

The Good News

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What is Your DESTINY?

Here is a sobering analysis of the revealed future of those whom God is now calling.

by Roderick C. Meredith

WHAT will you be doing *one hundred years* from now? Have you realized that you are *now* in the process of determining your eternal destiny?

I know that many of you who have been baptized this past summer—and many of our *older brethren* as well—are at this moment standing on *very dangerous ground!*

You have all taken the first step. You have repented of your past sins, were baptized, and have been blessed with the gift of God's Holy Spirit. But what of the *prophesied* future for you—and for all who have come to accept God's truth?

Trials Ahead

The apostle Peter warned Christians of his day, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the *fiery trial* which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings" (I Pet. 4:12-13). God's people are to be tried and tested by *persecution*, by *tribulation*, and by *Satan* himself.

Peter went on to show that these trials are part of *our judgment*. "For the time is come that *judgment* must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin in us, what shall be the end of them that obey not the gospel of God?" (Verse 17). We who have received of God's Spirit are in the Church of God—the *house of God*. We are *now* being judged!

Is the trial easy? Peter says, "And if the righteous *scarcely* be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" (Verse 18). The natural tendency after being converted is to *bog down* and *lose* your original *zeal*. Do you think you can afford to "rest on your oars" for a while? Peter says that even the righteous will *scarcely* be saved! God tries us to keep us *alive* and *growing* spiritually.

The church at Thessalonica was told by Paul (II Thes. 1:4-5) that the persecutions and tribulations they endured were a token of *God's judgment*.

In Hebrews 12:6-10, we find that God *chastens* every son He loves so that we might profit thereby and eventually be partakers of God's own holiness. At conversion, we have only *started* on the road to becoming a *born* son of God. Let us *not* be "puffed up" with the precious knowledge that God is revealing to our church—His church—in these last days. We are only unborn "babes" of God, not yet even born of the Spirit as members of God's family.

Thus, we *need chastening* and many a trial to keep us humble and zealously *GROWING* as we should. We poor humans are inclined to overlook and justify our sins and faults. Too often we think that we have "arrived" while our lives still contain *sin*. We forget that our goal is *perfection*—to be *like God!*

In I Corinthians 11:20-30, Paul is rebuking the Corinthians for taking the Passover in a careless and licentious manner. Because of this, many of them

were weak and sickly—and many had died! The apostle continued, "For if *we would judge ourselves*, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world" (Verses 31-32). Because we do not "judge" ourselves as we should and *purge sin out of our lives*, God *chastens* us to wake us up and keep us *growing* spiritually.

How you respond to God's *instruction*—to God's *chastening*—will determine *your future*. Many of you reading this may become spiritually *lukewarm* and finally *dead* unless you heed this warning! It is up to *you!*

What Will Happen

The condition any of God's people could fall into is revealed in Matthew 25. Jesus here refers to Christians as "virgins"—those who have kept themselves pure from the spiritual fornication of fellowship with false churches. They *all* repented of the wrong ways of this world and *came out* of this world to serve God. They *all* went forth to meet the bridegroom—expecting to receive salvation.

But some of them lost the "oil" of God's Spirit. They thought that just knowing the truth, coming out of the world, and fellowshiping with God's church was *enough*. They had not *GROWN spiritually* as had the other virgins. Perhaps they thought that they would just naturally get into God's kingdom because they were in the fellowship and love of the brethren who *were* spir-

itually alive.

Just knowing the truth and having fellowship with God's Church is NOT ENOUGH!

You are either receiving more of God's Spirit each day through fervent prayer, diligent Bible study, and submitting your will *completely* to God that He may direct your every thought and action, or you are stagnating and spiritually DYING! *There is no middle ground.* The door to the kingdom was shut in the face of those who *thought* they were "saved," but had not yielded themselves to *grow* into more truth and to *practice* the truth more perfectly each day of their lives.

Don't let this happen to you!

Do Your Part

The fearful temptation to "do nothing" is described in Mat. 25:14-30. Jesus portrayed the two faithful servants who had put their talents and resources to *work* in His service, and the servant who had not.

Notice that the two servants who had received the most talents were more eager to use them. *It is even so in God's Church.*

Many of YOU feel that because you have no great talents or resources, you can *let down* and not do your part with the same *zeal* as others. You are *mistaken!* This parable shows that you ought to be using your talents just as much as other true Christians. This parable is a warning to *beware* of such a wrong attitude!

Each one has his part to do in God's work. Perhaps your part is simply to *pray* for God's work and His ministers, to *study* that you may answer the questions of others, to *pay* God's tithe and cheerfully *give* offerings to His work, and to set a *shining example* of love and service to those about you. But are you doing these things with all your strength?

God's word shows that many of you will become *lukewarm* and will *fail* to carry out *your part* in God's work. How can you prevent this?

Your destiny will be determined in a great measure by how well you practice certain virtues in your daily life. The zealous performance or careless omission of these duties is largely a matter of HABIT.

This is a *key* that can *build* or *wreck* your life!

You should get in the *habit* of kneeling down two or three times a day and *earnestly praying* to God—getting to know Him as your Father. This should be the most important *habit* of your life. Don't let circumstances break this habit!

Studying your Bible for a few hours

Question Box

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

Is Michael, who was called "your prince" in Daniel 10:21, the person who later became Christ?

There is a church which contends that Michael, who was called "your prince," was Christ. This assumption is taken from the statement that Christ is called "Messiah the Prince" in Daniel 9:25. Is this doctrine true?

Christ certainly was, and *is*, a Prince. But this does not make Him a prince who was named "Michael."

The angelic being who gave Daniel the vision recorded in chapter 10, told Daniel, ". . . the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, ONE OF THE chief princes, came to help me . . ." (verse 13). Notice that there was a *prince of Persia*. That prince is another spirit being of equal rank to Michael.

Notice, also, in this verse that Michael is called "ONE OF the chief princes." This clearly indicates that among the spirit beings there are *more than one "chief prince"*—more than one of first rank! The combined power of prince Michael and the prince who delivered the vision to Daniel (Gabriel) was enough that they were able to subdue the prince of Persia, an evil, rebellious spirit prince.

But Christ is far superior to any of these created spirit princes. There are not many other princes of equal rank to Christ. But there are others of Michael's rank! Christ is not Michael. Michael is "your prince"—the spirit set to serve Israel. Michael and the other princes over the nations are all subject to Christ who is *Supreme Ruler!*

The chief princes among God's created spirit beings have great power and authority over the nations. But what is the limit of their authority? How far does their authority and power extend? In Jude 8 and 9 we read, "these filthy dreamers [evil men] . . . despite

each week is next in importance. Unusual circumstances may necessarily interfere with daily Bible study at times, but you *can* arrange to study the Bible for at least four or five hours each week. And this means the Bible *itself*—not literature about the Bible. Diligently and prayerfully studying God's word is a habit that will give you the *faith* and *understanding* you long for. Make it *your habit!*

An important habit which most of

dominion [authority], and speak evil of dignities [those who are given authority]. Yet Michael the archangel [a chief prince], when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, "The Lord [Christ—who is Michael's Superior] rebuke thee."

Notice this scripture! Evil men have no respect for those in authority, but *Michael*, who is an *archangel*, showed respect to the office of authority of Satan the Devil. By this scripture we can see very clearly that *Michael does not have greater rank than Satan.*

But Christ does have greater rank. If Michael did have greater rank, he would have given the Devil a command—he could have done the rebuking himself, instead of saying, "The Lord rebuke thee."

Turn to Matthew 4:10. Here we find Christ said to Satan: "Get thee hence, Satan. . . ." Christ gave Satan a *sharp command*. Christ was of greater rank and authority. Christ was in *authority over Satan* because *He created Satan*. He was the one through whom the Father created all things (Col. 1: 15-16 and John 1:3); Satan was but a created being (Ezek. 28: 14-15).

Christ, Satan's Creator, has been in authority over Satan since he was created. But Michael was not in authority over him and could not give him a command: he could only pass on a rebuke—a command—from the Lord, Christ (Jude 9).

It is absolutely proven that Michael could not have been Christ! Michael is, instead, an angelic being who is put in authority over other lesser angelic beings in God's government. He was one of the leaders among God's faithful angels. But he dared not usurp authority and *command* Satan, who was an unfaithful, fallen cherub.

you have not realized is that of *fasting*. When you are faced with a special problem, when you are in a temptation or if you feel you are growing lukewarm, one of the surest remedies is to *fast* and *pray*. This subject will be discussed at length in future articles. But zealous Christians *should fast* at least one or two days during each month. *This habit is vital!*

Many brethren know it is God's
(Please continue on page 4)

Beware of False Brethren!

You could be deceived by false brethren. Here is how you can recognize them.

by L. Leroy Neff

THERE is an amazing prophecy concerning our Church which you probably have never understood. This prophecy is little known, yet you probably have read it!

This startling prophecy concerning God's Church today was given by the prophet Daniel. Many have read this important prophecy, but applied it to some other people, or thought that it concerned only ancient history. But this prophecy is a living and dynamic warning for you and me. We need to understand prophecy here and now.

A Prophecy for Today

Daniel prophesied: "The people that do *know* their God shall be strong, and do exploits" (Dan. 11:32). Such a statement could refer only to God's people. Now notice what follows: "And they *that understand* among the people shall instruct many: yet they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil, many days" (verse 33). Here is a very brief summary of how God's Church has been persecuted down through the centuries.

Some commentators has incorrectly applied this to the Jews. But it could not refer to the Jewish people of our day! The Jews do not *know* their God, nor do they *understand*, nor do they *instruct* many in the ways of God.

This prophecy concerns *God's Church*. Continuing "Now when they [God's people] shall fall, they shall be holpen [helped] with a little help: BUT MANY SHALL CLEAVE TO THEM WITH FLATTERIES" (verse 34). Here is the point that most people have missed. Many individuals who assemble with us on God's Sabbath, or in God's Feasts, are prophesied to cleave to us with flatteries!

Other translations make this even clearer. The Moffatt Translation states: "Many shall join them under *false pretense*." Yes, some do *join themselves* to God's Church, with false pretenses, claiming to be true brethren, claiming to obey God, claiming to have God's Holy Spirit, and yet they are not a part of the body of Christ. God has not *joined* them to His Church!

In *The Complete Bible, an American Translation* by Gordon-Goodspeed we read: "Many shall attach themselves in *hypocrisy*." These people who attach themselves to God's Church assemble under false pretense. They are inwardly

hypocritical, and flatter or deceive others.

If you have the idea that all who come to God's Church are truly converted Christians, this scripture ought to dispel this delusion! There are some among us who are not converted. They are not a real spiritually *living* part of the body of Christ. They are not letting Christ do His work in them. They have not truly and completely surrendered their lives to Christ in full repentance.

Notice that this prophecy continues right up to the time of the end (verse 35), to the return of Jesus Christ. Here is a prophecy which concerns us today!

Ancient Israel a Type of the Church

Ancient Israel also had many people who were not a fleshly part of the physical congregation (Church) in the wilderness. This *mixed multitude* is mentioned in Exodus 12:38. "And a mixed multitude went up also with them; and flocks, and herds, even very much cattle." That is not the end of the story. Notice Numbers 11:4: "And the mixed multitude that was among them *fell a lusting*: and the children of Israel also wept again, and said, 'Who shall give us flesh to eat?'" The mixed multitude were the first to start lusting. Lusting—or coveting—is sin. The "mixed multitude" sinned and the children of Israel followed right after them.

This "mixed multitude" was instrumental in causing Israel to sin. It became so bad in the time of Nehemiah, that he had to completely separate the "mixed multitude" from the children of Israel.

In like manner, we must also beware of "false brethren" who are prophesied to come among us. In Paul's time false brethren came into the Church unawares. Paul states in Galatians 2:4 that "false brethren" came to spy out the spiritual liberty a true Christian has in Christ Jesus. They subtly seek to bring weaker brethren back into bondage of sin. They are also among us today, seeking to mislead weak brethren.

In New Testament times just *one man* caused a *whole* congregation to sin. Part of this account is recorded in I Corinthians 5. Because of this man's sin, the whole Church became puffed up (verse 2). They became guilty with him in his evil deeds. Because of such a serious sin, Paul rebuked them sharply.

Because of his sin this man had to be put out of the Church for a while. The second letter of Corinthians from Paul shows that he was accepted back into the Church because he truly repented of his sin.

Paul instructed the Church previously that the brethren should not company (associate) with those in the Church who were openly violating God's laws (verses 9 and 11). A Christian should not associate, or even eat with such a person!

Also False Teachers

Besides false brethren, false ministers and teachers have come among God's people on many occasions. Peter mentions that there were false prophets in ancient time among the children of Israel, just as there would be false teachers who would try to set themselves up as teachers among God's people today (II Peter 2). Such men *privately*, secretly bring in heresies, denying Jesus Christ by their *works* (Titus 1:16) as well as their tongues! Notice that these men bring such teachings in "privately" (verse 1) and not openly. Those who upset some in God's Church today usually do it *privately*, with stealth, in private homes and secretly, lest God's ministers find out and put a sudden stop to it. Such men want to seduce and deceive you brethren of God's Church! These wicked men with feigned words, smooth speech, false pretenses, and hypocrisy make themselves appear as if they were *very religious and holy*. They are like the Pharisees of Christ's time who *appeared* holy to some people but were like "whitewashed graves"—"whitened sepulchers"—full of spiritual "dead men's bones." Some of you brethren look ON THE OUTSIDE, and are sometimes deceived!

If a false brother personally came to you, agreeing in principle with what you say, *apparently agreeing* with God's ministers, would you then be fooled when he *gradually begins to twist the scriptures, to bring private accusations against the brethren* and certain ministers, or Mr. Armstrong, or to bring some "new doctrine"?

There are some people who have come among God's people today who are guilty of these very things! They appear to be righteous. They have a form of godliness, but they actually
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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Marvelous Change

"Dear Mr. Armstrong:

"I feel I must write to you about my husband. He had always been an unbeliever, or at least had given everyone the impression that he was, including his family. He was also very aggressive and domineering. Something of a 'bully,' and used profanity constantly. About 5 years ago he began listening to your programs on the air and sent for several booklets, including *The PLAIN TRUTH*, which we all read very carefully and enjoyed very much. He began to change his ways of thinking and finally decided he wanted to see you personally. In October he went to Gladewater, Texas, to attend the Feast of Tabernacles. He was converted and baptized while there and returned a completely changed person. No more profanity and he was more gentle of nature and mild mannered. I marveled at how a person could change in such a short time."

Woman, Falls City, Nebraska.

Obedience Pays

"Dear Mr. Armstrong:

"For many years I have not celebrated Christmas, and I don't even send cards. So thankful I understand these things. In March I'll be 82! I have remarkable health, had only one cold in seven

years! I attribute my good health to having obeyed the health laws of the Bible for more than fifty years and of course the many blessings of the Lord."
Woman, Hammond, Indiana.

Blessed by Tithing

"I just want to mention the wonderful blessings God has allowed me to enjoy since I started paying His tithe. At this very moment I am almost out of debt, in fact I am at the point where I could pay off all I owe anytime I wish. What a wonderful feeling that is, and I owe it all to God and His law of tithing."

Man from Chicago, Illinois.

Eyes Healed

"Dear Mr. Armstrong:

"The third day after we wrote for a healing cloth for our little daughter's cross eyes you could see them get their right look of strength back and after receiving the cloth and placing it on her they have straightened up so wonderfully we believe they will be completely straight for keeps now."

Couple from Hermiston, Oregon.

"Congratulations"

"Dear Mr. Armstrong:

"May I offer my congratulations on the opening of your office in Australia. I trust that your mission may have God's richest blessing here in Australia, in fact right throughout the world. I am a grateful recipient of *The PLAIN TRUTH* and your booklets."

Man, Kalamunda, Western Australia.

Australia Again!

"Dear Mr. Armstrong:

"I thank you for your letter and am so glad with you and your co-workers over the much expanding work of Jesus Christ in Australia. My last letter to you in the USA asked for advice on the possibility of paying my tithes here in Australia and now everything is made so simple. Especially am I happy that there will be now no more long delays in receiving answers to questions and *The PLAIN TRUTH* regularly. Daily I pray for you, your family and your co-workers' health and strength and protection and that God may open enough hearts so that you may receive sufficient funds for your work."

Man, Kuranda, Queensland.

Church History Surprising

"I have just finished my second reading of 'A True History of the True Church,' and needless to say how wonderful and how much I appreciate it. . . I am studying the Bible Course. It is exciting and enlightening."

Woman from Wheeling, W. Va.

Your Destiny

(Continued from page 2)

command that we faithfully render tithes and offerings for His work, but they have not acquired the *habit* of doing this as they should. God loves a *cheerful* giver (II Cor. 9:7). If you are not in the *habit*, it may be hard for you to give cheerfully to the *most important work on earth*. Study the twelfth chapter of Luke. Here Christ is clearly and forcefully showing that your life is *not* made rich by the things you possess. Rather, your true wealth is what is laid up in heaven because your *pocketbook* as well as your heart has been converted to God's service.

Was Christ mercenary? *Decidedly not!* But He knew that if you weren't trying hard to put more of your material wealth into God's work, your *interest* and *zeal* would soon *die out*. "For where your *treasure* is, there will your *heart* be also" (Luke 12:34). I stress this point because I well know that most of you have not been trying to make more money for the *purpose* of helping God's work. Some of our older brethren who fully understand the significance of this work and the times we are in work *extra hours* in order that they may give *more* toward carrying out the true gospel.

How important is God's work to you? This *habit* which shows God that *you really mean it!*

A Constant Practice

The very *basis* of real Christianity is that you pattern your life after Jesus Christ. He is our *perfect* example. We need to *study* God's word continually to know how to follow Christ's example.

A vital *habit* that can aid you marvelously in achieving this is the following: Whenever you are about to do *anything* significant, stop and ask yourself, "How would Jesus handle this situation?" Then ask *God* to guide you in *acting* as Christ would. This can alter the course of your life!

You *must* have studied God's word and Jesus' example for this to help as it should. But even trying this *as you learn* will bring you closer to God *every single day*.

This habit may be exercised before you walk in a room, before a party, before work, at the start of each new day. Just ask God, "How would Jesus act now?" Then, with God's help—*ACT that way!*

If you sow this habit, you should reap *eternal life!*

Your destiny is in your *own* hands. Remember that it is largely a *matter of habit*.

Must God's Ministers Be Ordained *by the Hand of Man?*

*How can you know who are the true called ministers of God?
Does God ordain them privately and direct—is it contrary to
God's order to ordain by the hand of man?*

by Herbert W. Armstrong

IT'S VITAL that you know *how* God confers the authority of office in His Church.

Jesus conferred upon His called ministers of His Church the keys of the Kingdom of God. He vested them with *authority* to guide His Church, and carry on His work, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

But how can you know who carries this authority? HOW are those upon whom it is conferred ordained to office? HOW can you recognize the one and only true Church of God—the very Church Jesus said He would build—HIS BODY, thru whom the Spirit of God today carries on *the work of God*?

Was the Apostle Paul Ordained by Man?

How was the Apostle Paul ordained to his office of authority? Did God ordain him privately—secretly—without any human witnesses to the fact, or was he ordained *by the hand of man*?

Is God's order, in His Church, to ordain men independently of each other, secretly, directly? And does God carry on His work thru different competing men, *independently*? Or is God's Church organized, working together *in harmony and teamwork*, with one mind, actuated by ONE SPIRIT?

It is of vital importance that these questions be answered—ACCORDING TO GOD'S OWN WORD!

First, then, how was the Apostle Paul ordained?

Let's trace the case-history of this Apostle from his conversion to the time he became an Apostle with full authority. You should be familiar with this chain of experiences.

Paul's Case History

As you know, this man's name was Saul, until God changed his name to Paul. Saul is first mentioned in Acts 7:58, in connection with the martyrdom of Stephen. In Acts 8:1 it is mentioned that Saul was approving the stoning of Stephen. He was a young man at that time (Acts 7:58).

Acts 8:3, Saul, filled with misguided zeal, participated violently in the perse-

cution of the Church, making havoc of it, literally dragging men and women off to prison.

Acts 9:1-2, Saul, passionately breathing threats of murder against disciples of Christ, obtained credentials from the high priest to the synagogue at Damascus, authorizing him to arrest and bring to Jerusalem any men or women disciples found at Damascus. As he approached Damascus, God struck him down blind with a blinding light, and there Jesus spoke to Saul and revealed himself to him, and commanded Saul to rise and go on into the city, where he would be told what to do (verses 3-6). He was blind for three days (verse 9).

Now in the conversion of Saul, did God work thru human agency, or did He do it all secretly, privately? God now used a disciple whom Saul would have murdered, or thrown into prison—Ananias—to whom Jesus spoke in a vision, instructing him to go to Saul. This Ananias was the HUMAN instrument thru whom Christ worked in converting Saul.

"And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him (Saul) said, 'Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Spirit' (Acts 9:17). "And now," said Ananias (Acts 22:16), "why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."

Ananias laid his hands on Saul for the receiving of the Holy Spirit—his actual conversion and begetting as a son of God—as well as for the restoring of his sight.

Even Conversion by Man's Hand

Thus Saul's *conversion* was accomplished BY THE HAND OF MAN, used as God's instrumentality. This was not his ordination as an apostle—it was his setting apart as a begotten son of God. But God works thru HIS chosen human hands!

For several days (Acts 9:19-20), Saul was with the disciples at Damascus. Immediately, in the synagogues, he pro-

claimed that Jesus was the promised Messiah—the Son of God. He did *not* at this time proclaim the GOSPEL of the Kingdom of God, for that had not yet been revealed to him. He merely knew, at this juncture, from his heavenly vision, that Jesus was the Christ.

Next, in verse 23, "after that many days were fulfilled, . . ." The events of this verse 23 occurred *many days* later. What happened in the meantime?

Paul's account in his letter to the Galatians explains it.

"But *when* it pleased God, . . . to reveal His Son to me"—at the time he was struck down blind and led to Damascus—". . . *immediately* I conferred not with flesh and blood: neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but *I went into Arabia*, and returned again unto Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem."

(Gal. 1:15-18.) So Saul did not go up to Jerusalem *immediately*, after his conversion. Instead, *immediately*—after the few days proclaiming Christ in the synagogues in Damascus—HE WENT INTO ARABIA! What happened there?

Notice I Cor. 9:1 and I Cor. 15:8: Paul had actually *seen Christ!* He had been *with Christ!* He did not receive his knowledge of THE GOSPEL from Peter or the apostles, or from men. He received it *direct from CHRIST!* As one begotten into the apostolic family out of due time. When? Where? Why, during these three years in Arabia! He was in the Arabian desert—away from civilization, and from men. He was there with Christ! Then he returned to Damascus. This, then, is what happened during the "MANY DAYS" mentioned in Acts 9:23. The "many days" were the three years Saul was in Arabia with Christ.

Now, Gal. 1:18, after these three years in Arabia Saul returned to Damascus, and went up to Jerusalem to see Peter—to report to the *chief* Apostle. But he saw none of the apostles on this trip, except Peter, and James, the Lord's brother. This must be the trip to Jerusalem described in Acts 9:23-27. After this "many days," the Jews at Damascus plotted to kill Saul, but Christian disciples

let him down over the wall of the city in a basket by night, and he escaped, and went to Jerusalem, attempting there to join the disciples. But they were afraid of him. Then Barnabas took Saul and brought him to the apostles—just the two, Peter and James, according to Gal. 1:18-19, to whom he reported his heavenly vision, Christ's commission, and his conversion. Thereupon Saul went in and out with Peter and James at the Temple, preaching boldly—but the Jews soon sought to kill him. At this time, while Saul was in a trance, praying in the Temple, Christ again appeared, telling Saul to leave Jerusalem, and that he was to be sent to the Gentiles (Acts 22:17-21). Then the Christian brethren brought Saul to Caesarea, and sent him off to Tarsus, his home city.

Paul Ordained by Hand of Men in Authority

Jesus revealed to Saul, when he was first struck down blind, that he was to be sent to carry the Gospel to the Gentiles. But up to this point in the case-history of Paul's call to this service, God had not opened salvation to the Gentiles. It was "to the Jew first," and then to the Gentiles.

It was while Saul was back home in Tarsus that God sent PETER to carry the Gospel, *first by the hand of Peter*, to the Gentiles. The 10th and 11th chapters of Acts record the experiences of Peter being sent to the home of the gentile Cornelius, and the opening of the minds of the apostles at Jerusalem to the fact that God had now granted repentance to the Gentiles.

Now pick up the story in Acts 11:19. The disciples who were scattered as a result of Stephen's martyrdom travelled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching to Jews only. Then some of them at Antioch preached to the Greeks also, and God blessed their work, and a great number turned to Christ. News of this reached the Church at Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch. Under the ministry of Barnabas a large number were added to the Lord there. Then (v. 25) Barnabas went to Tarsus after Saul, and brought him to Antioch to help in the growing work there. Barnabas (his name now mentioned first) and Saul taught in the Church there for one year. Here the disciples for the first time were called "Christians."

In these days prophets came from Jerusalem to Antioch. These prophets ranked second to the apostles in the framework of God's Church. (Eph. 4:11.) Their mission seems to have been to receive messages or prophecies direct from God, and to convey these messages from God to the apostles or evangelists

or elders. God's Word had not yet been completely committed to writing. The New Testament was still in process of being written. There is no evidence of the existence of any prophets in the Church since the New Testament was written.

Every example in the New Testament, however, shows that Christ carried on affairs in His Church according to HIS GOVERNMENT, and in definite order. There is no doubt, therefore, that *these prophets were sent* from Jerusalem BY AUTHORITY OF THE APOSTLES.

Then there was a great famine, foretold by the prophet Agabus. Barnabas and Saul were sent with relief provisions to drought-stricken Jerusalem (Acts 11:27-30). About this time Herod the king became violent against the Church. He killed James (brother of John), and put Peter in prison at Passover time. Peter was freed from prison by an angel (Acts 12:6-10). Verse 25, Barnabas (still named first) and Saul returned to Antioch with Mark. Up to this time, Saul had engaged only in a preparatory ministry—had not yet entered his called mission to the Gentiles.

Now *chapter 13*. At this time there were, at the Antioch Church, PROPHETS and TEACHERS (no apostles). But God's authority was vested in the Church at Jerusalem, and authority there was vested in the APOSTLES, who undoubtedly, in process of GOD'S GOVERNMENT, *had sent* the prophets to Antioch. Barnabas and Saul were included among the TEACHERS at Antioch.

Verse 2: While they were worshipping and fasting, GOD, thru the Holy Spirit, gave order: "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for *the work to which I have called them*." THAT IS, ORDAIN THEM! Up to this time, Saul *had not entered upon the work to which Christ had called him*. He had been merely gaining preparatory experience.

What is the Bible definition of "ORDAIN"? From *Cruden's Concordance*, it is: "To appoint, or design to a certain end or use. To choose, or SET APART for an office."

So here we see in operation THE GOVERNMENT OF GOD IN HIS CHURCH, *through* His human officers chosen by Him, headed by prophets sent by Apostles! *Verse 3*: "And when they had fasted and prayed, *and laid their hands on them*, they SENT THEM away."

THERE IT IS! Barnabas and Saul, renamed in verse 9 PAUL, were then and there OFFICIALLY ORDAINED, after fasting and prayer, BY THE LAYING ON OF HANDS of those in authority, SENT there by the Apostles, and as DIRECTED by the Holy Spirit! God did not ordain Paul privately, secretly or INDEPENDENTLY of HIS CHURCH. He was OR-

DAINED BY THE HAND OF MAN, according to GOD'S ORDER OF GOVERNMENT, as directed by Christ the HEAD of the Church, but THRU THOSE HUMAN INSTRUMENTS according to God's own ORDER.

GOD'S Order of Government

Up until this ordination, BY THE HAND OF MAN, the Apostle Paul never spoke with authority. He spoke boldly. He spoke convincingly. But never with authority. Never did he issue orders. HE WAS UNDER AUTHORITY. He OBEYED ORDERS.

But now, after this ordination by the laying on of hands, PAUL SPOKE WITH AUTHORITY of his OFFICE.

You read of Paul's ordination in verse 3, of Acts 13. Notice, verse 6, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, who opposed Barnabas and Saul. Now notice how Paul acted *with authority*:

Verse 9: "But Saul, *who is also called PAUL*, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him and said, 'You son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, full of all deceit and villainy, will you not stop making crooked the straight paths of the Lord? And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon you, and you shall be blind and unable to see the sun for a time.' Immediately mist and darkness fell upon him." (Verse 9-11.)

Never before had Paul assumed authority. Now, after being ordained by laying on of the hands of men in proper office, authorized by Christ, Paul assumed and wielded the AUTHORITY of God!

What is God's order of authority in His Church?

You find it in Ephesians 4:11-12: "And He (Christ, the HEAD of the Church) gave some, APOSTLES, and some, PROPHETS, and some, EVANGELISTS, and some, PASTORS (leading or presiding elders of local churches), and TEACHERS; for the perfecting of the saints, for THE WORK of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: *till we all come to the unity of the faith . . .*" In other words, to *prevent* separate, *independent*, and competing work which would introduce confusion, and division, driving many out of the Body of Christ, GOD HAS ORGANIZED GOVERNMENT in His Church. That government is the government of GOD.

It operates from GOD, at the top, on down. It is government of and by and from GOD the Father, thru CHRIST, thru God-called and ordained APOSTLES, thru EVANGELISTS, thru PASTORS, thru TEACHERS, *in that order*. This government means TEAMWORK. It works for UNITY, not division.

In Christ's apostolic organization, during those first two 19-year time-cycles

of His Church, there was always TEAMWORK, harmony, unity, in God's GOVERNMENT in His Church.

Teamwork Between Paul and Peter

Before Saul did any more than a little preparatory preaching, asserting that Jesus was the prophesied Messiah—even before his ordination as an apostle—he went to Jerusalem to see Peter—to report to Peter his vision from Christ, and the commission Christ had given him. It is evident from the Scriptural account that Peter accepted him. During his 15 days with Peter in Jerusalem, he roomed with Peter (Gal. 1:18).

The Prophets with the teachers, who, under direct instruction from Christ, ordained Paul at Antioch, had come from Jerusalem. And in the operation of the GOVERNMENT OF GOD within His Church this could not have been except by authority from Peter and the Apostles. Nothing was at any time done contrary to, or in opposition to, Peter or the Apostles. There was always perfect harmony and cooperation.

Later, 14 years after his conversion (Gal. 2:1), Paul went up to Jerusalem again, with Barnabas, taking Titus also. God had revealed to him the command to go. He then communicated privately to Peter and the Apostles the Gospel he preached among the Gentiles. This was the same visit to Jerusalem recorded in Acts 15. It was a coming to the HEAD-QUARTERS Church, where the Apostles sat in COUNCIL, with AUTHORITY, for decisions inspired by the Holy Spirit, thru APOSTLES, God's chief human offices under Christ.

Upon seeing that the work of the Gospel to the Gentiles had been committed BY CHRIST to Paul, as chief apostolic office for that work, even as the chief apostolic office for the work of the Gospel to ISRAELITES had been committed to Peter—that the SAME HOLY SPIRIT worked in both, but in their different, non-conflicting, non-competing fields—they gave to Paul and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship in this APOSTOLIC MINISTRY—Paul as Christ's Apostle in first authority under Christ in the work to the Gentiles; Peter as Christ's Apostle in first authority under Christ in the work to Israelites.

But still there was perfect harmony. There was no conflict. There was no abridgment of God's GOVERNMENT, thru Christ, thru Apostles—in that order! And even so, Paul's position and office was recognized and accepted by Peter and other Apostles.

Titles of Office

It is well, here, to explain the titles GOD uses for those in office in His government. We have just considered such

offices as those of *apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, teacher*. But what about such titles as "Elder," "Bishop," "Overseer, or "Presbyter." All these are used in the New Testament. Actually, all these latter four mean exactly the same thing. A Bishop, or an Overseer, is an Elder—and the Presbyters are, simply, elders.

But some Elders hold higher office of *authority* than others. Actually, Apostles are also elders, and the assistant pastors, or even non-preaching teachers and leaders in local churches are elders. The Apostle John called himself an Elder (II John 1, and III John 1). The Apostle Peter called himself an Elder (I Pet. 5:1). In other words, ALL ministers of Christ, no matter how high or low the office of authority, are Elders. All Apostles are Elders, *but all Elders are not Apostles!*

To understand the derivation of the term "Elder," let me briefly sketch for you the history of the title.

The original government of the Hebrews, from Abraham, was patriarchal. The head of the family exercised the supreme rule (under God), over all his descendants. His married sons bore rule over their respective families, children and grandchildren, etc., but still remained subordinate to their father as supreme head. It was government from the TOP, *down*. At the father's death, his firstborn son succeeded him in supreme headship over the family. Naturally, these positions, hence the designation, "Elder," which simply meant the oldest one. Thus Jacob (Israel) was the supreme head over all who went to Egypt with him, altho his sons had families of their own. Thus "Elder" became the official title of those in authority.

The earliest mention of "Elders" in government office (aside from family rule), is at the time of the Exodus. The seventy elders mentioned in Exodus and Numbers were a governing body, a sort of parliament. This was the origin of the Sanhedrin, or Council. This carried to the time of Christ. In the New Testament Church, the Elders, or Presbyters, were the same as Bishops—the general title for ALL spiritual offices of authority over the Church.

God Works Thru Only ONE Body

God's Church is CHRIST'S BODY. When Jesus was on earth in human flesh, He said that of Himself He could do nothing—the Father that dwelt *in Him*, thru the Holy Spirit, did the works. The Spirit, or Power, of God, then, did the WORK OF GOD for that time thru the one human body of Jesus!

But Jesus said to His disciples that they should do the same works He did, because He would go to the Father, and

send the SAME SPIRIT to work IN THEM. After Jesus ascended to heaven, the SPIRIT OF GOD entered into the human bodies of those God had put into HIS CHURCH, and now worked THRU THEM as His human instruments. Thus THE CHURCH is the BODY OF CHRIST—the human body (composed of its many human members) by which, empowered by the Holy Spirit, THE WORK OF GOD is carried on.

The Word of God clearly teaches us that there is but the ONE Spirit, and the ONE Body. (I Cor. 12:12-13, 20.) God cannot, and does not, carry on HIS WORK thru ONE BODY, with headquarters at Pasadena, California, and also thru some one man, or different Body, working independently and out of harmony with the Pasadena Body, in Pittsburgh, and another man pulling in a still different direction of opposition, in New York.

God ALWAYS Ordains by Hand of Man

That ONE BODY of Christ, carrying on HIS WORK, must function as a UNIT. It must work in harmony and unity, with teamwork, for God is not the author of confusion. There must be no pulling off in different directions by different men *in* that one Body. There must be no competition, or division. And anyone who knowingly promotes, or encourages anyone in promoting, such disharmony, competition, and division, becomes the enemy of God, and is serving the devil and not God!

In order that this ONENESS—this UNITY of purpose and action—this HARMONY and co-operative teamwork, be maintained and preserved in GOD'S WORK, God has ordained GOVERNMENT IN HIS CHURCH. And He has empowered His Church with DIVINE AUTHORITY.

That government in God's Church is government from God, thru Christ, thru apostles, thru evangelists, thru pastors, thru other elders, *in that order!*

Now suppose God did *not* have these various officers ordained by the hand of man. What would happen? One man in New York would *appoint himself*, and come up and say, "I claim equal office and authority with those ordained from Pasadena. I wasn't ordained by the hand of man, but direct by the hand of God." And then this man carries on his own independent work. Such a work *cannot* be a PART of the work of GOD'S TRUE CHURCH, for the simple reason that sooner or later it will start pulling off in an opposite direction—unless there is DIRECTION from Christ on down, in ONE CHURCH ORDER OF GOVERNMENT as God ordained. Sooner or later competition, misunderstanding, strife, and division will result! CHRIST IS NOT

DIVIDED!

So you see, Brethren, WHY God always ordains men to office THRU HIS OWN CHURCH, THRU HIS OWN ESTABLISHED ORDER, as laid down in HIS WORD! God ALWAYS ordains to office *by the hand of men*, whom HE has placed in office. THERE IS NOT ONE EXAMPLE IN THE NEW TESTAMENT WHERE ANY MAN WAS SELF-APPOINTED, OR ORDAINED WITHOUT THE HAND OF MAN, SEPARATE FROM AND INDEPENDENT OF HIS ORDERED CHURCH! Any such claims to ordination or office are WITHOUT A SHRED OF SCRIPTURAL AUTHORITY!

Notice a few Scriptural examples:

John 15:16: Jesus Christ Himself ORDAINED His Apostles—by His Hand in Person, direct. Also Mark 3:14.

Acts 1:22: Matthias, after God thru the Holy Spirit directed that he be chosen, was ORDAINED thru the other eleven as one of the TWELVE APOSTLES (Also verses 23-26).

Acts 14:23: Elders were chosen and ORDAINED in every city, by the hands of Paul and Barnabas, with fasting and prayer.

I Tim. 2:7: Was Paul actually ORDAINED, or just made an Apostle by God direct without ordination? Paul here says plainly, HE WAS ORDAINED! That settles it!

II Tim. 1:6 and 4:1-5: Timothy was sent out by Paul as an evangelist, clothed with AUTHORITY to appoint and ordain elders and deacons in the local churches, and given authority over local pastors and churches. God did this THRU THE HAND OF PAUL, and in this Scripture, we see Paul had laid hands on Timothy. If for receiving the Holy Spirit, then certainly also for his ordination.

Titus 1:5: Paul gave to Titus the evangelist authority to ORDAIN elders in every city, as Paul had appointed him. Thus Titus was ordained to this authority by the hand of Paul, and elders in many churches were ordained by the hand of Titus, the evangelist. Here is the GOVERNMENT OF GOD, operating from Christ, thru Paul *the apostle*, thru Titus, *the evangelist*, thru local Elders, in the order of God's authority in His Church according to Eph. 4:11.

And so it goes. There is not one example in the New Testament showing that any man was ever ordained to an office of authority WITHOUT the hand of man! The *only* examples and instructions we have show God doing it thru the hand of men of His choosing!

WHICH Is Christ's ONE Body?

Either the Church of God with headquarters in Pasadena is the ONE AND ONLY true Body of Christ, thru whom Christ carries on HIS WORK, or else it is deceived, or it is a fraud. There is no

other possibility. YOU MUST FACE IT, and DECIDE WHICH ALTERNATIVE IS TRUE. If it is the Body thru whom Christ works in carrying on HIS WORK to the world for this time, then it is THE ONLY BODY that is being used of Christ. *Christ is not divided!*

Now what *is* the true WORK OF GOD? Jesus' first commission to His Church was: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." Apostasy was prophesied. But, looking into our present end-time, Jesus said, "*This Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached (Mark 13, published) in all the world for a witness unto all nations: and then shall the end come.*"

Brethren, WHO is preaching the same Gospel Jesus taught, the Gospel of the KINGDOM OF GOD, to the world? Do you know any other Church fulfilling this prophecy as to the WORK OF THE TRUE CHURCH for this very day and time?

This is the time when the "Philadelphia" era of God's Church has been reached. Somewhere in the world today is this TRUE CHURCH of GOD, fitting the description of the "church in Philadelphia" of Rev. 3.

It follows the "Sardis" era of the Church. The Sardis Church had the NAME of being alive—the NAME, "Church of God." But this Sardis Church died, spiritually. Christ, in His Messages to these seven Churches, or church eras, warned this church that its WORK was not perfect—it was not performing the WORK OF GOD in power, but with such pitiful weakness there was NO SPIRITUAL LIFE in it. It had many true doctrines, else it could not have been the Church of God at all—but Christ warned it to AWAKE, and strengthen itself, and to REPENT. In other words, acknowledge its errors in doctrine, and accept the NEW LIGHT now becoming available in these last days, and yield to God so it could be filled with HIS POWER. Otherwise, Christ warned, He would come on the people of this Church "like a thief," and they will not know "the hour" of His coming. This, of course (compare Mat. 24, Mark 13, Luke 21), refers to the Second Coming of Christ. This shows that members of this Church will still be physically alive AT THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST. Yet there were a few names in that Church who were not guilty of refusing to repent or accept new truth. Apparently they carry over, and form the nucleus of the following era—the Philadelphia Church.

Of the "Philadelphia" Church, Christ says, "I know that you have but little power." It is probably the WEAKEST in numerical and physical strength and power—the smallest in membership, of any of the Churches from the time of the

Apostles until the Second Coming. It has but few ministers. Yet this Church has KEPT God's Word—repented where it was wrong—accepted the new knowledge now revealed—lived by the Word of God—and is also called by the NAME, The CHURCH OF GOD. Because this Church, physically small and weak, has KEPT GOD'S WORD with patient endurance, it shall be PROTECTED and PRESERVED from the hour of trial—the Great Tribulation, and Day of the Lord, soon coming on the earth! And THIS is the Church Christ *uses* as HIS INSTRUMENT in proclaiming His GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM—the GOVERNMENT of God—to the world. He sets before this Church an "OPEN DOOR," for the proclaiming of this Gospel to ALL THE WORLD. The meaning of this "DOOR" is explained in II Cor. 2:12-13. Paul said: "I came to Troas to preach Christ's gospel, and a DOOR was opened to me of the Lord." This was a means to preach the Gospel in EUROPE. Until then, for 19 years, the Gospel had been preached only in Asia!

For one 19-year time-cycle, God carried on the Gospel thru His Church to North America. He had opened the DOOR of radio and the printing press. Then, 19 years to the exact month, God OPENED THE DOOR for the Gospel to go to ALL EUROPE, and the very next year to ASIA. The same identical time-pattern of 19-year time-cycles is being fulfilled in God's work thru His Church today, as it was thru His Church in Apostolic days.

But SOME of those in the Church today will grow weary with well-doing. They will brag about being the true Church—thinking they are spiritually rich, when they are, in fact, almost spiritually destitute. Because they are indifferent to the real WORK OF GOD, lukewarm, lacking in zeal, Christ will spew them out of His mouth. THEY cannot be used in His work! THEY shall lose the very salvation they boast of having unless they repent! God help *you* never to drift into the LAODICEAN church!

Ordained, and Under Authority

Finally, brethren, though I have mentioned it in the Autobiography, many may not realize the significance of the fact that I personally was fully ORDAINED by the laying on of hands after fasting and prayer of those in authority in GOD'S CHURCH. It was in the summer of 1931. I had held a short evangelistic campaign for the Oregon Conference, Church of God (Stanberry, Mo.), six months before, after three and a half years of receiving instruction in the Gospel from Christ, thru His written Word. In the summer of 1931 those in

(Please continue on page 11)

Accidents *Do* Happen!

Is it a SIN to have INSURANCE? What does the Bible say about insurance? Is it a lack of faith to have insurance?

by Herman L. Hoeh

LET'S awake, brethren. Accidents do happen to us! Some brethren become careless or are caught off guard and become involved in needless accidents involving serious injuries. We all can be caught off guard at the crucial moment. What should you personally do about accident insurance?

What is the Church's responsibility when unconverted relatives die, leaving converted widows destitute? What does the Bible say about insurance—or "protection," as it is often called—in such instances?

What the Bible Reveals

It will come as a surprise, but *the Bible does say something about insurance!*

The problem of owning insurance continues to perplex many in the Church. It is often reasoned by those who do not have insurance that it would be showing a lack of faith to be "protected" by insurance. Others have said that when they had insurance they did not feel they needed to trust God as much as before. It seemed to destroy their faith, since they were "protected" by men.

Is this kind of reasoning right? Exactly what DOES the Bible reveal about owning insurance—about saving for the future?

Before we can understand the right or wrong of insurance, we must first ask ourselves the question: "Is it wrong to save for the future?"

Notice what the Bible says about laying up for a "rainy day"!

The prophet Agur, under inspiration, wrote: "There are four things which are little upon the earth"—they are little in size—"BUT THEY ARE EXCEEDING WISE: the ants are a people not strong"—in comparison with the gigantic weight that man lifts—"yet they provide their food in the summer" (Proverbs 30:1, 24-25).

The ant SAVES. The ant gathers in summer for the coming winter. The ants are wise creatures. They do not have to beg for food.

No wonder Solomon said: "Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise: which having no chief, overseer, or ruler"—to tell the ant what to do—she "provideth her bread in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest" (Prov. 6:6).

The ant does not wait till the winter comes to gather food. It is too late by that time. The wise thing to do is prepare for hard times.

So the Bible counsels laying up for a rainy day.

God also saves for us—He saves up the wealth of the sinner for the righteous!

Then what did Jesus mean by saying: "Treasure not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust consume, and where thieves steal. But treasure up for yourselves treasures in heaven . . . for where thy treasure is there will thy heart be also" (Mat. 6: 19-21).

Does this mean that Jesus frowned upon saving for the future? Not at all! Jesus sanctioned saving for all eternity—"treasure up for yourselves treasure in heaven." That saving Jesus will give us as a reward when He returns. But Jesus warned not to treasure up "for yourselves" earthly savings. Don't save for yourselves—save for others! A good man does not lay up for himself. He saves for his grandchildren! A wise man does not build up a bank account only for himself, but for his family.

What Is Insurance?

Now we are ready to understand what insurance really is.

Insurance involves a program by which many individuals pay small premiums into a company, so that in case of accident, fire or death, the party suffering the loss receives sufficient money as compensation for the loss. It is a kind of pool in which people save and share the burdens of one another.

Insurance, of course, does not prevent accident, fire or death; it merely compensates you if you suffer such a loss so that you can regain your economic feet. In case of death, insurance provides security for widows and children.

Does the Bible have anything to say about this kind of insurance?

Turn with me to Deuteronomy 14: 28-29. "At the end of three years, thou shalt bring forth all the tithe of thine increase the same year, and shalt lay it up within thy gates." For whom is this laid up? For yourself?

NO!

For "the strangers, and the fatherless, and the widow, that are within thy

gates [or cities]." Why? So that they may "come and eat and be satisfied; that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all the work of thy hand which thou doest."

This is INSURANCE! Here is God's insurance program to take care of widows and orphans *in case of death* of the husband and father. It often happens that people will not have sufficient laid up for emergencies until later life. God knew this might happen. To provide for this He ordered the people to save 10% of their income once in three years—that is, the third and sixth year out of every seven years. We commonly call this the THIRD TITHE. The same command is repeated in Deut. 26:12.

Such problems as this have already faced God's Church. Sometimes women who have young children are converted. Either the husbands have died or have left them without means of support. What shall the Church do? It is the responsibility of its members to save the THIRD TITHE to take care of just such emergencies. Such young women should not be out working, but ought to be at home taking care of their children, *until they become old enough to support themselves.*

In another instance a few years ago a fire gutted the home of an elderly widow who had recently been baptized. She had little savings. What should we, as God's people, have done? She received help from the THIRD TITHE.

This is the *unselfish* thing to do. Insurance is the principle of saving to help others. God wants us to save the *third tithe* once in three years as an insurance program for the Church, just as He wants us to save the FIRST TITHE for the spread of the gospel. It is a lack of faith not to save the third tithe for the fatherless and widows. Saving the third tithe is a test of your faith!

The third tithe is a kind of flood and drought insurance, too. It is also a type of "life insurance," aiding the widows and the young children if the head of the house dies unexpectedly. This can and does happen! "*Time and chance happen to all*" (Ecclesiastes 9:11).

But the third tithe does not mention the perpetually poor or the lazy.

Notice Deuteronomy 15:7-11: "If there be among you a *needy man*, one of thy brethren, within any of thy gates . . . thou shalt not harden thy

heart, not shut thy hand from thy needy brother; BUT THOU SHALT SURELY OPEN THY HAND UNTO HIM, AND SHALT SURELY LEND HIM SUFFICIENT FOR HIS NEED IN THAT WHICH HE WANTETH."

When to GIVE to the Poor

If any poor man be called a brother, we are to LEND to him. It does *not* say "give." Too often the perpetually lazy and poor are permitted to receive *when they are not willing to work*. Paul commands, "If any will not work, let him not eat!" (II Thes. 3:10). We are to *loan* to the deserving needy brother. But we are not to charge him interest. We are not to be usurers, seeking a profit from a loan.

If, after seven years have passed, and the poor or needy have not been able to repay the loan, then you are to release the brother from that obligation. You are to count the loan as a gift. "At the end of every seven years thou shalt make a release. And this is the manner of the release: every creditor shall release that which he hath lent unto his neighbor; he shall not exact it of his neighbor and his brother . . . Of a foreigner"—one who is not converted—"thou mayest exact it; but whatsoever of thine is with thy brother thy hand shall release. Howbeit there shall be no needy among you—if only thou diligently hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do ALL this commandment" (Deut. 15:1-5).

The only reason many of us are poor and needy is that we have not observed all God's commandments *in the past*. We reap what we sow!

If we are needy, God expects us to borrow *and also to pay back*. David said: "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed *begging* bread. All the day long he dealeth graciously, and LENDETH; and his seed is blessed" (Psalm 37:25-26).

The righteous do not beg. The righteous lend. Of course, God does expect us to *give* to habitual beggars and the lazy of this world if they ask us and we have the means. *Alms* are for the blind and maimed and crippled of this world. Jesus said: "Give alms."

This aid for the poor is different from the third tithe which is God's insurance program for His people administered by the Church.

Example from History

We have given you previously the illustration from Jewish history which shows how the Jews understood the use of the tithes. Let us reconsider this example—from Tobit, chapter 1. (This is a historic, though uninspired record):

"A tenth part [the first tithe] of all my produce I would give to the sons of Levi, who officiated at Jerusalem, and another tenth [the second tithe] I would sell [because Tobit lived too far from Jerusalem to bring it there] and go and spend the proceeds in Jerusalem each year [at the annual feasts], 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 BY MY FATHER.*"

For whom was it fitting to give the third tithe?—widows and orphans.

Now that we have come to recognize the full import of this command, we must recognize that it is God's injunction that all of His people who have an earned income *must* save the third tithe. Why should some of His people expect to reap the benefits of others, and do nothing themselves?

It is our duty as a body to take care of one another in case of accident or death, of catastrophes from flood or other natural causes.

That is the kind of insurance which the third tithe provides. This tithe may be handled locally, wherever there is a congregation; or at the headquarters in Pasadena to which the scattered members may send their third tithe.

But this does not free each man who is the head of a family for the divinely appointed responsibility of providing savings for his children. Without such savings, many people would not have been able in the past to help God's work as they did. They voluntarily gave to the work in a special crisis.

When the Church is NOT Responsible

Now let us consider a personal responsibility of each member in God's Church. Turn to I Timothy 5:3-4, 8, 16: "Honor widows that are widows indeed. But if any widow hath children or grandchildren, let them learn first to show piety towards their own house, and to requite their parents: for this is acceptable before God . . . But if any provideth not for his own, and especially his household, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an unbeliever! . . . If any believer hath widows, let that believer relieve them, and LET NOT THE CHURCH BE BURDENED; that it may relieve the real widows"—those who are absolutely alone in the world.

Paul wrote this to Timothy. It was Timothy's duty to see that no one took advantage of the financial sacrifice of God's people. If you are able—and some think they are not able when they *are* able—to support widows and orphans in your household, you are to do so. That is acceptable before God, Paul said.

IT IS NOT THE CHURCH'S DUTY IN

SUCH CASES to use the third tithe. God does not want spongers in His Kingdom!

Other Personal Insurance

It is, of course, up to each individual to provide for his own home. Some may have enough saved or invested and feel no need for special insurance.

Consider, however, personal accident and liability insurance. Since most individuals cannot save money on their own in anticipation of emergencies, they need to obtain auto insurance (and whatever else may be necessary). We all become CARELESS or take unnecessary chances at times.

Accidents can happen to YOU! The experience of our own Church members proves it! God is not going to prevent you from reaping the consequences of carelessness. But He will deliver you. Thanks to God we can always pray to be healed or to be protected from infection in case of injury.

Many people cannot save unless they owe some insurance company a premium obligation. What a shame! But be careful. Do not accept just any insurance company agent that comes along. Some companies are not sound. Remember, too, that accident, fire and educational insurance which provide benefits in the next few years, are far more beneficial than life insurance—which will probably be of little value 12 years hence anyway!

No insurance can replace faith. Otherwise God would not have provided life and disaster insurance for His people in His own law *in the form of the third tithe*.

If you are one who believes that insurance *replaces* faith, that is merely proof that you probably DID NOT HAVE ANY ABIDING FAITH IN THE FIRST PLACE.

Insurance is never a substitute for faith. Faith is that assurance that God will deliver you *out of* every difficulty you may become involved in. Paul was in several shipwrecks. God delivered him out of each of them after they happened. Paul often lost his property. Time and circumstance happen to us all. God alone could deliver Paul from death in such accidents. No insurance could have! But savings in the form of insurance would compensate Paul for his loss.

That is how God wants us to view the question of insurance and the third tithe.

It is time we open our minds to receive God's understanding and believe and act on this command of God's law to save the THIRD TITHE. "If you know these things, happy are you if you do them," said Jesus.

Are you doing them?

How Ordained?

(Continued from page 8)

authority in this Church of God asked me to enter the full time ministry, starting with a tent campaign in Eugene, Oregon. And for this ministry I was ORDAINED, by fasting and prayer and laying on of hands of the presbytery—those in authority in God's Church. This Church is now clearly identified, in the light of carefully documented historical research, as the "Sardis" era of the Church described prophetically by Jesus in Revelation 3:1-6.

An abbreviated account of those early years in the ministry—of being UNDER authority—of preaching where and when I was *sent* by those over me in authority—of being *sent* by them to the country school house west of Eugene, Oregon, in 1933, from where the present work and the "Philadelphia" era of the Church blossomed forth—was published in the December GOOD NEWS, in Herman L. Hoeh's article "*God Demands Teamwork.*"

There is not space in the present article to repeat this history of early experience—of being considered, and accepting the status, of the *least* of the ministers in the Church. But to continue!

God works thru HUMAN INSTRUMENTS! Of course God *could* carry on His work otherwise. God *could* carry on His work without relying on the tithes and offerings of His children in His Church. He *could* supply all the money by direct miracle. But it is for OUR good that He gives every begotten child of His a *direct part* in His great work.

God *could* ordain those He has called to office and authority in His work secretly and direct, without the hand of man. But there is no instance in the history of His Church where He ever did! God *could* do all His work HIMSELF, direct, without using any ministers or human agencies at all! BUT THAT IS NOT GOD'S WAY! God did His work on earth thru the human body of Jesus Christ while Jesus was on earth. Now, according to God's own Word, HIS CHURCH, with its many human members, is CHRIST'S BODY thru whom God carries on His work. There is no example in the Bible where God carried on HIS WORK under the New Covenant by any single individual OUTSIDE OF, *independent of*, HIS ORGANIZED CHURCH AND HIS ORDER OF GOVERNMENT IN THE CHURCH. Anyone outside of God's Church is AGAINST God's Church!

Jesus said: "He that is not with me is *against me*; and he that gathereth not with me *scattereth abroad!*"

HERE'S GOOD NEWS!

As you read these lines, our publisher is making press runs on sections of the largest, most colorful, and all-inclusive ENVOY ever produced. From *cover to cover*—a completely new and different book is now in production. Read of this phenomenal growth and progress—indicative of Ambassador College.

THE WONDERFUL news of the tremendous success of the Feast of Tabernacles was recounted for you in the November issue. You read of the great *enthusiasm* and *joy*—the feeling of *love* and *unity* that permeated the huge crowd of 5,500. God's Church is growing!

Along with the Church, Ambassador College continuously adds new properties to its ever expanding Campus. In addition, the enlarged student body has created the need for larger classroom and student housing facilities.

Brethren, this stupendous growth in both the Church and College has forced the ENVOY Staff to think *BIG*—to reach out with greater strides than ever before! The new 1960 ENVOY will be a book of *progress*.

Bond of Unity

In one sense, you might call the ENVOY a bonding or unifying agent. Here's why. We realize your situation, in that most of you are scattered—isolated from local congregations. For many the Feast of Tabernacles is the only time during the entire year when they can have that personal contact with other members and can counsel directly with God's ministers. Those newly baptized and even some of you older brethren are not yet acquainted with the ministers and their wives or with others in key positions at headquarters. You have wondered what each of the students looks like and where they individually come from. What is it to be an Ambassador student? What makes the training different? A trip to Ambassador College would answer the bulk of these questions, but for the majority of you this is not possible! On the other hand, God does provide a solution to this problem through the ENVOY. It is geared to nullify the many miles that segregate us physically and to provide a comprehensive year by year report of Ambassador College in action.

Entirely New

When we say this year's ENVOY is different from *cover to cover*, we literally mean just that! A cover, more colorful and beautiful, will encase 160 pages packed full of quality pictures and interesting write-ups. Another plus

—a new, heavier, matted-finish paper will add a quality unobtainable in previous issues.

In order that we could include more, it was necessary to increase 32 pages over the size of last year's book. Our circulation, too, has taken a remarkable leap forward so that the 1960 ENVOY will have almost 14 times the circulation of the first ENVOY in 1951.

A two-page spread in living, full color, many more pictures in rich duotones, plus brilliant spot color used throughout the book to add life and warmth. With more artists on this year's staff we will have many full spreads of quality detailed art work, brought to life with vivid applied color.

Sections to include our brethren in Britain and the new Ambassador College U. K. are being prepared. The now-completed stream on our campus will be included, along with a graphic picture story of its construction. More pages have been devoted to the Festivals—many of you will recognize yourselves in some of the candid pictures. The additional features section will include future plans of the Work and the Campus, now in the planning stages. And still, added to all this, because you want it, we will include pictures of the ministers and their wives.

So here is your opportunity!

What To Do

We are printing this year 800 more books than last year, but there is *NO* promise of your getting a copy *IF YOU WAIT!* Last year many had to be turned down—*THEY WAITED TOO LONG!* You know you'll want this year's ENVOY—it won't be too late to insure your receiving one if you act *NOW!*

We are putting as much quality and quantity into the book as is financially possible. By enlarging our circulation each year, these tremendous new increases are made possible and at a price you can afford. Postal rates and labor costs have gone up, but we are happy to announce the price of the 1960 ENVOY is still only \$5.00.

Fill in the coupon below or print the required information in a letter and send it IMMEDIATELY to "The ENVOY," at Post Office Box 111, Pasadena, California. Please use the enclosed envelope.

The ENVOY Staff:

YES! I want to reserve a copy of the 1960 ENVOY for delivery next June! I enclose the sum of FIVE DOLLARS (\$5.00) which pays the subscription price in full.

(Print name)

(Print street and number)

City

Zone

State

False Brethren

(Continued from page 3)

deny the power of God working in the Church of God today. These people *despise the government that God has set in His Church*. They are *self-willed*. They privately find fault and speak evil of those whom God has set in His Church. They will seek to go to your homes in order to bring accusations against the brethren, and against God's ministers. They do this *privately*. They may not at first put big stress on deceitful ideas as they do not want to be detected. But they will sneak around to others and privately try to lure others to their ideas of destruction. You may even know such people, and yet are not aware of their deceitful tricks. These false brethren, instead of building up, speak evil, or tear down. They discourage weaker brethren, plant doubts in their minds, try to stir up bitterness between brethren.

"Blemishes on Our Feast Days"

Jude also mentions wicked men who are blemishes on our love feasts and Holy Days. "For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God unto lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ" (Jude 4). Here is a message and a warning for all the Church through history. This message did not concern the time of Jude only. Such conditions will exist until the second coming of Jesus Christ! Jude mentions in verse 12: "These [people] are spots in your feasts of charity [Feast Days], when they feast with you."

John calls these men who set themselves up *in the place* of Christ "antichrists." An "antichrist" is one who sits in judgment of God's ministers and His Church. They are not subject to the government of Christ. Notice the history of the Church through the centuries in 1 John 2:19: "Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that [the] antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us."

This warning especially occurred in apostolic days. But Daniel shows it is a warning for all ages. There are such people among those of God's Church

today! Some of you may be deceived by them! You need to *beware*. Do not be deceived any longer. Christ warns us that the love of many will turn cold. Some of you, because of the iniquity or sin of others, *and because of your own private sin*, will follow such people right out of God's Church. The apostle Paul prophesied that in the last days some would depart from the faith (1 Tim. 4:1). It behooves us to beware lest we follow others right out of God's Church, *instead of following Christ!*

Mark Those That Cause Division

God instructs us through the Apostle Paul: "Now I beseech you, brethren, *mark them which cause divisions* and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; *and avoid them*" (Rom. 16:17). If you know of someone who is causing division in the Church, who is accusing the brethren, and who is committing offense contrary to what we have been taught, come to God's ministers who will *mark* him. Then you should avoid any such person! You should not "company," or associate with that person. Paul even makes this instruction stronger: "Now WE COMMAND you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye WITHDRAW YOURSELVES from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us" (II Thess. 3:6).

Here is a *direct command* from one of God's apostles concerning such people. Paul taught certain practices in the Church, just as God's ministers today teach certain practices, which the Church is to follow. If someone continually refuses to accept the teachings of Christ through His Church, a true Christian should withdraw from him! Continuing in II Thessalonians 3:7, we read: "For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us [the apostles, God's ministers]: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you." We are to follow Christ and the example of God's ministers as they follow Christ, and as Christ lives within them. But some of you brethren, follow those who *appear* spiritual, who use spiritual phraseology, but who set themselves up in the place of Christ to judge God's ministers and His Church.

Paul also states: "*Be ye followers of me, even as I am of Christ*" (I Cor. 11:1).

Since we have been instructed to mark those who cause divisions, we also should follow those who are good examples in the Church. Notice them, and see their good works. "Brethren, be followers together of me, and *mark them* which walk so as ye have us for

an example" (Phil. 3:17). Brethren, we are to follow those who walk as Paul walked. We are to follow those who walk as Jesus Christ walked. But Paul goes on to warn, in verse 18, that there are others who are enemies of Jesus Christ, who are concerned about earthly things, even though they may *profess themselves* to be religious. We need to discern through whom God is working.

In Philippians 4:9 Paul brings out the point that those whom he had taught, who had received and heard from him, should do the things that he had done. Are we today following those whom God is now using in His ministry?

"Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation [conduct]" (Heb. 13:7). It's time you recognized through whom God *rules* the Church—through His ministers or those who secretly sow discord and lead to division and doubts.

Follow Jesus Christ

God has given leaders in His Church for the perfecting of the saints and to build up the body of Jesus Christ. God set them in office so that we all might come to a unity of the faith, might become perfect individuals, measuring up to the stature of Jesus Christ! Jesus Christ is our aim—our "yardstick." We are to measure up to Him, to follow His "steps" (I Peter 2:21).

If we use Christ as our example and His servants, we will never fall away through the clever deception of false brethren. Nor will we fall away with those whose love grows cold.

By recognizing that there are such people among us, we can beware and avoid those who set up themselves to teach the brethren.

Yes, many have joined themselves to God's Church, *may even have been baptized*; but they have not yielded themselves to God. They are yet carnal! There have always been those who have come among God's people—who have influenced weak brethren by their smooth and deceitful speech, their flatteries and their hypocrisy. You have been warned. You need not be deceived. Now is the time to be on your guard—to beware, lest you follow false brethren into the lake of fire.

If you should fall you will have *one person to blame*—yourself—because you have been forewarned! You will be the only person to blame! Will you heed the warning and keep close to God through prayer, Bible study, fasting—and be submissive to God's government in His Church?