

The Good News

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Come to the TABERNACLE

Many of you wish to see the Tabernacle being built at Gladewater, Texas. Here's the right way to do it.

by Roderick C. Meredith

HAVE you seen the Tabernacle that is being constructed for God's people near Gladewater, Texas? If not, then you're missing something *big!*

Most of you have heard and read about this inspiring project, and you are probably anxious to see it. *When* should you come? *How* can you afford to make the trip? *Why* should you come?

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

Purpose of Tabernacle

As Mr. Armstrong has explained, the chief purpose of this large Tabernacle is to enable God's children to convene at the annual Holy Days as He has commanded. This world's churches have their man-devised "camp meetings" at a *time* and in a *way* that seems right to man. But we have proved in past articles—and will continue to do so—that the annual sabbaths or feast days God gave His people were commanded *and intended* to be kept *forever* (Lev. 23:21, 31, 41). Christ set us a perfect example in keeping them, and the apostles *continued* keeping them and even commanding Gentile converts to keep these days of God (1 Cor. 5:8).

The world is busy observing the *pagan* holidays of Christmas and Easter. Its camp meetings are organized and directed as *man reasons*—not as *God*

commands. Then it sneers at the days God has *made holy*—at the festivals the Creator instituted to keep men in remembrance of His *true plan*. Carnal men scoffingly, sneeringly call these days "Jewish" and they ridicule them as the invention of a harsh, inconsiderate "God of the Old Testament." They seem to forget that Christ and the apostles kept these days in the *New Testament*. They ignore the fact that God calls these days "MY sabbaths"—*holy unto the Lord!*

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

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

God's Way

Many of you brethren have come out of this world, and then have found yourselves *unable* to have fellowship with any of God's people. It is often impossible to meet with other true brethren on the weekly Sabbath. You must simply

worship God alone "in Spirit and in truth." BUT God's *annual* Sabbaths or holy days provide an opportunity to travel even some distance and have that needed fellowship with other members of the true church of God.

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

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

And now GOD HAS DONE SO!

As Mr. Armstrong has reported in detail, we have now come into possession of properties in northeast Texas, near Gladewater, and are building there a Tabernacle in which to hold

services at these annual convocations. This property is in the very center of our heaviest listening area for the broadcast. It has much natural beauty, a warm climate similar to that in Palestine, and is *ideal in every way* for holding God's annual festivals!

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

A Duty and Privilege

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

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

These occasions are not man-made. They are *holy convocations*—COMMAND-ED ASSEMBLIES! (Lev. 23:7, 21, 35) God does not say "if" you want to come. He *orders* you to attend. Do you think your Creator has the authority to order you to do something? Apparently some of you brethren have not fully realized the seriousness of this command. May God help you to be *zealous* in obeying Him!

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

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

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

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

How to Afford It

God has not only provided, but also

commanded a way to make it financially possible for everyone to keep His Holy Days!

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

What does God command?

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

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

That is *God's way*—God's command!

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

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

Not the First Tithe

Please do not confuse this second tithe, especially for these occasions, with the first tithe which God has commanded us to render to His true ministers for proclaiming to the whole world the Gospel. *Unlike* the second tithe, the *first* tenth or tithe of our income belongs to God. He created all things and is only *permitting* man to use this material world anyway. "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein" (Ps. 24:1).

In Numbers 18:21 we read that God gave a tenth or "tithe" of Israel's income to the Levites for an inheritance. This tithe does not belong to us, it is the

inheritance of God's ministry. Today the priesthood has been *changed* (Hebrews 7:12)—the ministry of CHRIST superseding the Levitical priesthood—so we now pay our tithes to God's representatives, Christ's true ministers, for the gospel work (I Cor. 9:14).

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Use Wisdom

Let's use the minds God has endowed us with to carry out these commands in a reasonable manner. Deut. 14:22 states that you shall tithe the increase of your seed. Then it is certainly permissible for you farmers to bring some of your produce or canned goods to the feasts instead of money.

Sad as it sometimes is, with some families, the second tithe *just hasn't been* (Please continue on page 6)

GOVERNMENT in Our Church

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

by Herman L. Hoeb

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

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

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

What Kind of Government?

We, who have separated from the world, have come to realize that society is organized in hundreds of forms of human government—man ruling man. Even the churches are organized with different types of *human* government—the congregational, the presbyterian, or the episcopal forms. Some are controlled by boards of men, others are run by one-man dictatorships.

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

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

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

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

The gospel of the kingdom is the good news of God's government. The church is composed of the *advance agents*, the emissaries, of that government. To inherit and rule in that kingdom we must come under the authority of the rule of God now, in this lifetime.

Source of Common Error

Especially in the United States, it has become that accepted teaching that authority was established to be flaunted and disobeyed. From childhood we were allowed to disobey our parents. We grew up seeing our friends and neighbors laugh and joke about anyone bearing authority—from the president of the United States to the teachers in grade schools.

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

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

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

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

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

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

tinues to say—what most people have overlooked!

Right Principle of Government

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

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

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

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

WHY Church Government?

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

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

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

God's rule in our church is to direct the work of the gospel, to keep you

**The
Good News**

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THE CHURCH OF GOD
*ministering to its members
scattered abroad, and
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Herbert W. Armstrong
Publisher and Editor

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from being "carried about with every wind of doctrine" through the craftiness of cunning men who are already trying to enter in among you to deceive you (Eph. 4:12-14).

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

New Testament Instruction

Our knowledge of church government must come from the New Testament; for after the historic book of Acts closes there is a gap of more than fifty years after which we find changed doctrines, changed customs and a changed form of government—human rule instead of divine—in the churches of this world.

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

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

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

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

Again, we observe that Paul, under inspiration, mentions bishops (elders) and deacons as church officers in 1 Timothy 3:1-13 and Titus 1:5-9. Before we examine these offices and gifts in detail, let us also notice the *example* of the

New Testament not only in Acts, but also in Paul's epistles.

New Testament Example

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

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

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

Paul, himself, said that Jesus entrusted Peter with the direction of the gospel to Israel as Jesus has entrusted Paul with the direction of the gospel to the Gentiles (Galatians 2:7 and 8). But in another place we find that the apostles *sent* Peter and John to Samaria, although Peter may have suggested this (Acts 8:14). His gifts carried the greatest weight in the church and would have been especially helpful to the newly converted Samaritans. Among the twelve there must have been such a spirit of peace and love that they had perfect harmony without jealousy in equality of rank and office. They did not quarrel

among themselves by trying to build on one another's foundation as some would do today (Rom. 15:20). They did not compete with one another or take disciples from another.

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

How God Operated Through Paul

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

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

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

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

Those who evangelized had authority over local churches, whereas the prophets had no government office or authority. Even in the Old Testament, where both men and women were used as prophets, none of the prophets had government authority unless they were *also* judges. In the New Testament, the only prophets with government authority were *also* apostles, evangelists, or elders (Acts 15:32; I Tim. 4:14).

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RADIO LOG

"The WORLD TOMORROW"

Herbert W. Armstrong analyzes today's news, with the prophecies of The WORLD TOMORROW!

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WHO Should Perform the *Marriage Ceremony?*

*Does it make any difference who performs the marriage ceremony?
Is it right that our young people should go to a justice of the peace
or a minister of any denomination? Here is what young people
NEED to know!*

by Herman L. Hoeb

A WEDDING is undoubtedly the most delightful event young people experience. It is the moment for which they have waited, perhaps months, or maybe years. You parents experienced the same joys when you were married, didn't you?

Mothers, especially, can't keep from the natural desire to live over again their marriages in their daughters. Just ask any husband!

Yet with all the joys, anticipations and hopes—as God intended marriage to be—there is also the SERIOUS side of marriage. Responsibility comes with it—financial, emotional, parental and spiritual problems present themselves. Marriage is indeed the most *serious* physical union in which human beings can be united. But how few understand what is involved *before* they are married!

World in Confusion

As our church is growing constantly each year, we are confronted with young people who inevitably do as God intended—they want to marry. It thus is becoming one of our great responsibilities to teach and train and prepare our young people who are anticipating marriage. How many of you wish *now* that you had understood what marriage and life were all about when you were young!

The very first principle which all children, and especially young couples planning to marry, should realize is that GOD ORDAINED MARRIAGE. He is the Author of this physical union. It is to Him that we should ultimately look for advice and counsel. He is the One who has explained WHY marriage has been ordained, WHAT its duties are. It is to God that we must go if we are to understand the truth about marriage ceremonies and WHO should perform them.

Let's understand what the Bible *reveals* about this most important union.

The world is in confusion. Each State has its own marriage laws. Every de-

nomination has its opinion about what constitutes marriage. But almost no one seems to *understand* the significance of the Biblical revelation that God is the Author of marriage. Human beings go to human courts of law, they go to representatives of *this world*—justices of the peace and worldly ministers—to have the marriage ceremony performed. Most everyone believes that some official of this world "binds" husband and wife.

Isn't that exactly how most of you were married? Of course, *God*, recognizing your hearts, *did bind you*. You were married, but it was God and not man, by the authority of a sovereign State, who bound you till death.

But is this the *way* God intended marriage to be solemnized? Now that you know the TRUTH, would you have the marriage ceremony performed in that manner—contrary to God's will?

God has overlooked our past mistakes, but let us teach our children the right way so they won't make the same mistakes.

Is a Ceremony Wrong?

Some people who carelessly read the Bible have arrived at the mistaken notion that all ceremony is wrong.

Jesus attended a wedding at which he performed his first miracle—turning water into *wine*. The church is to be married to Christ at a "marriage supper,"—a ceremony. It is a matter of the *kind* of ceremony that is important. *God approves and sanctions ceremony*, but not the ritualistic practices that attend worldly social ceremonies which have no other purpose than exciting pride and vanity.

The TRUE Marriage Ceremony

Not every detail in the marriage ceremony is revealed, but we *can* understand the principles. God was present at the first marriage—He brought Eve to Adam and gave her to be his wife. There was a time of festive rejoicing

at the marriage of Jacob (Gen. 29:22).

A simple ceremony is absolutely necessary to avoid the evils of fornication, adultery, bigamy and kindred practices that would result without a ceremony.

Marriage is a union, involving vows, which is BOUND BY GOD *through prayer* (Matt. 19:6). It is a *setting apart* of two young people to become husband and wife. Throughout the Bible, in ceremony, there is the constant example of setting apart for special purpose by PRAYER TO GOD and LAYING ON OF HANDS (Num. 27:18-23; Acts 6:6; 8:18).

How plain it is, then, that the marriage ceremony ought to be performed by one who stands as *God's representative*, since it is God who binds.

The ceremony ought to be performed by one whom God hears—one of God's ministers whose prayers God will answer. How foolish to go to some one whom God doesn't hear to have the ceremony performed, and then go to God's minister to ask him for God's blessing.

The true ceremony should be performed by laying on of the minister's hands on the clasped hands of the couple and, through prayer to God, asking God to bind the couple according to His Word (Matt. 19:6). Of course, all legal requirements of the State should be attended to also.

Young People Need Counsel

Before marriage, more than any other time, young people need advice. Most of you who are parents have come to realize this by hard experience. You probably didn't have the kind of counsel you really needed. God did not intend that young people should go to ministers who do not even know the law of God for advice on problems which involve some of the most important spiritual and physical laws which God ordained.

But how are young people—perhaps
(Please continue on page 8)

Question Box

Your questions answered in these columns! Your opportunity to have discussed those problems pertaining directly to members of God's church.

What Should You Do with Your Copies of The PLAIN TRUTH and The GOOD NEWS?

You are very fortunate, indeed, if you have preserved all your copies of the PLAIN TRUTH and the GOOD NEWS. Many of you have not been able to do so, either because friends to whom you have loaned copies never returned them, or because you have not fully realized WHY you need to retain them.

Beginning with the July numbers, a new policy has been adopted, which Mr. Armstrong explained in the last issue of the GOOD NEWS. The GOOD NEWS becomes the national magazine of our church—the medium in print through which we can FEED THE FLOCK.

The GOOD NEWS contains articles of special importance which you need to study and restudy constantly. Without back copies to which you can refer, you will not "be ready ALWAYS to give an answer to every man who asks you a reason" for the true faith that God has revealed to His church. By experience we know that unless you do restudy the articles you will gradually forget what you have read! The GOOD NEWS is also

of immense help in teaching your children. It will encourage them to study the Bible. That is WHY you need to retain every copy.

The PLAIN TRUTH is now the evangelistic magazine to the world. It is edited especially for the public, but you need to study its striking articles on prophecy, general Christian living and doctrine.

Although you must NOT give or loan copies of The GOOD NEWS, because people may become offended by the "strong meat," you should feel free to give or loan copies of The PLAIN TRUTH to sincerely interested friends. If your copy is not returned to you, be sure to write us for another copy so you will have a complete file of all issues of The PLAIN TRUTH.

The most satisfactory method of preserving the magazines is to buy a binder in which you can insert each new issue. You can punch two or three holes in the margin of each copy, according to the style binder you purchase. When you want to study any particular number, you can easily remove it. So be sure, from now on, to preserve every copy of both magazines!

Come to Tabernacle

(Continued from page 2)

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

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

Tithe for the Poor

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

ing another, altogether different tithe.

Now don't be shocked! You may not have known it before, but God wants us to save one more tithe every third year to help the poor and needy! This is God's way of providing money for charitable purposes.

In both Deut. 14:28-29 and Deut. 26:12-15 we find this tithe commanded. It used to be set aside in every walled city, "within thy gates" (Deut. 26:12). But now many poor are so far away that we simply send it wherever needed. This third tithe is to be saved only every third year.

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

Remember that this tithe is for the poor and needy. If you are really in financial straits God does not expect you to save this tithe! This is a matter between you and God alone, and you

should be honest about it before Him.

This tithe is for the poor, not from the poor!

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

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

Do you think God has commanded you to do something which He knows you will be unable to perform? NO! Those of us who have saved these three tithes know by EXPERIENCE that God is able to bless us sufficiently that we abound to every good work (II Corinthians 9:6-8). He is doing it this moment for many of the brethren and he will do it for you. You just do YOUR part, and God will be faithful to do HIS!

Historical Example

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

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

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

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

from anyone who sincerely desires to know the truth.

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

The Great Blessings

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

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

Do you realize what this means?

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

So by all means *come to the Tabernacle!*

When? At the time *God* has set—at His three great spiritual feasts each year.

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

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

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

God has made your presence possible if you do *your* part! Are you willing?

Government in Our Church

(Continued from page 4)

The evangelists, under the direction of Paul the apostle, preached—*evangelist* means an announcer of good news—made converts, established local churches and appointed elders and deacons (Titus 1:5), and visited estab-

lished churches (Phil. 2:19-20) *with authority over local officers*. The apostle Paul commanded Timothy to reprove and rebuke publicly any elder that sinned so that the congregation would fear to do wrong (I Tim. 5:19-20). The evangelists ministered to the brethren, corrected them and encouraged them whenever and wherever it was impossible for the apostle Paul.

Government in Local Congregations

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

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

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

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

Duties of Elders

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

But over each local church congregation there is also a local pastor directly under the apostles and evangelists. He is the presiding elder or bishop over other elders in a local congregation. Notice that in the gathering at Jerusalem, recorded in Acts 15, there were *many elders* in Jerusalem, together with the apostles. Yet it was James—not the apostle James, but the brother of Jesus—who, in the capacity of *pastor* in authority over the other elders, voiced his decision (Acts 15:14).

All elders must be apt to teach (I Tim. 3:2), hence they are called teachers in I Cor. 12:28 and Eph. 4:11. Elders who rule well are to be highly respected *for their works'* sake, espe-

cially those who labor in preaching and teaching (I Tim. 5:17).

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

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

Here, then, is the spiritual government of God in the early church plainly stated: The Father manifested His will to Jesus, the living Head of our church, Who in turn manifested His will to the apostles. They in turn instructed the evangelists in carrying out the gospel. The evangelists, together with the apostles, taught the elders who presided over the local congregations. In each congregation was a presiding pastor, usually with other elders, who taught the members. There was no membership politics, nor voting on church offices or doctrines. The elders *ruled* the local church, but *were not ruled* by the congregation or lay boards.

Office of Deacon

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

Philip, originally *ordained* as one of seven deacons to serve at tables (Acts 6:6), was so filled with the Holy Spirit that he later became an evangelist (Acts 21:8). Those who helped in material duties were sometimes called "ministers" in old English usage. The apostles Barnabas and Paul had Luke and John Mark to minister to them (Acts 13:5). Today, however, the term "minister" is used to designate a pastor.

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

sixty and without other relatives who could support them (I Tim. 5:9-10).

We read in Acts 9:36-43 that Dorcas, an elderly woman, had died. Peter came to raise her from the dead, but before doing so, "all the widows stood by him weeping, and showing the coats and garments which Dorcas made"—*material service*.

Offices Are Gifts of Holy Spirit

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

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

Government in Our Church Today

Down through the ages Jesus has chosen directly those who serve in the capacity of apostles—His direct representatives bearing His authority. The world does not use the title apostle for the highest office in the church under Christ. Instead, it has invented other lofty titles—primate, archbishop, pope, all offices of men's devising. Some churches call every pastor a minister no matter what the rank.

But in our church, the church of God, in which the government of God exists today, Jesus has chosen Mr. Armstrong as His direct representative, as an ambassador of the Kingdom of God to the

nations of this world, as a man through whom He can work in preaching and publishing the true gospel to the whole world. Mr. Armstrong's office carries with it divine authority, backed up by the power of God. Jesus has sent him to speak in His name and by His authority, and has given testimony to it by the fruits which only God can produce.

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

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

In our local congregations today, there are elders pastoring the local flocks, and deacons, who serve the congregations. In every way it is the government of God. *Those who are the greatest in authority serve the most.* It is not a rule by the will of man, but by the will of God. The critics who think God's government is man's government DO NOT KNOW THE POWER OF GOD. God's ministers know only too well that God will DESTROY those who seek to devour the church by leading away disciples after them.

How plain it is that God rules our church. The congregations are ruled by the elders, who are ruled by the evangelists, and they are ruled by the apostle

who is ruled by Christ who is ruled by God! All offices are appointive, by a superior office. It is government from God down to each individual member in the church.

Marriage Ceremony

(Continued from page 5)

your children—going to receive the proper advice before marrying if they live great distances from God's ministers? How can they have the marriage performed if they can't afford to travel far? Is it fair?

At Annual Festivals

God is always fair. Since He intends his ministers to perform marriages for those who have come to understand the truth, He has provided the way and at no extra cost! God loves our young people, and so He has made the way possible.

We who have come to know the truth understand that it is a command to attend the annual festivals. With the Tabernacle being built in Texas at the most central point, many hundreds of you will be able to attend three times a year. Since you are also commanded to save a second tithe anyway in order to attend, it wouldn't be any extra expense to have the marriages of young people occur at the annual festivals!

God intended his annual occasions to be times of great joy apart from the world. He wants young people to be free from unnecessary problems as they enter marriage (Deut 24:5). What time could be more appropriate than these holy occasions? It is the perfect solution to encouraging young people in the church not to have such fellowship with the world as would lead to marriage outside of the faith.

Yes, what a joy it is to understand the TRUTH!

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