

# Should Christians **VOTE?**

*by* David C. Pack

**Millions believe voting is their civic and patriotic duty. It is the *democratic* way. But is it *God's* way? Christ's gospel is about GOVERNMENT. If He were here today, would He vote? Would His servants participate in the politics of this world? Does His Church practice voting—to decide doctrine, or select board members and leaders? Are God's leaders chosen by men's ballots? Here is the Bible teaching on voting, made plain!**

Herbert W. Armstrong led the Worldwide Church of God (formerly The Radio Church of God until 1968) until his death in 1986. Tens of millions of people heard his voice and read his literature. God called him in the fall of 1926 and he was converted in the spring of 1927. Over the course of his ministry, God revealed, from the Bible, hundreds of true doctrines through him, that had been lost through the centuries. Mr. Armstrong said this many times himself. In the years after his death, his successors ceased to believe and teach these doctrines. Copyright law prohibits the reproduction and distribution of literature produced during the time he led the Worldwide Church of God. The Restored Church of God is committed to the preservation and teaching of all of these truths that he taught!

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Jesus Christ brought a message about government. Everywhere He went, He preached—HE ANNOUNCED—the coming of the kingdom of God. He explained that it would be a WORLD-RULING GOVERNMENT that would smash and replace all the governments of men.

You may have supposed that the governments of modern nations reflect God's way. This is almost everyone's assumption. While God does, in fact, establish and remove nations, this is not His world. This is why Christ foretold the arrival of a great super-government to replace the confused, ineffective, inefficient governments of man, which are powerless to solve any of the world's biggest problems.

*How* did the world come to be this way? *Why* is it in such a state of confusion and ignorance? *Why* can the governments of men not get along—avoid war—find peace and agreement? *Why* is there constant instability, scandal and division among leaders and seemingly endless revolutions and military coups? *Why* is there no shortage of demagogues, dictators and revolutionaries, always promising to make things better, yet only able to preside over a continual worsening of problems and conditions?

Look at the governments of this world. Generally speaking, there are three types today—*monarchies*, *dictatorships* and *democracies*.

Monarchies involve nobility—royalty—where bloodline is the key to succession of power. Through the death of a king or queen, a succeeding prince or princess ascends the throne. This can last for generations or many centuries. Monarchies are usually replaced, either violently, or peacefully, so that the king or queen is permitted to retain some minimum power.

Dictatorships and totalitarian governments are usually created through violence, by coup or revolution. They are often short-lived because something similar quickly replaces them.

Democracies and republics are best described as collaborative, representative or parliamentary, in that officials and leaders are elected, representing “the will of the people.” This involves a voting or balloting process in the selection of one candidate in preference to one or several others. This form is generally considered to be the best of mankind's governments. Yet, the great 20th century British Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, called democracy “the *worst* form of government—*except for all the others*.” This shows an amazing insight into how democracy really works, from an insider's view.

But it is true that as bad as democracy may be, it is far better than any other form of government—*when that government lies in the hands of men*. Democracy does attempt to insure more individual “freedoms” than other kinds of humanly devised government.

In the end, however, none of man’s governments work either very well or for very long.

God is calling people who are citizens of many different nations on earth. Most who are called in this age are privileged to live under the freedoms of a democracy. Of course, many of these same people have participated in the election of their local, state, provincial or national leaders.

Should Christians vote or participate in the politics of their country? A

### The Life of a Democracy

It has been said that “eventually, all democracies commit suicide.” Since history bears this out, what is the average lifespan of a democratic society? How long will it typically last before forces within it topple or implode it? What are the limits beyond which it cannot survive? What forces threaten it?

The following quotes from well-known American patriots demonstrate the short-lived nature of democracies and why this is so. Wise King Solomon wrote that “Righteousness exalts a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people” (Prov. 14:34). If a democracy has any chance to survive longer than normal, it will only be character found in its citizens that permits this. Consider these statements in light of the severe, fast-increasing moral decay that looms as the very greatest threat to the democratic nations of the West.

**“A democracy cannot exist as a permanent form of government. It can only exist until the voters discover they can vote themselves largesse from the public treasury. From that moment on, the majority always votes for the candidates promising them the most benefits from the public treasury, with the result that a democracy always collapses over a [lousy] fiscal responsibility, always followed by a dictatorship. The average of the world’s great civilizations before they decline has been 200 years. These nations have progressed in this sequence: From (1) bondage to spiritual faith; from (2) spiritual faith to great courage; from (3) courage to liberty; from (4) liberty to abundance; from (5) abundance to selfishness; from (6) selfishness to complacency; from (7) complacency to apathy; from (8) apathy to dependency; from (9) dependency back again to bondage.”**

-Alexander Tyler, in his 1770 book, *Cycle of Democracy*

George Washington referred to the United States as “**a great experiment.**” And in his farewell address he said, “**Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports.**”

Christian is one who follows—who *copies*—Jesus Christ (I Peter 2:21; Phil. 2:5).

What would Christ do if He were on earth today? Would *HE* participate in the governments or politics of men? What does the Bible teach about voting to select leaders—either in national governments or in the selection of church leaders of any specific church denomination?

Christ would not vote, because He understands the origin of the governments of this world and who is behind them.

*Where* did the governments of men come from? *How* did they originate? *Who* is behind them? *Why* is there so much strife and competition in the world today? Is this God’s world?

**“Is there no virtue among us? If there be not, we are in a wretched situation. No theoretical checks—no form of government can render us secure. To suppose that any form of government will secure liberty or happiness without virtue in the people is a chimerical [an illusion or fabrication of the mind] idea.”** And “**Democracies have always been spectacles of turbulence and contention and as short in their lives as they have been violent in their deaths.**”

-James Madison

**“Only a virtuous people are capable of freedom.”**

-Benjamin Franklin

**“We have no government armed with powers capable of contending with human passions unbridled by morality and religion. Avarice [greed], ambition, revenge or gallantry would break the strongest cords of our constitution as a whale goes through a net.”**

-John Adams

**“Can the liberties of a nation be thought secure when we have removed their only firm basis? A conviction in the minds of the people, that these liberties are a gift of God? That they are not violated but with his wrath?”**

-Thomas Jefferson

**“Men are not flattered by being shown that there has been a difference of purpose between the Almighty and them. To deny it, however, in this case, is to deny that there is a God governing the world.”**

-Abraham Lincoln, March 15, 1865, letter to Thurlow Weed one month before his assassination

Most theologians, religionists and churchmen blindly assume that it is. Therefore, they conclude that if “all Christians work together, in love and unity, to make this world and its governments a safer and better place for all, we can bring peace, happiness and prosperity to the world.” This is a completely wrong viewpoint. Nowhere did Jesus say “go into all the world and strive to make it a better place by becoming part of it.” Instead, He said, “Go you into all the world and preach the gospel.” Christ did not come to make *this* world better. He announced the COMING of a better world, under His government!

Blind, deceived men think that they can bring the kingdom of God through human effort. They see certain evil forces at work and feel compelled to “do something about it.” They assume that Christ would be an “activist” striving to “make the world a better place.” Be honest! Haven’t you heard this many times? Haven’t you heard churches urge people to “get involved” or “take a stand” or some similar thing, in order to improve national or world problems of one sort or another? (Request our free booklet *What is the KINGDOM OF GOD?* You will learn much more about the most important event that will ever occur on earth.)

But is this God’s world? Does HE want Christians to “make the world a better place”?

### The Great Deceiver

The Bible speaks of Satan, “which *deceives the whole world*” (Rev. 12:9). Notice that it says, “*the whole world.*” This is a staggering statement—but there it is in your Bible.

How can the devil deceive over *six billion* people? Does he have help or does he act alone? Can he and does he work primarily through human agents—or does he influence the world in other ways? What motivates him? How did he get to be the way he is? These are valid questions.

This same verse concludes, “he was cast out into the earth, and *his angels* were cast out with him.” Notice that it says, “HIS angels.” These beings are referred to as demons. What role, if any, do these beings have? Would people “know one if they saw one”? Who are they and how do you recognize them? (Request our free booklet *Who is the DEVIL?* for the answers and to learn how he holds sway over this present world.)

For now, let’s focus on one aspect of this enormous understanding.

If Satan has deceived the entire world, then how can it be God’s world? It has to be one or the other! Since the whole world is deceived, it must then be cut off from God (Isa. 59:1-2). This will become clear.

If the devil practices deception throughout the world, it would certainly include influence upon, and control over, the humanly devised governments of this world.

Now, if the devil deceives the whole world, and you do not accept Revelation 12:9 as coming directly from the mind of God, then any hope of

breaking free of this terrible deception will be lost! (The Bible is the plain word of God! If you doubt this, then take the time to prove it to yourself. Request our free booklet *BIBLE AUTHORITY—can it be proven?*)

### The “god of this world”

The Bible refers to the “god of this world” and it is not the God of heaven. II Corinthians 4:4 records, “In whom the *god of this world* has blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the *light* of the glorious *gospel*...should shine unto them.”

There is only one being who wants to “blind” this world to the truth of the real gospel—Satan the devil. The true gospel is about the prophesied soon-coming kingdom of God—God’s world-ruling government. (Our free booklet *Which is the REAL GOSPEL?* explains how Christ is going to return and establish God’s kingdom on this earth, thus replacing the devil, who is the present “god of this world.”) No wonder Satan wants to block people from understanding this marvelous truth. He wants no “light” to shine on it. He knows that it depicts a time when he will be banished from his current position of great influence.

Three times in the gospel of John, Christ Himself refers to Satan the devil as “the prince of this world.” John 12:31, 16:11 and 14:30 make plain that in the future the “prince of this world” will be judged because, as Christ says in 14:30, the devil “has nothing in Me.” Take time to read these verses. John 12:31 parallels the judgment of this world with the judgment of Satan. This is because this world is *his* world!

Let’s make this plain.

Matthew 4 contains the well-known account of Christ’s confrontation with the devil after fasting for forty days. The devil repeatedly *tempts* Christ through twisting scripture (one of his favorite devices).

At one point, in verses 8 and 9, “the devil took Him up into an exceeding high mountain, and showed Him all the *kingdoms of the world*, and the glory of them; And said unto Him, All these things will I give you, if you will fall down and worship me.” This is a stunning account! Why? Notice that Christ rebuked Satan (verse 10) and quoted Deuteronomy 6:13 in response. Christ answered, “You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only shall you serve.” At this point, the devil departed.

Notice! At no point did Christ say, “These kingdoms are *NOT* yours to give” or “Who do you think you are, trying to offer Me what is already Mine (God’s)?” Christ said no such thing. Why? Because He knew that *the kingdoms of this world ARE the devil’s kingdoms* (governments). Christ clearly knew that they *WERE* Satan’s to give. Therefore, He rejected the terms for receiving them from the one (Satan) who *did* have the authority to offer them.

Understand! This account describes the *temptation* of Christ. What the devil offered Him was designed to *tempt* Him. If both Christ and the devil knew that the kingdoms of this world were not the devil’s to give, *then where*

was the temptation? Surely, the devil would have known what Christ knew. Of course, Christ, who was God on earth, would have known that the devil had the power and authority to offer those kingdoms. The temptation would carry no weight—it would be hollow—if they were not the devil’s to offer.

In short, for Christ to *overcome* temptation, there had to be temptation! Ultimately, Christ succeeded where Adam and Eve had failed. Christ passed a very real test!

So that there can be absolutely no doubt that this is true, note the exact same account paralleled in Luke 4:6. The devil is speaking directly to Christ. Luke’s account adds a key phrase that should hit you like a sledgehammer. He said, “All this power will I give You, and the glory of them: for that [it] *IS DELIVERED UNTO ME; and TO WHOMSOEVER I WILL I GIVE IT.*” Did you notice? It was completely *within the scope of the devil’s power and authority* to offer or withhold the kingdoms of this world. They were *his* to give or not to give. God had “delivered” it (them) to him—to his control.

This world’s nations and governments, with “all the glory of them,” are still under the control of the “god of this world”—the “prince of this world”! Has anyone ever told you this before? This is the plain truth from your Bible! And it has a direct bearing on why the world is filled with devastating problems. This world, with its ways and systems, is under the control of the devil! (Request our free booklet *A WORLD IN CAPTIVITY* to learn more about the devil’s role and power.)

### **Satan’s Kingdom is Both Organized and Unified**

Satan holds sway over all governments and nations of men. But is his own government, led by him and his demons, and ruling over human governments, unified? Is the devil himself divided? Allow Christ to answer these questions.

Christ and His disciples often had to cast out demons. I have done this on a number of occasions, and these can be very intense, dramatic encounters. They are not pleasant to witness. Those who do witness them are often shocked by what they see. It is obvious to them that great power is present—both in the demon that is being cast out and the greater power necessary to achieve this. Christ’s accusers saw clear evidence that He was backed up by *real power!* However, in Matthew 12:24-26, they accused Him of using the power of the devil to cast out (or exorcise) demons.

Here is Christ’s response: “Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and *every city or house divided against itself shall not stand*: And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand?” (vs. 25). Christ was saying that Satan would never cast out demons—they are his! He would be dividing his own kingdom. He does have a kingdom. Since his kingdom *does stand*, it is clearly not divided!

Recall Revelation 12:9. It referred to Satan and “his” demons. This clearly means that they are *his*—they belong to him—he controls them.

Here is the point. Not only does Satan govern the kingdoms of this world,

through his power and influence, but he also does it in an undivided, unified fashion with the aid of hundreds of millions (Rev. 5:11; 12:4) of demons.

Now notice an amazing account in Daniel 10:13-21. An actual spirit *war*, lasting three full weeks (vs. 13), is described! Michael, an archangel, fought with one called the “prince of the kingdom of Persia” and later referred to another up-coming battle with an arch-demon called the “prince of Grecia.” Archangels do not need *twenty-one days* to defeat puny, little, physical men. These great spirit beings, within Satan’s unified government, ruling over individual kingdoms (nations) within it, were battling Michael. Also notice Jude 9, which demonstrates how Michael will even “contend” and “dispute” with the devil over different matters.

Finally, Ephesians 6:12 explains how Christians wrestle “against principalities, against powers, against the *rulers of the darkness of this world*, against *wicked spirits* [the proper translation] *in high places.*” The context makes clear that these “high places” are within the governments or principalities of this world.

This is not God’s world! It should now be evident that the devil governs a great realm of fallen spirits. Together they deceive, confuse and exert great influence over all the governments and activities of this world.

### **Ten Biblical Reasons Why Christians Do Not Vote**

The next section covers ten separate biblical reasons why Christians should not vote. Each summarizes a principle from the Bible explaining why Christians never participate in the governments of this world or in selection of leaders and doctrine within God’s true Church. Not only does a Christian not participate in the democratic politics of this world, but, even more, he would never bring the world’s politics into God’s Church and attempt to stamp it with His authority. As you examine these points, consider why each has a clear application, both in the civil governments of men and the churches of Satan’s world. It will become plain *why* voting could never be practiced within God’s Church.

#### **Reason Number One**

Benjamin Franklin once said, “The longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this truth, that God governs in the affairs of man; and if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without His notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without His aid?” This is truer than Franklin understood. Here’s why.

Reason number ONE represents a great biblical understanding that few recognize. Consider these questions: “Who is behind the selection of leaders over the many countries on earth? Who actually chooses them?” Ultimately, do *men* select the kings, presidents and prime ministers, who stand as the human leaders of the nations today? We have seen that this is Satan’s world. But is this all there is to it? Is there anything else to understand? Does God play absolutely NO role in men’s affairs?

First read Daniel 4:17. This is part of a remarkable story and partly explains why more talented people are leaving politics than ever before. It contains an amazing statement: “This matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones: to the intent that the living may know that *the most High rules in the kingdom of men*, and gives it to whomsoever He will, and *sets up over it the BASEST OF MEN.*” The word *base* means *the bottom, under*. If a house has a *basement*, it is located at the bottom or under the house.

This part of Daniel describes a Gentile king, Nebuchadnezzar, who may have been the greatest Gentile leader the world has seen and he represented, in type, the “head of gold” of the giant image described in chapter 2. As a result of his important role in prophecy, leading the greatest empire on earth nearly 2,600 years ago, Nebuchadnezzar became lifted up with pride. Notice his words in verse 30: “The king spoke, and said, Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of *MY* power, and for the honour of *MY* majesty?”

This carnal king was far too impressed with his *own* accomplishments and the grandeur of the great city (and kingdom) of Babylon over which he ruled. The account records that God humbled and punished him by giving him the mind of a wild animal for a period of seven years (vs. 32-33).

Nebuchadnezzar was an exception to the rule of verse 17—and there are a few exceptions that God guides, for His own reasons. But He plainly states that He places “the basest of men” over the governments and nations on earth. Also, Daniel 2:21 states, “He [God] removes kings, and sets up kings.”

Now, typically, whom do *people* seek to put into office when they cast their ballot in an election? They try to insure that the “best candidate” wins! No one votes for someone because they think that he is the “*worst* candidate.” However, if we are to believe Daniel 4:17, this puts them in opposition to God’s purpose—which is that the worst, or basest, man wins. The weakest, basest, lowliest people are those whom God, for His own purpose, puts into office. This effect is why more qualified leaders often choose not to be part of a system primarily composed of this kind of people.

It is not God’s purpose that the “better” people win. God determines the winners in advance. In the end, the “will of the people” has no power or effect, because God is in charge of the outcome of elections.

Do not misunderstand, however. The kingdoms of this world are not God’s kingdoms because He selects leaders. Some have tried to cite Daniel 4:17, completely missing the point when they say, “God is working in this election and good Christians everywhere, if we can get out the vote, can put godly men in office.” This literally puts them in a position of fighting God’s stated purpose. They do not understand *WHY* God says the basest people are elected. Many religious leaders ignore this verse, believing that it is their job to work out God’s purpose.

God is working out a plan that encompasses 7,000 years. He is allowing mankind to find out that his own ways, governments, values, religions and purposes do not work. God has already picked the leaders that best work toward

the fulfillment of His great plan of salvation for all mankind.

Here is the point. You and I do not know whom God has selected, in advance, as the “winner” that HE wants in office. To cast a vote for someone other than the *pre-selected* winner is to *fight God’s purpose!* That is serious—and the Bible says that it is possible to do this (Acts 5:39)!

Further, if you are seeking to elect the *best* man, in an election where God has told you in advance that He is going to pick the “basest” man, you are directly ignoring God’s purpose and replacing it with your own. God has already picked the winner. Christians understand that they had better “get out of the way”! God does not need our “help” to install the one He has chosen.

### Reason Number Two

Number TWO involves a famous “conversation.” In John 18, Christ was on trial before Pontius Pilate. In verse 33, Pilate asked Jesus, “Are You the King of the Jews?” The exchange continues until it climaxes in verse 36. Christ had determined not to resist whatever Pilate or the Jews had chosen as His fate. He answered Pilate’s question. Notice verse 36: “Jesus answered, *MY KINGDOM IS NOT OF THIS WORLD*: if My kingdom were of this world, then would My servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: *but now is My kingdom not from hence* [here].”

Do you understand Christ’s words? He said that His kingdom (the New Testament term for government) *is not of this world*. Christians are part of THAT government—GOD’S government. They await the coming of *this* government to earth. Also, just based on this verse (there are many others), Christ explains that God’s servants do not fight to defend His kingdom. Since they do not even fight to defend Christ’s (God’s) kingdom, they certainly, then, would never fight to defend any kingdom led by men.

Remember that Christ’s kingdom is not on earth—it is from another place. It is not the job of His servants, through participation in men’s governments or through fighting in their wars, to spread the kingdom of God. It has not yet arrived. (Request our free article “SEVEN PROOFS God’s Kingdom is *Not Here Yet*”) Since God’s kingdom comes from, and is headquartered in, heaven, His servants neither vote in, nor fight for, men’s kingdoms or governments. (Also request our free booklet *WAR, KILLING and the MILITARY* to learn why Christians never go to war.)

So, the second reason that Christians do not vote is because they are part of another kingdom not of this world. In Matthew 6:9-10, Christ told them to regularly pray, “Thy kingdom come,” because His followers serve and look toward a different kingdom, that will soon come to this earth.

### Reason Number Three

Number THREE builds on reason number one and actually strengthens that point. We will see this with the next several points, as they interrelate with rea-

son two. First read Philippians 3:20, which states, “For our *conversation* [the Greek word here should be properly translated *citizenship*] is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.”

This is a fascinating verse. It plainly says that a Christian’s “citizenship” is in heaven—it is not on *this earth*. Of course, all true Christians are also citizens of at least one country on earth (some few have dual citizenship).

This verse explains *WHY* Christ said, “My kingdom is not OF this world.” It is from another place—from heaven. This verse complements John 18:36! Human leaders come from some city, state or province of the country that they represent. So does Christ. He comes from heaven.

The Greek word for citizenship is *politeia*. *POLITICS* comes from this word! Christians *do* have a “political agenda,” but it is not *of this world*. *Politeia* technically can also be translated another way. It can mean *a townsman*. It is correct to say that citizens of men’s governments are townsmen—of particular *towns* on earth.

Do God’s people practice politics? The answer is YES—in a sense! I have an absolutely deep political conviction. Let me say it more clearly, so you can understand. In one sense, Christians *are* very political in their thinking. Is God a political being? The answer is absolutely YES! But His politics are not of *this world*. He has His *own* view of government, His *own* view of correct and right *politeia*, or politics. His kingdom—His government—is not of this world, but He *does* have a government.

The word *police* comes from *politeia*. So do *policy* and *poll*. It is not hard to understand how police, policies and polls are connected, in one way or another, to politics. Even the large cities of Indianapolis and Minneapolis derive their names from *politeia*. They are large towns with lots of citizens. Minnea(polis) means the great city of Minnesota and Indiana(polis) means the great city of Indiana. There is no mystery when words are broken down. The root meaning of *politeia* holds an important lesson for Christians regarding from where and by whom their politics are governed.

#### Reason Number Four

Number FOUR comes from II Corinthians 5:20: “Now then we are AMBASSADORS for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ’s stead, be you reconciled to God.”

I attended Ambassador College, from 1967-1971, in preparation and training for the ministry. This was one of three colleges that was started and sponsored by the Worldwide Church of God, under the leadership of Herbert W. Armstrong. Mr. Armstrong saw this verse and decided upon this name because it best reflected what Ambassador College students were intended to become.

Those who were accepted had to really know *why* they wanted to go. And once they arrived, they were taught what it meant to be an Ambassador. I was told, during the time that I attended, that I was in training to hold this office.

High standards were set so that high standards could be attained. Those standards touched upon all facets of student life: studies, finances, health, appearance, work, athletics, dating and spiritual growth. All who did not strive to reach them, simply did not remain an “Ambassador” at Ambassador College.

The Greek word for *ambassador* is also interesting. It is *presbeuo*. While it means *ambassador*, the word *president* comes from it, as does *Presbyterian*. The most literal meaning of *presbeuo* is “representative.” In the United States, we have the House of Representatives—with 435 members. Together with the Senate’s 100 members, this forms the Congress of 535 elected *representatives* of the people. These elected officials answer to and, in fact, are supposed to represent the will of the people who sent them to Congress. All democratic governments, in which the people select their representatives, work similarly.

It is the same with Christians, who are ambassadors, or representatives, of Jesus Christ. In a sense, it could be said that I attended “Representative College,” because I was training to become His representative.

Consider why the leader of a country often carries the title of *President*. This is because he is the ultimate or greatest representative of the people who elected him.

The highest office in the land could just as easily be *Representative*. And the House of Representatives could just as easily be called the *House of Presidents*. These words are interchangeable. A president is a representative and a representative is a president, but men have distinguished between them by picking two different words that mean exactly the same thing! Both come from *presbeuo*—and both really mean *ambassadors*. Those who are ambassadors for Christ are ambassadors in a foreign land. This carries implications.

Any ambassador knows that if he represents a country, such as the United States, as an ambassador to Russia or China or Lebanon or Mozambique or any other country, he cannot participate in the politics of the country to which he is appointed. This is because he participates in the country and the politics of the country he *represents*. As a *presbeuo*, a representative, an ambassador of another country, he cannot fight for the country he is visiting—to which he is sent. He also cannot vote there.

All ambassadors receive a certain “diplomatic immunity.” This legal term is understood and practiced all over the world. This policy was developed because ambassadors could be illegally put on trial, on trumped up charges, and no one would ever accept ambassadorships to places where the governments are particularly corrupt, and function primarily on bribes, personal favors, nepotism and rampant injustice.

Christians are ambassadors for *another* government. This means that they have certain immunities, allowing them to enjoy the country to which they are assigned, while still representing their own.

In most cases, God’s people do enjoy various blessings in the countries of their birth. But, as ambassadors and citizens of the kingdom of God, they can no longer participate in man’s systems of government. Their citizenship is derived, and held by, a different authority—*HEAVEN!*

## Ambassadors for Another Government

The ultimate destiny of Christians is to become kings and priests, ruling with Jesus Christ in the kingdom of God. But all Christians have an important diplomatic job here and now. As God's people, we represent a foreign government, because as the Apostle Paul said, "our citizenship is in heaven" (Phil. 3:20).

Ambassadorships are critical appointments and are only conferred on those who can properly, positively represent the ideals, laws, people, culture, government policies and political ideologies of the countries where they hold citizenship. If an Ambassador fails to uphold all these standards, he can automatically disqualify himself from representing his government—and be recalled from his post!

As ambassadors for God's future government, Christians must exemplify His way. They are to represent the peace, order and abundant joy inherent in the spiritual government to which they owe their true allegiance. They are, in Christ's words, to be lights to the world (Matt. 5:14-16). And the "Father of lights" (James. 1:17) will not permit them to hide their good examples "under a bushel." True Christians have been "set on a hill" for all to see, just as a light pierces the surrounding darkness so that people can see where to go.

Have you noticed that people have a way of immediately *categorizing* anyone they meet or any idea with which they come in contact? If you meet someone from the southern United States, you automatically fit the person into the image you have of the South, though you may have never been there. You may think of a Confederate flag, a steamboat, the Atlanta Falcons football team, hot, humid weather or "Southern hospitality." You assign the person to a certain "slot" in your mind.

If someone drives a Cadillac, it means a certain thing to most people. Driving a Volkswagen also communicates an image. Everybody knows businessmen dress a certain way. The images of models, playboys, bricklayers and athletes also connote a certain "uniform," in our minds. The way a person carries himself conveys that he is cocky, refined, shy, confident or relaxed.

People are categorized, many times incorrectly, according to their religion, skin color, political preference, manners, friends, sports they like, books they read, jokes they tell, entertainment they prefer or even the kind of dog they own.

Here is what this means to a Christian Ambassador.

People are analyzing *your* every word, move and habit. Thus, *you* must set an example that unmistakably identifies *what* you are and *who* you represent.

God intended that ancient Israel be such a sterling example, in their obedience to Him, that all the surrounding Gentile nations could not help but notice how they, too, were intended by God to live (Deut. 4:4-8).

Unfortunately, the Bible shows, this never happened. Israel utterly failed their commission! In fact, they failed so miserably, that in the New Testament, Paul often referred to Israel's example to show how *NOT* to live (I Cor. 10:6). How much better it would have been had Israel written a positive, righteous record!

One bright spot in their history was King Solomon's early example of wisdom and understanding, which spread abroad so strongly that the Queen of Sheba could not believe it. She decided to check for herself (I Kings 10:1-10) and found that she "hadn't heard the half of it" (vs. 7). Solomon must have been setting a wonderful example. But, though he was king, he was still one man. What if the *entire nation* had been as wise and righteous as Solomon? It would have had that much greater impact on Israel's neighbors.

The early Church also had a difficult time learning to generate the right light. Paul must have had great patience as he dealt with the Corinthian congregation. He had much to say to them about their wrong conduct and explained to them "...we are *ambassadors* for Christ" (II Cor. 5:20). The reference was not to the ministry or apostles alone, though they are Ambassadors in the most direct sense. He sought to emphasize to Corinth the importance of the examples we *all* set (vs. 10) and stated that, "...if *any* man be in Christ, he is a new creature" (vs. 17). All who are "new creatures" have received an ambassadorial appointment—a very high office, carrying much weight in representing its government.

Paul instructed the Philippians to "Only let your conversation [conduct] be as it *becomes* the gospel of Christ" (Phil. 1:27). That gospel is of the coming government of God. Is *your* conduct "becoming" of that government, or do you cast a bad light on it? Are you an "un-becoming" representative?

In Mr. Armstrong's later years, when he traveled abroad regularly meeting with world leaders, he referred to himself as "an Ambassador without portfolio." He certainly conducted himself as an Ambassador—he understood that he represented a foreign government. He understood there was no escaping that leaders and others evaluated the Worldwide Church of God by the message



and conduct of its *representative*—Herbert W. Armstrong.

Notice Paul's instruction to the Colossians: "Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time. Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer every man" (4:5-6). People outside the Church should not be able to miss your wisdom. Like Solomon's, though to a lesser degree, it should stand out as unusual. Remember, God has chosen "the *foolish* things of the world" to "confound the wise" (I Cor. 1:26-31). We must be growing in wisdom, discretion, tact and diplomacy, to retain our "credentials" as Ambassadors.

I Corinthians 6:2 shows that the saints will one day judge the world. If that day were here, and all those who knew you in this life *now* could see you as a member of the ruling God Family, what would their reaction be? Would they, by remembering your outstanding example—in your home, family, neighborhood or job, find it easy to accept? Or would they collapse in shock that you could have made it into God's kingdom?

Would they remember hearing you and your mate fighting? Would they recall the disrespect, foul language and unkempt appearance of you or your children? Would an image come back to mind of an uncared-for yard or off-color jokes? Would they remember your unfriendly, secretive manner, your unpainted house, your poor work record—and on and on?

Christ gained "favor with God *and man*" (Luke 2:52). In this way, He also set an example for His followers (I Pet. 2:21). Are *you* in favor with both God and man? A man or woman can be used by God to convert his or her mate purely by conduct (I Pet. 3:1), without "a" word, or "the" Word, the Bible. Take time to read this verse. People should notice that, as a result of your beliefs, your conduct is *different* from that of the average person (I Pet. 4:4). Does your example convict them? You may be the only Bible some people ever read. Can people "read" you clearly? Do you even "abstain from all *appearance of evil*" (I Thes. 5:22)?

No error or fault could be found in the Prophet Daniel (Dan. 6:4). His conduct was so outstanding, in all respects, that a group of cunning, carnal-minded politicians could find *nothing* of which to accuse him—unless it was "concerning the law of his God" (verse 5). He was not doing a *single thing* that they could attack. Nothing!

This is what it means to be the light of the world. This is what it means to be an Ambassador for Christ and a member of the true Church of God in a world that is growing darker every day!

### Reason Number Five

Number FIVE summarizes the previous three reasons Christians do not vote. Notice Matthew 6:24: "*No man can serve two masters*: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. You *cannot* serve God and mammon."

No human being can give equal allegiance, or complete loyalty, to *two* different masters of *any* kind. Christ was actually teaching about seeking God and the accumulation of money (mammon) at the same time. Eventually, one takes precedence over the other and dominates the thinking of the person. Christians are totally loyal to the government they represent. As with citizens of any country on earth, they cannot also participate in the politics of any country *other than their own*. This can actually cause them to *lose their rights of citizenship*. Christians are the same!

Acts 5:29 explains that God's servants must always "...obey God rather than men." Understand this. If one is a citizen of a government waiting in heaven to come to earth and *replace* all governments of earth, then he cannot stand with his feet resting in two *opposing* governments—God's and Satan's!

### Reason Number Six

Number SIX is based on God's view toward division and discord between people. He wants people to live together in unity and harmony. Notice Psalm 133:1: "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for *brethren to dwell together in unity!*" It is a wonderful thing when people get along—when they *AGREE*. God hates division and discord. Read Romans 16:17 and Proverbs 6:19, where He says He hates "...he that sows *discord among brethren.*" Politics would bring division into the Church! How?

It has been said that there are two things that should never be debated—religion and politics! How true. Violating this principle invariably leads to arguing, strife and fighting. We have learned that Satan's world is cut off (Isa. 59:1-2; Jer. 5:25) from the God Who teaches the way to peace, harmony and unity. So, after an argument has developed, concerning religion or politics, there can be no resolution, no unity, except by ending the discussion.

What if the brethren in God's Church voted? Two things could happen—one bad and the other worse. There is the slight possibility that everyone would vote for the *same* person. (That could still be bad, since it may not be the person that GOD wanted.)

The moment that voting is practiced in God's Church, division is introduced. Amos 3:3 asks, "Can two walk *together* except they be *agreed?*" Soon enough, most people learn that the painful answer to this question is *No!* The political disagreement that breeds division and eventually splits countries, states, cities, towns, neighborhoods and families—also splits *congregations* and *churches!*

Paul asked, “Is Christ divided?” The obvious answer is *no!* Christ is NOT divided and neither is His Church (I Cor. 1:10, 13). We have seen that Christ also said, “Every kingdom divided against itself is *brought to desolation*; and every city or house divided against itself *shall not stand*. And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand?” (Matt. 12:25-26). It is interesting that even the DEVIL has figured this out! He leads a vast kingdom of fallen spirits (demons) and he recognizes that he cannot let his kingdom be divided.

A professional football team cannot be divided and expect to win the Super Bowl. A baseball team cannot be divided and win the World Series—or a professional hockey team the Stanley Cup. All divided families will eventually separate. The same is true of countries. The Church of God could hardly be different. Christ would not say that all *other* kinds of organizations or entities cannot be divided and survive, while the most important thing that He directs—His Church—is an exception. Christ would never exempt His Church from this principle. The Church should be the epitome of unity and harmony.

Have you wondered *why* the churches of this world are so divided—why they *compete* with one another for members? It is because they do not *agree* on doctrine or administration. People must AGREE or there will be division in every endeavor. Politics is no different, and the only politics that God’s servants should have are the politics of God!

If voting is practiced by, or introduced into, the Church, it will be split—and God hates discord (division)!

### Reason Number Seven

Number SEVEN addresses the *system* that Christians avoid. Speaking of the system of religious, political “Babylon,” Revelation 18:4 gives direct instruction to God’s people: “And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, *Come out of her, MY PEOPLE*, that you be not partakers of her sins.” Babylon means *confusion*. The true servants of God have come out of this world and its governments—they have come out of its confusion (I Cor. 14:33). Let’s understand!

In John 17:15-17, when He was keeping the Passover on the last night before He was crucified, Christ explained a spiritual principle to His disciples. He said, “I pray not that you should take them out of the world, but that you should keep them from the evil. They are *NOT OF THE WORLD*, even as I am not of the world. *Sanctify them through your truth: YOUR WORD IS TRUTH.*”

A Christian believes and follows the truth. This sets him apart (sanctifies him) from all those around him. He is not OF this world and its ways, customs and traditions. He has come out of it, leaving its beliefs and ideas behind. He would never seek or run for any political office within it.

Of course, a Christian cannot live on Mars or in a cave. He cannot leave the planet or live as a hermit on a mountaintop, so that he is not “of” the world. Some religious zealots misunderstand Christ’s Words and go live in monasteries or retreats to avoid contact with ordinary people. Christ did not do this. He

did not mean to completely come out of the *physical* world. He meant come out of its SYSTEM of governments and religions. Christians practice and believe the truth—not the popular ideas of men!

For instance, what if true Christians are voting in Europe as the final beast of Revelation 17 arises? This great military, political, religious power is prophesied to come soon—and is already rising! By voting, Christians would literally be participating in establishing the final great counterfeit government prophesied to deceive the world and fight Christ at His Return!

Think! Ask yourself if God would have His servants participating in the rise of this final great Babylonish government. God has selected who the final beast will be—and, no doubt, the ten men who are going to give him power. (Request our free booklet *Who or What is the Beast of Revelation?*) Would God tell His servants in Europe to come out of Babylon, while at the same time permit them to *participate* in the very (now democratic) system that will select the final super dictator that will lead it?

Of course not!

### Reason Number Eight

Number EIGHT concerns the fruits—the *by-product*—of any system or leader. In Matthew 7:16, Christ stated, “You shall know them *by their fruits*.” He repeated, “Wherefore *by their fruits* you shall know them” (vs. 20). Matthew 12:33 says, “...for the TREE is known *by his [its] fruit*.” These verses are primarily speaking about leaders, but the principle has broad application.

Let’s examine the “tree” called *politics, voting and democracy*. In a sense, to demonstrate means to *demonstrate*. Observe the fruits of any demonstration that has gone wild and it is obvious that demons are behind it.

Look at the FRUITS of democracy. It is based on the spirit of *competition* between political parties. Each party seeks to gain an advantage over the other and will even undercut good programs if it will cast a bad light on their opponents. The practices of favoritism, endless debates and arguments, bribes, lust for power, corruption, lying and deceit, scandals and cover-ups, greed, exploitation, aggression, intense and relentless accusation, inefficiency, vanity, decisions based on polls, voter apathy, strife and back-stabbing are *some* of the *fruits* of democracy—and remember that Winston Churchill said that democracy is *better* than all the other forms of human government. Democratic politics are shot full of division and disagreement, over nearly every issue that any society might face. (Request our free booklet *UNKNOWN UNTIL NOW Why Mankind Cannot Solve His Problems*. It explains *why* man and his governments are in the mess that they are.)

The fruit of the democratic way is CHAOS! It is run by the god of this world and his “wicked spirits [marginal rendering] in *high places*” (Eph. 6:12). These wicked spirits sit at the real throttle of power *behind* the visible governments of the nations. The Greeks were much more right than they knew. *A Christian cannot participate in such a system!*

### Reason Number Nine

Number NINE is short and simple. There is no misunderstanding it. Study the Bible from Genesis to Revelation and you will not find a single instance where an election was used to select a leader. Nowhere in the Bible can you find people electing leaders—and the Bible is the pattern that Christians are supposed to follow in *all* matters. Christians “live by every word of God” (Matt. 4:4; Luke 4:4). God’s Word neither authorizes nor reflects any kind of pattern of voting.

### Reason Number Ten

Finally, number TEN bears consideration. Some candidates for office want to be a Mayor—others a Congressman—others a Governor or Judge or Senator—or even a President or Prime Minister. What is every political candidate actually saying, between the lines, when he offers himself for the particular office that he is seeking? What is such a person actually saying about his qualifications?

Focus on a Governor or a President—or even the Mayor of a city with millions of people. When a person seeks such a powerful office, that person is saying that he is qualified to be considered a great leader. Such a person is actively seeking to *exalt himself* to a position of *great authority*. He is saying that he is sufficiently qualified, talented, wonderful or special and/or experienced to be entrusted with a great office of responsibility. This is exactly what a candidate is saying, whether they are honest enough to admit it or not. He is saying, much like Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel 4:30, that he is a great person, a great leader and the voting masses should hand him GREAT POWER! Voters directly assist such people in their climb to power.

Jesus said, “For whosoever *exalts* himself shall be *abased*; and he that *humbles* himself shall be exalted” (Luke 14:11). Several chapters later, in 18:14, he repeated almost the exact same thing.

Christians are to humble themselves *now* (Matt. 18:1-4; James 4:10; I Pet. 5:5-6) so that God can exalt them *later*, in His coming kingdom, so that they can rule with great power and authority alongside Jesus Christ. Politicians exalt themselves and thereby insure that God will humble them at some later time, when they do not expect it.

Christians understand the way God works. To participate in a system in which men *exalt themselves*, in the seeking of high office, is to endorse—to validate—to agree with—a corrupt system, with terrible fruit. Democracy is completely opposite of what God expects of all people when He commands them to humble themselves!

### Obeying Civil Authority

No part of this booklet is intended to suggest that Christians should *ever* disobey civil authority—unless that authority directly instructs them to disobey

the higher authority of God. Participating in the governments of men and obeying or submitting to them are entirely different matters. Christians must never confuse the two! (To learn more about what God says on this subject, request our free article “Should Christians Submit to GOVERNMENT AUTHORITY?” It addresses vital matters such as paying taxes, military service, civil disobedience and obeying man’s laws.)

### What Herbert Armstrong Understood

Carefully review the extensive quote from an article written by Herbert W. Armstrong just prior to a presidential election, “How Would Jesus Vote for PRESIDENT?” This extraordinary, powerful statement explains the real origin of the voting process practiced by this world’s democratic governments. I first read this nearly thirty-five years ago. It appeared under the subhead, “WHY the World’s Greatest Church ‘Is Fallen’”:

**“In the prophecy of Revelation 17 is pictured the greatest church in this world—a *professing* Christian church, ruling over many nations, but she is called in Bible language ‘the great whore’—a most ugly name!**

**“But you will notice, verse 5, she is shown to be a MOTHER church. She has many daughters, who, even though they have come out of her in ‘protest’ naming themselves from the word ‘protest,’ nevertheless are labeled by God’s prophecy as ‘harlots.’**

**“What was her fornication?**

**“Notice it—verse 2: ‘With whom *the kings of the earth* have committed fornication.’ The ‘Beast’ on which she sits represents the GOVERNMENTS OF THIS WORLD.**

**“The true CHURCH is the affianced Bride of CHRIST. She is to be married to Christ in a Spiritual Marriage AT HIS SECOND COMING! (Rev. 19:7.) Then the true ‘CHURCH of God’ will become the ‘KINGDOM of God,’ to rule the earth. But Jesus said, ‘My Kingdom is *not of this world.*’ He taught His disciples to keep themselves unspotted from the world—to separate from it.**

**“But this great counterfeit Church, instead of becoming ‘engaged’ to the true Christ, and keeping herself true to Him as coming world ruler, formed an illicit union with the *governments of this world*—entered into this world’s politics—sought to DOMINATE this world’s governments, took an active part in its affairs! Thus she committed spiritual ‘fornication’—illicit union *prior* to marriage.**

**“The Roman church united Church and State, actually ruled over the state, which is Satan’s kingdom, for more than a thousand years! The popular churches of Christendom nearly all take active, vigorous part in this world’s affairs and its politics. Most churches will now be instructing their members HOW TO VOTE in this presidential election. They are part and parcel of THIS WORLD, and they serve only THE GOD OF THIS WORLD, Satan the devil. *They are deceived!* They do not even know they are doing wrong—**

they ARE DECEIVED!

“This entire system—religion taking part in politics—is labeled ‘BABYLON’ (Rev. 17:5).

“We call ours the ‘republican’ form, or, erroneously, ‘Democracy.’ But it is a MAN-MADE form of administration of the BABYLONISH SYSTEM.

“ISRAEL—the United States, Britain, the ‘Democracies’ of north-western Europe—modern Israel IS IN BABYLON TODAY, just as prophecy states (Jer. 50:1, 4-6, 8, Isa. 48: 1, 12-20, etc.). It is because of this—*because our sins are increasing*—because we have made alliances with heathen powers instead of relying upon our God—that the Eternal warns us our nations are soon to be invaded and conquered, in order to bring our people back to God (Isa. 47:1-6; Jer. 30:7-16, 24; Micah 5:8-11; Ezek. 3:1, 4-7, 17, 5:12-14; 6:11-14).

“Yes, ISRAEL IS IN A ‘BABYLONISH’ SYSTEM today, and GOD CALLS US OUT! (Rev. 18:4, Jer. 50:8; 51:6-9.)

#### Jesus Would Not Take Part

“What, then, would Jesus do...? He would WARN our people Israel: ‘COME OUT of her (Babylon), my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues!’ The plagues of God are soon to fall upon BABYLON and all who choose to remain a part of ‘Babylon.’ JESUS CALLS YOU OUT!

“What would Jesus do? HE WOULD BE TOO BUSY PROCLAIMING THE GOOD NEWS OF HIS OWN COMING WORLD-RULING KINGDOM, and the way of salvation, to take any part whatsoever in the politics of this present evil world, or in any man-made form of government that is DOOMED very soon to be destroyed and replaced by the Theocratic government of THE KINGDOM OF GOD!

“Our mission is, as Ambassadors of Christ—as advance emissaries of HIS KINGDOM—to WARN Israel of her plight and present danger, to proclaim to all nations the Good News of THE KINGDOM OF GOD!”

#### What About Church Government?

The question arises, “I realize God doesn’t want us to participate in the politics of this world, but isn’t it alright if our *church leaders, doctrine* and spiritual *traditions* are decided by ballot? Is it not proper to vote on these things, particularly as long as we pray about it in advance and ask for God’s wisdom and guidance?”

Asking God to guide a process, which He clearly explains is not the way He works, is *hypocritical*. To do something—ANYTHING—that is clearly wrong, and then ask God to bless it, is bald hypocrisy—a charade. It asks Him to endorse what He has explained, in numerous verses, is wrong—is SIN!

In regard to politics and voting, churches are no different. Many of the ten

reasons also have direct application to churches. They need not be repeated and re-explained because the way these principles work is obvious.

Except for the great universal church, centered at Rome (where a “college” also elects the ultimate leader to a life-long term), most of the large, respected, mainstream denominations of professing Christianity practice what is called “congregational” or “presbyterian” style governments. Underlings elect their leaders. This also gives them the power to remove or “un-elect” them, if they do not “deliver” on the expectations held by those who selected them.

Local pastors can be hired and fired from their spiritual posts by councils of deacons, elders or others who are under them in spiritual authority. On the national or international level, selection of leaders and acceptance or rejection of doctrine is invariably subject to votes by councils or conferences of ministers. Since they do not practice God’s hierarchical method of government from the top down, it is of no use that they “pray” about decisions or ask God to “bless” their actions. Running for office in a church, tacitly asking for votes and practicing degrees of politics in order to get them, and voting are no less practices of Satan’s world, with its forms of democratic government, than are these practices when they are used in a civil setting.

Christ did not build this world’s many divided, competing, disagreeing churches, any more than He built the divided, competing and disagreeing nations on earth. God is not leading them. The churches of this world do not have, and do not practice, God’s truth on the matter of government or anything else. They are led by conventions of ministers, who meet regularly to ballot about matters that include who *THEY* wish to be their “president”—*THEIR* leader—for a humanly-set limit of time. They have not selected *GOD’S* chosen leader—they have selected *THEIR OWN!* Such chosen leaders are governed, in every respect, by the “will of the people” or, in this case, the “will of the collective ministry” or the “will of a church council”—instead of *GOD’S WILL!*

If God selects the leaders of this world, as part of His own great master plan and purpose, then how much more would He then select the leaders of HIS OWN CHURCH? God would never employ a process that results in the “will of the people” being expressed, when it is HIS WILL that must determine what leader, or leaders, HE will work through as HIS servants, in HIS Church!

#### Recent Church History

We have seen that Christians do not participate in politics—in the democratic, political process of either this world’s governments or its churches. But this does not mean that men will not, periodically, *attempt* to bring democracy, voting and other elements of Satan’s forms of government into God’s Own Church. Satan will never give up trying to overthrow the government of God within the true Church.

Several brief quotes are included here to help you understand how Mr. Armstrong, in the 1970s, dealt with a time of subtle rebellion in the Worldwide Church of God. He had been traveling around the world, visiting many kings,

presidents and prime ministers, approximately 300 days out of every year. In his absence, a group of liberal ministers rose up and sought to water down the doctrines of God within His Church. Similar efforts have occurred over the 2,000-year history of God's Church.

One of the false doctrines that these leaders tried to bring into the Church was that voting, either in worldly elections or within the Church, was nothing more than a personal preference that each individual must decide for himself.

When this plan came to Mr. Armstrong's attention, he dealt with it swiftly, emphatically and based on the Word of God. Here is what he wrote:

**"[The liberal] wants to be free to vote, at least in local elections.**

**"The argument was made to me that our Church people actually outnumbered others living in Big Sandy, Tex., BUT (what a big word is 'BUT') you see, if they did not vote, the minority would vote to incorporate the Ambassador College campus into the town of Big Sandy, and we'd have to pay big taxes. It never seemed to occur to the liberal mind that CHRIST will solve our problems, and we do not have to go contrary to HIS ATTITUDE!"**

*"What Is a Liberal?" Good News magazine, March 1979*

**"This means the local churches would be precisely like the Baptist churches in organizational structure and government. That concept is TOTALLY UNSCRIPTURAL. God's Church is now established GOD'S WAY—the BIBLE WAY, under the biblical pattern, with Jesus Christ the living Head, under God the Father, and next under Christ those on earth He Himself has called and chosen, and through whom He has raised up this Church, and USED IT TO CARRY ON HIS WORK FOR THIS END-TIME as covered in the prophecy for OUR TIME in Matthew 24:14. GOD'S Church is organized the BIBLE WAY as directed in the Bible—through those HE has chosen and set in the various offices to get HIS WORK done.**

**"Those now advocating this Scriptural HERESY want to abolish all authority which Christ as our Head SET in His Church. Their contentions would lead to VOTING—the 'democratic way'—the very OPPOSITE of God's Way. They want to be 'LIBERAL,' and soon this liberality would lead into general and widespread SIN. They would become just a few more churches OF THIS WORLD—Satan's world.**

**"Some ministers, [are] getting confused between this world's politics in the American 'democratic' system, and THE WAYS OF GOD..."**

**"These dissenting ministers want to desert God's authority and ASSUME IT THEMSELVES. In other words they want 'DEMOCRACY', VOTING which is TOTALLY un-scriptural. They want to be part of THIS world—Satan's world."**

*Letter to Brethren, Feb. 25, 1974*

The next quote is included so that you can understand that voting was never practiced in God's Church when ministers came together to counsel, discuss and make decisions:

**"In every instance where God's ministers in this Philadelphia era of the Church have come together to make a ruling, our minds have been put in complete accord. There is no voting.**

**"We ministers know that we serve a dynamic, living, all-powerful supernatural God! We fear to disobey, or to fail to be submissive. We know well what would happen to us if we should ever permit self-will to sway us in any decision."**

*"Christ Did Put Authority and RULE In His Church,"  
Good News, Jan. 1957*

### **Does God's Church Elect Its Leaders?**

Jesus told His disciples, "I will build My Church" (Matt. 16:18). It is Christ who is the Head of that Church—His Church (Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1:18)! (Request our two free booklets *Where is God's TRUE CHURCH?* and *The History of God's TRUE CHURCH*. The first booklet will tell you how to identify where that Church is, and the second, more extensive booklet shows where it has been for the 2,000 years since Christ promised to build it.)

Throughout history, it is God who has appointed *His* servants and *His* leaders. This has always been the Bible pattern. God selects, trains and raises up the men through whom He works. Christ called, chose and ordained His apostles to preach the gospel and lead the early New Testament Church. They were not voted into office, except for the lone "vote" cast by God, which was enough to make their selection unanimous. They did not make themselves "available" to an electorate and then, either subtly or overtly, "politic" their way to victory by shaking the right hands or offering the most popular agenda. Christ, under the Father, still selects and raises up His leaders today.

I have seen many such "leaders." While attempting to portray themselves as men of strong ethics, integrity and principle, they must use flattery to "position themselves" to advance their own candidacy. They often act as though they will "accept" office, if they are "drafted," so that they do not *appear* to be seeking personal advancement. While wishing to *appear* outwardly to be humble and godly, inside, they are invariably filled with a coveting—a lust—for power and prestige!

God never works through men like this or through a system that permits such self-seeking men to be selected. He understands that political elections corrupt people, and He cannot work with people who must then also corrupt *themselves* to succeed in a process where the votes of men are necessary to bring about personal elevation to some exalted higher office. Democracy, in either a civil or church setting, is a humanly devised practice that has never been of God!

Many New Testament verses plainly show that God works from the top down—always starting with ONE MAN, who in turn appoints others, who themselves sometimes appoint others, and so on. It is always done without voting—without balloting.

Those who vote *label* it “God’s will being done,” but the results of their elections are still the “will of the people.” The twelve apostles did not pick or “vote in” Christ—*He* picked *them*. A large conference of ministers did not pick the twelve apostles—the apostles picked the ministry under them (Titus 1:5-9; I Tim. 3:1-7, etc.).

The Church of God always has a leader who is appointed by God. That man seeks to follow God’s will in ALL matters. He never concerns himself with, “What will the *people* think?” He never asks, “Will the people *like* me if I do this, or *dislike* me if I do that?”

God blesses the efforts of His chosen leader. That leader then selects others, who in turn select others, and so forth, as this Church grows in number.

### An Incredible Dream

This final quote describes an incident, in which Mr. Armstrong had a dream that he felt was intended by God to reveal an important lesson to him and the Church. It occurred shortly after the period in the 1970s, referenced above, when liberal leaders sought to inject democracy into the Church. It was this statement that was the inspiration for my book *EXCEPT THE LORD BUILD THE HOUSE*:

**“I awakened considerably impressed with the dream. Was God revealing to me that TOO MANY within the Church membership are leaving GOD out of the picture?—in their own minds putting GOD out of the Church? ...that the people should say to GOD, ‘This is OUR Church, God, we want you to GET OUT of the Church and leave us alone. WE will run this Church OUR way!’ I awakened impressed that TOO MANY of our people are LEAVING GOD AND CHRIST OUT OF HIS CHURCH, and trying to make it OUR Church—the church of the PEOPLE, and NOT the CHURCH of GOD!**

**“[In the 70s] There were at least six or seven in TOP offices next to Christ’s apostle in authority—men trusted and honored. But they were going to make it ‘THE CHURCH OF PEOPLE,’ instead of the CHURCH OF GOD. They could not see God nor Christ in their mental picture of God’s Church. They were LIBERALS!**

**“Now churches or works OF THEIR OWN have been started. But they overlook one thing: ‘EXCEPT THE LORD BUILD THE HOUSE, THEY LABOUR IN VAIN THAT BUILD IT.’**

**“GOD is not building their houses!”**

**“Shall We All Leave THE CHURCH OF GOD and join ‘THE CHURCH OF PEOPLE?’”**

*Good News, Sept. 1980*

Christians participating in the governments of Satan’s world, through voting, military service or activism in various causes, is far more serious than most realize. It is disloyalty—a form of *SPIRITUAL FORNICATION* and *SPIRITUAL TREASON*—to the government of God and His complete authority over a Christian’s life.

At the center of the gospel of the kingdom of God is a message about God’s soon-coming, hierarchical government. The followers of Jesus Christ will practice this now. Any church that participates in the democratic politics of this world or elects its leaders and makes other decisions by voting *IS NOT A HOUSE BUILT BY GOD!*

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