was going on in policy changing and doctrinal liberalization had been carefully kept from me.

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

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

“Today the bona fide *Plain Truth* circulation is over 7.5 million.

“The *Youth* magazine has gained an already large circulation nearing 200,000. The *Good News* magazine circulation is projected to reach close to one million subscribers monthly by the end of this year. The Bible Correspondence Course has been rejuvenated with a present enrollment of approximately 130,000 students worldwide.

“God has revealed much vitally important new biblical truth. The Church has taken on a new spiritual vitality. Ambassador College is once again God’s college and students are serving in a number of important projects in other nations around the world. Many of the important new biblical truths will be covered in the new book *Mystery of the Ages*.”

“I want you, brethren, to think about and *understand* what happened to God’s Church in the 1970s *lest history repeat itself!* I want you to see the ‘fruits’ of rebelling against God’s way and God’s government” (“Recent History of the Philadelphia Era of the Worldwide Church of God,” *Worldwide News*, June 24, 1985).

The Church and Work Go Forward—Again

Ambassador College was reopened at Pasadena and, afterward, so was the Big Sandy campus. Intercollegiate sports were not reinstated. This helped to guard against the wrong spirit of competition and strife. Once again, students were taught to “recapture true values”—to learn *how to live*, not just how to *earn* a living.

In the spirit of Malachi 4—“turn[ing] the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to the fathers”—Mr. Armstrong turned his attention to the youth of God’s Church. In Y.O.U. (Youth Opportunities United), weekend activities were set up for teenagers—basketball, track and field, dances, etc. The camps comprising the Summer Educational Program (S.E.P.) had already existed, teaching teens to broaden their interests and helping them to build confidence.

In 1981, a youth magazine (*Youth 81*, 82, 83...) was launched. Each issue offered articles that pointed teens in the Church in the right direction, while helping them prepare for life’s challenges. Y.E.S. (Youth Educational Services) lessons and activities were established for young children and preteens, teaching them God’s ways.

The Feast of Tabernacles became the largest annual, multi-site convention on earth. Live services conducted by Mr. Armstrong were beamed via satellite into most festival sites, enabling tens of thousands of brethren in countries around the world to hear the same sermon and sing the same hymns in unison.

The Plain Truth magazine matched, and even surpassed, the quality and excellence of the world’s leading news magazines. It reached almost 8.2 million subscribers, translating to approximately 25 million readers. This, along with *The World Tomorrow* programs on television and radio, resulted in record numbers of phone calls requesting literature.

Mr. Armstrong’s book *THE UNITED STATES AND BRITAIN IN PROPHECY*, which had been gutted to one-quarter of its size, was returned to its full size and strength.

Full-page ads were published in *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Washington Post* and *The Los Angeles Times*, among others.

A massive *Plain Truth* Newsstand Distribution Program was put into action. Congregations throughout the Church searched for viable spots for distributing the magazine in cities, towns and metropolitan areas. *The Plain Truth* could be seen at street corners, in drug stores and supermarkets, in train stations, in the waiting rooms of doctors, dentists, mechanics, salons, etc.

Congregations that had stagnated in size for years suddenly bounced back to life. Once again, the Church was growing at almost 30 percent per year. Many thousands of *Plain Truth* readers and millions of *World Tomorrow* television viewers and radio listeners responded to the gospel and were moved to live a new way of life!

Statistical growth soon returned to the near-explosion level that had been enjoyed by the Church in nearly every category in which they had so recently been declining.

Mr. Armstrong, however, did add one new administrative security that had not been used before. He appointed an Advisory Council of Elders, consisting of what then appeared to be the most loyal, trusted senior men in the Church. This council would assist in keeping the Church and Work on track while Mr. Armstrong resumed travel around the world and began again doing other duties he had previously delegated.

Resumes Busy Schedule

After 1978, Mr. Armstrong returned to broadcasting on radio on a regular basis, while drawing upon earlier broadcasts, and actively administering the Work.

Besides resuming these responsibilities, Mr. Armstrong continued carrying the gospel to heads of state even during the last years of his life. He insisted upon continuing this and other duties as soon as the State of California retreated from threatening the Church. This allowed the Work to resume operations as normal. This occurred when he was 87, an age at which most people would have been retired by over two decades—almost a generation!

When asked how he kept going at his advanced age, he would quote Isaiah 40:30-31:

“Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.” This passage became one of his favorites.

Given his age and the incredible schedule he kept—including international travel, jet lag, and speaking before thousands on a regular basis, besides broadcasting to millions—he had to continually draw on God’s power. Mr. Armstrong took all this in stride—it had been his life for over half a century!

These excerpts from the February 25, 1982 Brethren/Co-Worker Letter show the extent of his travels and schedule:

"I have just returned from a very busy trip to Honolulu, Hong Kong, Bangkok, Thailand, Manila, Philippines, and Tokyo, and am writing in flight to Big Sandy, Texas, to speak before the college and Church there. Then on to Atlanta, Georgia, to speak to a combined group of about 3,000 brethren.

"I think the Far East trip was reported in The WORLDWIDE NEWS. I spoke before a Church group at Honolulu, a group of nearly 200 subscribers to The PLAIN TRUTH in Hong Kong, more than 200 PLAIN TRUTH subscribers in Bangkok, and a similar number in Tokyo. In Thailand I flew on north to Chiang Mai, where King Bhumibol of Thailand sent his mountain jeep to bring me to his mountain palace for an hour's visit.

"At Manila I was guest speaker at the Rotary Club of leading businessmen, a banquet of 1,000 leading citizens, addressed a meeting of all the ministers and wives of the Worldwide Church of God from all parts of the Philippines...visited with the President and First Lady and held two overflow services in the large new public auditorium—the Philippines Convention Center—attendance 4,200 and 4,500 on successive nights.

"In Tokyo I also was guest speaker at a prestigious banquet of some 400 leading Japanese, including Prince Mikasa, brother of the Emperor, and his wife Princess Mikasa, several congressmen of the Japanese Diet who call themselves my "Japanese sons," 21 ambassadors from 21 other nations and many leading citizens. Some of these speeches will be telecast on my weekly TV program in some three or four weeks. I also had a private luncheon with the ambassador from Israel and his wife.

"I am leaving in about three weeks for a trip to London and Amman, Jordan, for a private meeting with King Hussein, a visit to Cyprus to obtain radio and TV time, Jerusalem and Paris.

"This schedule has kept me very busy. We are opening up radio and TV time in Hong Kong, Bangkok, Manila and probably Tokyo as a result of this trip.

"Many other near-breathtaking opportunities are opening now for the expansion of God's Work."

Here is one other shorter quote from another Brethren/Co-Worker Letter written just 14 months before his death: "Brethren, this world is being destroyed for lack of knowledge of and from GOD, as we read in Hosea 4:6. Through my personal visits, and the PLAIN TRUTH magazine, on TV and radio and through other literature, we are proclaiming that knowledge in POWER and AUTHORITY. Some listen. It is God's

last witness against those who do not. BUT WE MUST DRIVE RIGHT ON UNTIL CHRIST COMES!" (*Brethren/Co-Worker Letter*, November 18, 1984).

His Last Years

Mr. Armstrong essentially had no personal assets at the end of his life. Virtually everything that he had or used belonged to the Church. Both during and after his lifetime, critics have condemned him for extravagance. Such people are incapable of grasping how *God* made possible the acquisition of huge estates by the Church at a fraction of their market value.

Some of these estates also contained immaculate furnishings. In addition, the Church often received gifts of expensive items from members, co-workers and admirers of what Mr. Armstrong was doing. These often became part of his furnishings, and directly served God's purpose, because they were of sufficient quality to host the dignitaries and heads of state who came to visit him. (So large and extensive were the assets of the campuses and buildings with which God had blessed the Work over the years that, once all of it fell into the hands of his successors, it literally took them *many years* to dismantle, sell and dissolve all the Work's assets. So enormous had been the Work of God under Mr. Armstrong's ministry.)

Mr. Armstrong had maintained resilience and steadfast determination even in the face of losing his eldest son to death in 1958, then his wife to death in 1967. His remaining son had turned against him, leaving the Church in 1978. Mr. Armstrong had trusted advisors and consultants who ultimately either drifted away or betrayed him in the pursuit of personal agendas. Ironically, through the last years of his life, he was betrayed by the various ones whom he trusted the most. Yet, while the entire ministry generally found it easy to remain loyal to Mr. Armstrong until he died, "true colors" were to appear soon after.

From members of the flight crew to long-time employees of the Church and college, a number of people were especially helpful to Mr. Armstrong at the end of his life when his increasing frailty and loss of eyesight and hearing meant that he needed them most. Certain close aides, such as Aaron Dean, gave Mr. Armstrong much needed assistance during his final years.

It was during this time that Mr. Armstrong continually warned the Church of the importance of seeing the big picture, and when he would repeatedly express in these warnings, "I don't think that most of you

really get it.” Mr. Armstrong sensed that most people were oblivious to the significance of the calling to be a part of the Church and the Work of announcing the soon-coming kingdom of God, as well as to maintaining a serious focus on growing and overcoming in their personal lives. He was able to discern a spirit of lethargy that was dominant in the Church during the last years of his life.

Often expressing that he felt that God had revealed more truth to him near the end of his life than at any previous time, he could readily discern that the majority of members were not truly receptive to his words.

The future would prove his discernment correct!

His Last and Greatest Work

Then, at the fall festival of 1985, Mr. Armstrong released his most important work, *Mystery of the Ages*. This book was an overview of the Bible and God’s master plan of salvation for all humanity. This, his last book, explained to readers who and what is God—the role of angels and evil spirits—the purpose of man—civilization—the descendants of ancient Israel—the Church—and the kingdom of God.

In a September 12, 1985 Co-Worker Letter, four months before he died, Mr. Armstrong wrote, “This new book *Mystery of the Ages* unveils all these mysteries. It puts the many different parts of the ‘jig-saw puzzle’ together. It is, in fact, a synopsis of the entire Bible. It is my prayer that you will read it along with your Bible—that it will make your Bible come alive and understandable. And with God’s Holy Spirit dwelling in you, I feel sure that it will. I am now in my 94th year and I feel that this book is the most valuable gift I could possibly give to you. This book is a partial expression of my thanks and gratitude to you for being a co-laborer with me and with Jesus Christ. With all my heart, I do appreciate and thank God for your part with me in the wonderful Work these closing days.”

On January 16, 1986, Herbert W. Armstrong died at the age of 93½, “on the job.” The Church was “on track,” and the Work was going full speed. All that the ministry and brethren had to do was stay the course and finish the Work. Here is how he expressed this in his next to last Member/Co-Worker Letter, written just three weeks before his death:

“I thank God that he has organized this present work of his so thoroughly that regardless of the outcome of my present illness, the work will continue right on to the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. Meanwhile,

dear brethren and co-workers, I and the work of God, need, as never before, your continued fervent prayers for the continued progress of this great work. Christ is the Living Head of this work, and He will continue guiding those He has chosen right up to His Second Coming, which grows daily nearer at hand” (*Brethren/Co-Worker Letter*, December 23, 1985).

EPILOGUE

Normally, a biography ends with the death of the person who is the subject. For instance, when a great leader dies, his biographer would generally confine what he covers to contemporary events surrounding the life of the person whose accomplishments he is recounting.

George Washington died in the last week of 1799. It would be unreasonable for his biographers to continue the story of his life through the War of 1812, for instance. Similarly, since Abraham Lincoln was assassinated in 1865, his biographers would not consider it necessary to cover the impeachment of Andrew Johnson (his vice-president, who became president) in 1868, or the reconstruction of the South into the 1870s and beyond. Biographers understand that later events beyond their subject's lifetime are generally not relevant to the description of the person's life.

But there are exceptions. Consider this. If the South had been allowed to drift back into slavery because of Lincoln's absence, many voices would have reminded the nation of his words. And Lincoln biographers would have felt it imperative to document the events that would have surrounded such a historic turning point, back into such an oppressive, disgraceful practice.

Likewise, because this is even more true of God's servants, this book would be incomplete if it did not address the astounding events that took place after Mr. Armstrong's death—events that forever changed the landscape of the Church he once faithfully led.

The Great Difference

In the ultimate sense, the work of God's leaders transcends the time in which they live. Their task is to assist in the preparation of God's people, who will carry on in the *spiritual* pursuit of an *eternal* goal, in which—compared to the *temporal* affairs of men—the stakes are much higher. Miscalculation, weak leadership or lack of vision in the leader's absence can lead to *eternal* catastrophe, potentially for great numbers.

The apostle Paul was concerned with this when he warned of what would happen after his death. Notice: "...*after my departing* shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock" (Acts 20:29). Two verses later, he admonished the brethren to "...watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to *warn* every one night and day with tears" (vs. 31). History records that, after Paul died, the first-century Church went into apostasy, with most brethren ignoring Paul's greatest warnings—to their own destruction.

After Mr. Armstrong's death, the Worldwide Church of God continued, at least for a little while, to follow the truths that had been restored to the Church under his leadership. Like Paul at the end of his life, Mr. Armstrong had also, in essence, "warned with tears," for *more* than three years, of what could happen after *his* "departing." He was most concerned with what could take place *again* if he were no longer in the picture.

His concerns proved to be well-founded.

In fact, as early as 1987, beginning with the meaning of the Passover symbols, changes started to occur—with these early errors often referred to as "clarifications." Like all truths of God, changes invariably affected other doctrines. Altering or discarding one doctrine meant altering or discarding the others connected to it—and once these were changed, doctrines and traditions connected to them "had" to be changed as well.

One by one, all teachings were either slowly altered, almost matter-of-factly, and then done away with completely, or discarded outright. At first, these changes began slowly—but they eventually escalated, assaulting God's people as fast as bullets coming from a machine gun. True doctrines fell like dominoes, to be replaced by one familiar pagan, traditional "Christian" counterfeit after another. To the delight of the false leaders of the Worldwide Church of God, most brethren ignored the changes, did not care about them or agreed with them. The grand strategy was to keep the changes coming so fast that brethren would be con-

tinually off-balance, unable to grasp what they meant or what should be done about them.

All doctrine was openly put on the table. Brethren were told that they could "believe anything, but just stay in the Church and don't talk about it to others." But, for instance, anyone who taught that Christians must keep the Sabbath was to be disfellowshipped. This was also true of ministers who directly spoke out against other changes.

Here are some of the things that took place in the Church after Mr. Armstrong's "departing":

All previous baptisms of new attendees from churches outside God's Church were to be accepted as valid without question.

Many of the more doctrinally sound evangelists and senior ministers were demoted, retired, fired, or transferred far away.

The youth (Y.E.S.) Bible curriculum was replaced with a Protestant course containing teachings on Sunday observance, Christmas, and Easter. Y.E.S. classes were permitted during the regular Sabbath service time. Parents were discouraged from attending with their children. Pregnant teens were still considered Y.O.U. members in good standing, only restricted in sports involvement "for the good of the baby."

Before both remaining Ambassador College campuses were closed, due to the church's financial implosion, intercollegiate sports were re-instituted, bringing back the spirit of competition that Mr. Armstrong had preached against.

Church Bible studies were cancelled at the local pastor's discretion. Secular speakers began to appear at the Feast of Tabernacles. Following the formats of the churches of the world, church services began to include much more "gospel" music and "prayer." Sermonette time was seemingly used for everything *but* sermonettes—including testimonials, youth dramas, prayer, special music, extended announcements, films, etc. The traditional two-hour service was reduced to 90 minutes. The blessing of little children (an annual tradition) was to be done privately or not at all. New baptism, marriage and funeral ceremonies were released. A new hymnal was produced that included many Protestant "favorites." Pentecostal-like prayer meetings were added and often held weekly, with both men and women leading. Eventually, all true Feast sites were cancelled, and the entire format and meaning of the Holy Days were altered to fit traditional Christianity.

In addition, *The Good News* magazine, *The Plain Truth* Newsstand Program, *The World Tomorrow* telecast, and the 32-lesson *Bible Correspondence Course* were eventually discontinued. All the books, booklets and articles that Mr. Armstrong had written were removed

from circulation and cast from local Church libraries. All publications began to reflect sexual and political correctness. Terms such as *man*, *mankind*, *manhood*, *spokesman*, *chairman* and *forefathers* were changed to *humanity*, *people*, *human beings*, *humankind*, *adulthood*, *spokesperson*, *chairperson*, *forerunner*, *ancestors*, etc. Quotes from Protestant ministerial journals and secular experts filled all WCG literature and telecasts. Money, not faith, determined which doors the Church walked through.

In time, virtually every one of the Bible's hundreds of true doctrines were cast aside in favor of the world's popular counterfeits. With almost no exceptions, the Church's teachings *and traditions* were changed or done away. Birthdays, make-up, and eating unclean meats were brought into the Church, as were crosses and the trinitarian view of God—replacing the true God, and effectively disfellowshipping Him from what could then no longer be His Church. Therefore, His Law—the Ten Commandments—eventually had to be cast aside and declared “non-binding” on Christians, supposedly now, according to Protestant belief, kept for them by Christ.

Those of the true Church—*NOT* to be confused with the corporate Worldwide Church of God—faced a life-changing decision: leave and, as Mr. Armstrong often said he would do if necessary, “walk across the street and start over,” *or* stay and be devoured by “grievous wolves” occupying the highest ranks of the ministry. Tragically, most chose the latter.

The Falling Away

Again, for several years, Mr. Armstrong had thundered to the Church, “I don’t think most of you get it!” Little did he know how right he actually was.

About 80 percent of the Church membership—who had faithfully attended Sabbath services week after week, year after year, who were Spokesman Club and Graduate Club members, who had spent many Y.O.U. weekends with their teenaged children, who had sent their children off to Ambassador College, who had tithed and given offerings and contributed to special funds, who had served the brethren with song leading, opening and closing prayers, sermonettes, special music, hall set-up, who had maintained local Church libraries, and provided refreshments and security—left the truth with barely a second thought. Those who stayed in the WCG embraced their new “freedom” in rejecting tithing, God’s Sabbath, His annual Holy Days and feasts, and a host of other

laws and principles of God.

Truly, the “sow had returned to her wallowing in the mire” and the “dog had returned to his vomit.”

Approximately 20 percent of the WCG membership remained partially faithful to *varying degrees* of truth. To do this, they had to leave the corporate organization. However, the *vast majority* of those who left voiced their pet ideas of what doctrines and traditions to keep and which to alter or throw away. Essentially, they agreed that Mr. Armstrong was right about many teachings—but they could not agree on where they felt he was *wrong*, and thus, could not walk together, eventually splitting and re-splitting into more than 300 differing groups—“splinters.”

Some emphasize doing the Work over feeding the flock. Others claim that the Work can only be done in a specific way, that it “must” be done on television and radio. Still others claim that the Work is over—that it ended when Mr. Armstrong died. Of course, these people believe they are honoring Mr. Armstrong, or even following his instructions, with this view.

What If?...

Every year on the anniversary of his death, a few misguided people gather around Mr. Armstrong’s grave, expecting God to resurrect him, to once again unify the Church and put it back on track. Obviously, such people virtually worship Mr. Armstrong. He was their source of strength. Thus, when he died, their faith died with him.

But let’s pretend for a moment: What if God *did* resurrect Mr. Armstrong back to physical life? What if he actually did return? What would happen? What would his reaction be to the 300-plus groups claiming his mantle? With this book’s snapshot of his life, role and purpose, the answers should be obvious.

To appreciate his position, we must make this hypothetical scenario more clear. Mr. Armstrong would, in effect, be re-appearing as an independent person—a kind of “Pastor General at large”—who was not part of any of the groups. This clarifies the point to be made.

This book should have plainly demonstrated that, exactly as he did with the *fifth-era Sardis* ministers and groups, when he did face similar circumstances of doctrinal compromise, Mr. Armstrong would disassociate himself from the many *seventh-era Laodicean* ministers and groups today. Obviously, he would not be able to disfellowship ministers from any of the groups he was not leading. However, he *would* certainly know

that these ministers could not be part of any reconstitution of the true Church, unless they deeply repented.

And Mr. Armstrong would certainly not follow those leaders who wrap his name around doctrinal compromise—while at the same time elevating his books, booklets and articles into Scripture (without actually comprehending them), and viewing his role with solemn reverence. He would see that they have a wrong focus on *him* instead of on the Work of God. Of course, he would obviously also avoid those who reduce what he wrote to mere guidelines or starting points for further doctrinal debate.

Next, because Mr. Armstrong lived—breathed—was consumed with doing—the Work, he would immediately reject and avoid those who claim the Work is finished. He would be mindful of all the trials, struggles, pressures, obstacles, setbacks, and orchestrated attacks that he faced in order to preach the GOOD NEWS of God’s soon-coming kingdom—and that it has always been *Satan* who wants God’s people to lay down on the job, particularly when more is at stake than ever before for humanity.

Mr. Armstrong would no doubt be stunned to recognize the much worse state of decadence into which the United States, Canada, Britain, Australia and the other modern-day descendants of ancient Israel have sunk. He would instantly know that Israel must be powerfully warned!—that someone must be “Crying aloud, sparing not,” and “telling these nations their sins,” with even *more* force if possible!

Mr. Armstrong would certainly not forget that when he first learned of the Ezekiel Warning decades ago, he recognized that no other voice had been crying aloud to give this warning. He knew that with knowledge comes responsibility—the very reason he stood in the gap in the 1930s when no one else would, bearing the heat of the day and sounding the alarm with all the force he could bring to bear. He would know that God must still have someone thundering the same warning!

Following a Pattern

Therefore, as he did in 1927, when first learning the truth, Mr. Armstrong would search for God’s *one true Church*. He would diligently search for the *one* organization that does not compromise—water down, liberalize, alter in any way—either doctrine or tradition. He would not accept “close” as good enough. He would look for the group that is faithfully administering God’s government, feeding and protecting the flock, diligently preaching the true gospel (while using the most effective and effi-

cient means available) and trumpeting the Ezekiel Warning. Knowing Christ’s promise that His Church could not be destroyed (Matt. 16:18), Mr. Armstrong would look for the one place where the doctrines that he preached, decade after decade, have all been preserved intact.

That place—God’s true Church—still exists! It still has His government. It still does His Work. It continues taking care of Christ’s sheep. And it does not bend or compromise—on anything! Mr. Armstrong would leave no stone unturned in his search for that Church, not giving up until he found it...

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