

WHY THE  
**RESTORED**  
CHURCH OF GOD?

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Should You Join?

*by* David C. Pack

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There are over 300 offshoots of the Worldwide Church of God. Most believe there are much too many groups—and already “something for everyone.” Was another really necessary, particularly when many are trying to “get the groups together”?

The answer is a resounding “Yes!”

This short book introduces The Restored Church of God by answering the most basic, commonly asked questions about us.

We have carefully produced this material for all who want to understand the Worldwide Church of God apostasy—and what to DO about it!

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## INTRODUCTION

The reader is urged to begin this book only after studying the first four listed in the *Splinter Explanation Packet* (SEP). It contains two sections. Each is important.

Section I was once the first booklet produced by The Restored Church of God. Originally carrying the title *Why The Restored Church of God?*, it was produced in June 1999, approximately one month after we began. It was written to explain why we were very different from all other offshoots of the Worldwide Church of God (WCG). It summarized basic questions about our origin and purpose. This included carefully addressing why there was a need for yet *another* “organization” among the almost 300 existing to that point.

Some history: With the passing of time, certain elements of that original booklet took on a different relevance. This was due to circumstances playing out among the various splinters, and because the kinds of questions we were receiving were moving on to other issues, now addressed much more thoroughly in other splinter books and sermons. As a result, that first booklet came to be more of an *introduction* than a full *explanation* of who and what we were. But it is now useful as a summary.

You will notice certain elements of language and phraseology now reflect a tone of “look-back” rather than a June 1999 timeframe. This was added to the flow of those early events for the purpose of making important clarifications that were needed simply because of the passing of time. It became obvious these modifications to the original text were necessary

to make the book more current for readers trying to understand it years later. Some of these changes merely reflect the development and expansion of the Church and the Work.

All of this resulted in what would be a natural introduction to this final “decision-making” book, as the first part of this summary book—I repeat, to be reviewed possibly just before deciding to join The Restored Church of God.

Section I summarizes the more in-depth understanding in the larger books: who and what is the Church and Body of Christ; what and where is the Government of God, and what are the New Testament offices and duties within it; what is the Work of God, and has it changed; is Jesus part of the gospel, and does it matter; what must be understood about personal attacks, accusations and persecution, and from where will the greatest amount of persecution and false accusations be directed and why; was Mr. Armstrong the final Elijah, and what are the implications if he was or was not; how are true prophets distinguished from false, including the identity of “That Prophet”; what about the final two prophets, called the Two Witnesses; what doctrines did the WCG replace; what false doctrines are taught in the splinters; what is causing *all* of the splinters to add more and more false doctrines to their teachings, and why they cannot see this occurring; what Christ meant by “anoint your eyes that you may see”; among many other subjects.

By May 2000, the need had arisen to create a kind of personal “checklist” for those who had reached the time for a decision whether to join The Restored Church of God. This became another booklet, at that time our sixth to the splinters, *Should You Join The Restored Church of God?* I determined to address the crucial elements of the decision the reader was facing. It was intended to be the *last item* studied. That booklet has become Section II here, and has only been expanded slightly from its original content. It presents the “checklist” of crucial issues involved in your decision.

This forms the conclusion of your study—and of your decision!

## SECTION I

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Why did The Restored Church of God begin? How is it different from the many other groups that formed in the wake of the apostasy? Why was the name The *RESTORED* Church of God selected?

How do we view Mr. Armstrong? Do we see him as just a faithful minister—an apostle—or more? How does the “scattering,” foretold in Daniel 12:7, fit with the need to “restore”? Do we believe that Mr. Armstrong finished the Work? How are we governed? What are our doctrines?

This review section sets up the material that follows.

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## WHY THE RESTORED CHURCH OF GOD?

This section begins—and only begins!—the presentation of a very clear choice before you. On May 3, 1999, I was terminated from the Global Church of God (GCG), and led to begin and organize The Restored Church of God (RCG). What is written here is primarily a summary of events, and answers questions surrounding the *beginning* of RCG. It is not intended to be more than the briefest look at who and what we are. (“Anoint Your Eyes” – *Christ’s Warning to His People, The True Church – One Organization, or Many?* and my 2-volume Biography now address, with a much fuller perspective, virtually all of the issues described here.)

Many of God’s people have come to realize that what all knew was the true “faith once delivered” (Jude 3) to the sixth era of Christ’s Church has been watered down by *all* the Worldwide Church of God (WCG) splinters. They have also come to recognize this problem has grown *much* worse with time. Therefore, brethren within every organization have been searching for where *every* truth of the Bible is still taught, wanting safety from *all* false teachings.

By the late 90s, an ever-growing number, tired of continual compromise in both doctrine and conduct, had come to desire “everything the way it was”—all points *restored again* doctrinally. Some of these people had gone from the WCG to a splinter in which they waited for God to guide them, with others going to one group and some moving among several. Others left the WCG (early or late in the apostasy) and chose to wait at home. Still others stayed in the WCG, waiting for the correct

place to attend before they left. And still others who were merely long-time readers or former prospective members wondering what happened, seemed to wait in “unconscious mode” until the full truth reappeared again in one organization, only then resurfacing to make a decision. All of these categories awaited the place that would not dismiss or alter anything the Church once understood to be truth.

Of course, there is an additional category of people who are largely unconcerned about doctrine and tradition, but who *are* concerned that RCG represents “more division.” These see only surface matters.

Early phone calls and emails showed that people generally had the same questions:

- What happened?
- Why did you start a “new church”?
- Has God provided a place where the full *restored* truth is upheld?
- What importance does RCG place on Mr. Armstrong’s teachings?
- Does this Church intend to continue the Work?
- Who is David Pack?...and a host of related questions.

We hope this overview helps you to recapture your vision and first love of the truth. Christ tells Laodicea, “Behold, I stand at the door, and knock” (Rev. 3:20). Sadly, prophecy reveals most will not answer their “door.” But Jesus promised that, when His flock is in danger, He calls “His own sheep *by name*” (John 10:3-4), and leads them to safety. Since the Christ of the Bible keeps His promises, the question becomes, will *you* recognize His voice, and answer Him?

RCG is not competing with other groups that formed from the WCG rubble. They may compete with us, but we do not compete with them—for members or money! I cannot stress this strongly enough! We have come out of the squabbling groups, and the continuing attacks between them. One of our primary tasks has been to make clear that there is an organization that has risen above all of the disagreeing, divisive, confusing nonsense and partisan fights to stand on the only truly secure foundation, summarized in Ephesians 2:20.

The Restored Church of God is the only place in which people can meet without confusion from false ideas. This makes practicing *real* brotherly love and unity easier. Paul said, and Mr. Armstrong reinforced, “I beseech you, brethren...that you ALL speak the *same* thing, and that there be *no* divisions among you; but that you be perfectly *joined together* in the *same* mind and in the *same* judgment” (I Cor. 1:10). Peter added (after baptizing 3,000), “And they *continued steadfastly* in the *apostles’ doctrine and fellowship*” (Acts 2:42). Philadelphians are told, “Hold that fast WHICH YOU HAVE” (Rev. 3:11).

This verse directly ties holding fast to keeping one’s crown!

Paul warns of perilous times in the last days (II Tim. 3:1, 13-14), and explains what to do when threatened by “evil men and seducers...growing worse and worse.” The context describes a time when many “will not *endure* sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, *having itching ears*” (4:3). As this happens, Paul instructs, “Continue you in the things which you have learned and have been assured of, *knowing of whom you have learned them*” (3:14).

Further, I Timothy 4:13 and 16 is vital instruction to all ministers who would be found faithful by Christ, and to those who will hear us. We know other ministers and elders are tired of compromise. Paul tells *them*, “Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to *doctrine*...take heed unto yourself, and unto the *doctrine; continue in them*: for in doing this you shall both save yourself, and them that *hear you*.”

Will you “hear” this instruction? It may save your eternal life!

### “Why Did You Leave the Former GCG?”

I did not leave the Global Church of God voluntarily, but rather was fired and disfellowshipped for taking a stand and defending the flock against false teachers and doctrines. Any minister or elder in any organization who *truly* does this should expect the same! John 10:15 and 15:13 tell ministers to *give their lives* for the sheep, and I have striven to do this. The charges against me were described as “sowing division and discord.” Of course, I was not charged with “defending the flock,” and I certainly *was* “guilty” of this!

In early 1999, many members had been contacting GCG headquarters to report false teachings being heard in sermons by various pastors. After leaders ignored them, some called me. Faithful ministers never refuse to discuss such concerns. I referred them to their local ministers.

At this point, GCG trumped up charges against me. But Mr. Armstrong’s instruction from *MYSTERY OF THE AGES* was, “It is the duty of Christ’s TRUE ministers (and *how scarce today*) to PROTECT the begotten but yet unborn saints from false doctrines, from false ministers” (p. 262). Obviously, Mr. Armstrong agreed with both Christ and Paul. Knowing these instructions, I could not have done otherwise!

In spite of grave internal problems, which their later collapse and disintegration into numerous groups bore out, I would not have left GCG as soon as I did. Although aware that it was tolerating false teachers and doctrines, I first tried to work from within by appealing to the leaders to

address the issues. To simply depart, without trying to convince those at the top to correct the organization's wrong teachings and problems—and to help in this—would have been reckless and irresponsible. However, when the headquarters would not take action to protect the sheep, I realized that either I would soon be forced out, or GCG might collapse for financial reasons—or both! I wanted to be careful that I did not become the *cause* of the financial collapse certain to come. (Later, a Living Church of God [LCG] leader essentially sued GCG out of existence.)

I determined to exercise at least some patience for as long as reasonably possible. I had felt that after LCG split away, there was still *some* chance the remaining leaders would deal with what became even worse false teachings. Instead, upon approaching them, they “shot the messenger.” (Most of these men later joined the United Church of God [UCG], the most doctrinally compromised splinter, thus *proving* truth carried little weight in their thinking.)

Terminating me is what the founding leader of GCG, Roderick Meredith, also attempted to do for the same reasons less than six months earlier. At that time, he accused me of sowing division in Michigan during a sermon. (I had preached very strongly there to *hold to the truth* and *reject false doctrines* entering GCG at an alarming rate.)

Some claimed I left that organization because I “lacked faith that God would provide the funds to keep GCG going.” This is silly. Impending bankruptcy is not a reason to leave. Actually, if the leadership had been making every effort to save GCG, then leaving—at least at that time—*would* have been abandonment.

History shows that poor stewardship eventually implodes *any* organization—even where there is “faith.” I have faith God blesses those who please Him—nothing more or less. I certainly did *not* have faith in the leaders of GCG. In time, as mentioned, GCG did collapse and break apart. But the disintegration of any splinter is bad because people involved are further hurt and scattered!

I was fired and disfellowshipped from GCG for the same reasons I was fired and disfellowshipped from the WCG—and said so both times. Many will recall my first “30 Reasons to Follow the Truth” sermon (of May 15, 1993). It made clear to thousands of witnesses that I believed then as I did in 1999. The Bible teaches that when an organization becomes Laodicean, we leave for the place Christ provides. Those who heard that first of three sermons (perhaps 10,000-15,000 did), with the other two, realize I did not deviate from this in establishing RCG!

When I became a minister of GCG, I believed that Roderick Meredith, the Presiding Evangelist there, and later the number two man,

Raymond McNair, also a long-time evangelist, were forming it to uphold *all* the truths the Church received through Mr. Armstrong. As they were the most senior evangelists in the entire Church, I thought they (and all of God's people) understood for over ten years (by 1993) that Mr. Armstrong was the Elijah who would “restore all things” to the Church (Matt. 17:11). However, after several discussions, it became apparent the leader no longer believed this, or never did, and was unwilling to consider he could be wrong and change his position. I began to notice him watering down and changing other truths. In addition, it became apparent that the basic conduct of certain ministers was directly contrary to God's laws.

Having been on the GCG Council of Elders from its inception, I tried as hard as possible to work within to get the Church back on track. I sincerely believed this was what God wanted me to do. I had a “voice” in the Council and I used it—a lot! Later, after the split and the previous leader's departure, I initially thought that many problems would be alleviated. I was wrong!

After three months, I saw that the new leader was also willing to tolerate false teachers and was compromising almost as much as his predecessor. Also, other leaders at headquarters were still not exercising proper stewardship over tithes and offerings. (In the event a plan was underway to possibly sue LCG and/or its leader, I went on record that I could not participate in such an action. I Corinthians 6 clearly prohibits initiating the awful spectacle that this would have become.)

I recognized that the flock was being divided and scattered. However imperfectly, I worked diligently to hold them together until I was *driven out*. However, I acknowledge that I FORCED THEIR HAND by confronting them, because I could no longer accept false teachings that were being so comfortably tolerated.

### “How Did All the ‘Splinters’ Get Off Track?”

The original Global Church of God formed in 1993 because of the apostasy engulfing the WCG. I was actually the first WCG pastor fired, because I insisted on adherence to the doctrines that Mr. Armstrong taught. It is that simple, and the record bears me out. (One other local pastor, Gerald Flurry, in late 1989, had been fired for believing and teaching numerous *false* ideas relating to prophecy.) By 1993, many had come to believe that the WCG was becoming the Laodicean Church of Revelation 3:14-22. However, its false doctrine became much worse than any could have imagined. In the end, the leadership eventually left God completely.



Mr. Armstrong explains, in effect, how *all* the splinters got off track. He writes as if he were observing events of today (all emphasis his throughout):

“But it is still true that two can’t walk together except they be agreed. I am agreed with God and with Christ the Head of the Church. I shall never water down the TRUTH He has revealed to me, nor in any manner compromise with it. We are ALL OF US going to have to AGREE with God and with Christ *HIS* Son, if we are to walk together with them, into God’s Kingdom.”

*“Reports About Garner Ted False,” WN, March 6, 1981*

With this statement in mind, there is a critical biblical principle that all of the organizations have abandoned, or have not *properly* applied, after emerging from the WCG. The Bible instructs—commands—that His people *avoid* those who teach heresy or sow division—all of them—and this command is not ambiguous!

What happened to “If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, RECEIVE HIM NOT into your house, neither bid him God speed” (II John 10)? What became of “A man that is an heretic after the first and second admonition REJECT” (Titus 3:10)? How about “Now I beseech you, brethren, MARK them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which you have learned; and AVOID them” (Rom. 16:17)? What about “For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers...whose mouths must be STOPPED, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for *filthy lucre’s sake*” (Titus 1:10-11)? And, finally, what about “CAST OUT the scorner, and contention shall go out; yes, strife and reproach shall cease” (Prov. 22:10)?

Certainly Mr. Armstrong never forgot these verses, and so many others. Notice:

“The apostle Paul instructs that in the Church we must be of one accord all speaking the same thing (I Cor. 1:10). We are to mark those who, in hostile attitude, cause division and controversy among brethren and avoid them.”

“If the entire Church had followed these commandments from God’s Word we would not have had the troubles in the Church in 1974 and the later 1970s...God’s Church must follow these biblical instructions...”

*Member Letter, April 1, 1984*

“In the Church we are commanded that all must speak the same thing as Christ does—all AGREE 100 percent. The CHURCH must be 100 percent in LOVING SUBMISSION to God’s authority. Just one hostile teammate on an athletic team will cause the whole team to lose games. One rotten apple rots those next to it in the crate. God COMMANDS we must MARK those who cause division and are in hostile attitude, and avoid them by disfellowshipment. It is because we did not obey that command in Scripture that we had trouble in the Church for a few years...”

*Member Letter, Sept. 20, 1983*

“The Apostle Paul, speaking his farewell to the elders of the large Church of God at Ephesus, said: ‘*I know this*, that after my departing, shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also *of your own selves* shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them’ (Acts 20:29-30).

“THAT DID HAPPEN IN THAT CHURCH!

“The *greatest danger of all* is when one who is among us, supposed to be one of us, approaches you with some doctrine or interpretation CONTRARY to that of God’s Church, and of God’s ministers.

“Whether it be a so-called ‘Jehovah Witness’ or even one supposedly a member of God’s own Church, remember THIS COMMAND: ‘If there come ANY unto you’—it does not say member of *another* church—it says if *ANY* come unto you—‘and bring *not this doctrine*, RECEIVE HIM NOT INTO YOUR HOUSE...’—DON’T LISTEN TO HIM!

“...we say...*do not listen any longer* to those who bring a DIFFERENT doctrine! If you have already seen these truths for yourself—already PROVED them in your own Bible—already proved this is the true Church of God, then GOD’S TEACHING, as I have shown you in this article from the BIBLE, is, DO NOT LISTEN to those who bring a different doctrine.”

*“Should We Listen to Others?”, GN, May 1960*

Mr. Armstrong did not worry whether some thought he was “harsh,” “too strict,” “unloving” or “abusive,” when he was protecting God’s people from false teaching:

“Are some of us trying to be more kind, merciful and considerate even than GOD? Are we actually disobeying God in our soft, fence-straddling approach toward certain others?

“Now we COMMAND YOU, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every *brother* that walks disor-

derly,’ and, ‘if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have *no company* with him...’ (II Thes. 3:6, 14).

“*God is far more strict in all such matters within the Church than we have sometimes been inclined to be.*

“We MUST NOT appear to try to be more kind than God. Christ will say, ‘Depart from me!’ *WE MUST NOT COMPROMISE! GOD DOES NOT!*

“I do pray for all such. I pray that God will BLESS THEM—with whatever He in His supreme wisdom knows is BEST FOR THEM—even though that may be severe PUNISHMENT!”

“*Can We Fellowship the Disfellowshipped?*”, WN, May 4, 1981

The Restored Church of God addresses both heresy and the heretics who bring it—this has been *very* rare, and largely at our beginning—not to be harsh or abusive, but because it protects the flock and *God commands it!*

### “Is Restored Just Another ‘Splinter’ Group?”

Initially, many expressed sorrow and anger that The Restored Church of God appeared to be another “split”—“more division.” It is true that the leaders of many groups *have* split their organizations for wrong or even outright corrupt reasons. Internal civil wars, driven by personalities, administration, politics or other non-doctrinal issues, have multiplied the splinters. Those privy to the facts recognize this. However, RCG is not “just another split.” Why?

When one teaches false doctrine, *he* is the one causing division!—not those actively resisting it! Was Mr. Armstrong “divisive” when he left Sardis over seemingly *minor* truths? When I left the WCG over false doctrine, did I “divide” the Church? When *you* left family and friends there, did *you* cause division—or stand up for truth?

Here is what this means: Each splinter upholds some or much truth. (Again, however, the amount is diminishing.) As a rule, the later that individuals or groups left the WCG, the more doctrinal baggage they carried with them. A second rule is that the more false doctrines people pick up, the less they seem to see it. (I address this in greater detail in our book *Surviving “Perilous Times.”*)

Most simply do not recognize the danger of entertaining even one false doctrine. God only authorizes *apostles* to introduce new doctrine—even “minor” ones. (And this only applies to matters that do not alter old understanding.) Missing this vital *key* has unlocked the “Pandora’s Box” of doctrinal confusion and division so widespread today. Neglecting to

HOLD FAST has repeatedly split God’s people, with devastating results—and this process has only been growing worse!

RCG is *gathering* brethren—not dividing and/or scattering them. Let me explain. God raised up this *reorganization* of His Church for all who are determined to fellowship with others who care about the *precision* and *exactness* of true doctrine as all of God’s people originally learned it.

As mentioned before, many have sought a place where the *FULL restored* truth is upheld. Ever growing numbers have been learning where this is. To others who remained in larger organizations, it is becoming much more obvious to many that their leaders will not hold to and defend everything the Church once believed. God’s doctrines have never been mere courses of food at a smorgasbord to *pick over*, depending upon one’s taste!

We realize it takes courage to come with us. In life, most people take the easy path and, in the Church, this means staying where they are “settled in”—“comfortable,” mistakenly rationalizing, “Well, *my* pastor seems to be teaching the truth.”

To learn more about the doctrine of the true Church, read our thorough book *The True Church – One Organization, or Many?*

### “Why Is It So Important to Accept Mr. Armstrong as the Elijah?”

The entire Worldwide Church of God once knew Mr. Armstrong fulfilled the prophetic role of the end-time Elijah. The evidence was clear—plain!—and easy to understand. Seemingly no one doubted it. I first preached this understanding on April 24, 1982, and have not deviated from it since. Yet, scores of thousands have now lost this understanding! Did they just forget it? Did they fall asleep? Did they not care? Who convinced them otherwise? How could such a vast memory lapse occur?

Grasp this central point! Whether Mr. Armstrong was the Elijah is one of the most profoundly important doctrines the Church taught under Mr. Armstrong’s leadership. Yet, most today have no idea why! (Read the thorough *I Will Send Elijah to Restore All Things*. It proves incontrovertibly that Mr. Armstrong fulfilled this prophecy. You will be stunned by the proof *and the implications* of this understanding!)

### “What Are RCG’s Priorities?”

1. To preach the gospel of the coming kingdom of God in all the nations of the world (Matt. 28:19-20).

2. To continue and complete the “Watchman” role—the Ezekiel Warning (Ezek. 33:7)—to the modern nations descended from ancient Israel.

3. To warn all those in the splinters—those of Laodicea—to “anoint their eyes” and regain their eyesight, as Christ “counsels” His people to do in Revelation 3:18.

4. To *gather, feed and teach* those wishing to remain Philadelphian to HOLD FAST what was handed down by Christ to the Church through His prophets and apostles, including Mr. Armstrong.

5. Directly related to this, zealously recapture and *practice* true brotherly love within RCG *and* to the splinters of the seventh era.

### “What Government Does RCG Follow?”

The WCG, under Mr. Armstrong, practiced one-man-leadership government. This was because the Church was led by an apostle who, literally, outranked all other ministers. But God’s form of government has always started with one man. Mr. Armstrong’s office authorized him to bring truth into the Church and to make doctrinal corrections, as well as to have all final “say” in the Church. No one of lesser rank can claim the exact same authority. For some years after Mr. Armstrong’s death, God had not provided another *apostle* to guide the Church in the same way. Therefore, after that time, God’s form of Church government was best described as one-man LEADERSHIP. In time, as was the case with Mr. Armstrong, God made it evident through the “fruit” that He had once again sent one to hold this office.

(Of course, the reader will have by now thoroughly examined the truth—the abundant *facts, proof, evidence* and *fruit*—of the last statement. Do not take my word. Be sure you have PROVEN this! This was very carefully explained in a series of sermons titled “Twenty-First Century Apostle,” and its companion two-part sermon titled, “*Watchman* to Israel—*Messenger* to Laodicea,” which introduces the “Apostle” series. These should have removed all doubt!)

We practice the exact same form of government—in every sense—practiced by the Worldwide Church of God under Mr. Armstrong’s leadership. This includes an active *Advisory* Council of Elders, different from the *ruling* Councils in some of the splinters. (The INTRODUCTION referenced a book titled *THE GOVERNMENT OF GOD*. Most of God’s people have forgotten the importance of and even what *is* God’s government. This fascinating book explains—actually re-explains—the most crucial subject in the entire Bible.)

Some could ask why we do not use a Corporation Sole structure of corporate government. Essentially, this means the *corporation*, per se, is one person. Mr. Armstrong did *temporarily* use this form of *corporate* government from Arizona, during the illegal “receivership crisis” of 1979. It may or may not be needed again. This cannot be precluded, should future circumstances warrant such a change. Also, since Ohio law does not permit it, the question is now largely moot for us because God put our Headquarters here.

Under Christ, there is one leader in the Church. What does this mean? *No one*, including me, is allowed to change existing doctrine. Our by-laws state this and cannot be overruled, because our doctrinal positions define who we are and why this organization exists! My office does not permit me to overturn what Mr. Armstrong taught. I may only add to the foundation Christ laid through him—and these would almost certainly be minor points clarifying existing truths, most likely regarding prophecy.

While an Advisory Council of Elders has been established to advise on major decisions, just as Mr. Armstrong employed a similar council, I have tried to regularly seek counsel from our elders and certain others since our beginning. But understand. RCG’s Council will NEVER change doctrine—by some percentage of majority “vote,” or by any other means!

### “Haven’t You Changed Your Position on Government?”

I have always believed, as Mr. Armstrong taught in the first of his “18 truths,” that God works through one leading man. Again, however, only an apostle can bring truth to the Church. GCG’s first leader began to change doctrine. As a result, for a time, I thought that only an empowered Council could “check” a leader going astray, and preserve GCG—and I sincerely did not see another man or organization that I could follow. As explained, and like Mr. Armstrong in Sardis for a period, I tried to work from within as long as possible—partly because I had not yet considered how or that God would use me.

After the LCG/GCG split, I supported the remaining older evangelist as the decision-maker. It was not until April 13, 1999, that I learned we did not even have a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) making final decisions on behalf of the corporation. (Mr. Armstrong was the WCG CEO.) When I complained, I learned later that they had quietly appointed one. *Three* men had been sharing the leadership, with no one man taking responsibility to do what needed to be done. Time is never kind to organizations led this way.

Christ said, “For the children of *this world* are in their generation wiser than the children of light” (Luke 16:8). Even in “this world,” no successful corporation is run by committee. Mr. Armstrong strongly disliked committees. Councils and boards, holding final authority, are just nice words for *committees*!

Our website (*rcg.org*) carries several sermons carefully explaining God’s form of government. They show that God has always worked through the servants HE selects, not those *people* choose or elect. (*THE GOVERNMENT OF GOD* book works together with these sermons.)

### **“What Emphasis Is on Mr. Armstrong vs. His Teachings?”**

God gave hundreds of doctrines to His Church through Mr. Armstrong. Many seem oblivious to the fact that much of what Mr. Armstrong restored has been lost *again*. We have rewritten and “restored”—again!—what had been restored to the Church between 1934 and 1986.

Like all previous apostles, Mr. Armstrong died. Therefore, his teachings are part of the “foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone” (Eph. 2:20) on which the Church stands. However, as the Elijah, Mr. Armstrong fulfilled a greater prophecy than any other apostle in New Testament Church history. He reached many more people than all the earlier apostles *combined*. But we do not *overly* focus on or even appear to remotely worship him. This can become idolatry, and it terribly dishonors his memory. Tragically, many now seem to unwittingly do this.

The only areas in which the Church can grow in knowledge are those that *do not reverse established doctrine*. We *can* add to what God already gave—but only in clarifying existing truths, without altering the foundation. However, RCG will grow in truths *already* revealed. Mr. Armstrong freely stated (openly and privately) that there were prophetic details that God had not fully revealed to him. Again, this may be the primary area in which new or more clear understanding may be given.

### **“Are You Preaching the Gospel to the World?”**

Our book *The Work of God – Its Final Chapter!* shows our absolute commitment to continuing the Work of God, and exactly as was done in The Worldwide Church of God under Mr. Armstrong. I repeat: We are already doing this through our vast websites and a variety of other means. As God has empowered us, we have been greatly expanding the

Work. Of course, this will *never* be done at the expense of properly feeding the *already-existing* flock! But this is not a real concern for the Church *truly* led by Christ. We are a BIG Work, growing bigger!

As explained, RCG *is* taking the announcement of the kingdom of God to the world and the special warning to the nations of modern Israel, through a vast array of books, booklets, articles and magazines—more than has ever existed over the 6,000 years God has been working with human beings. We offer a greater diversity of, and more, literature than all the other splinters *combined*—with more added regularly.

Just a quick glance through either one of our three websites reveals a stunning picture!

Anyone who believes there is no ongoing obligation for the Church to announce the kingdom of God to all nations does not understand basic Christianity, let alone what Mr. Armstrong taught! No one can claim to love people, while saying the spiritual treasure shared with us should no longer be shared with others! You saw that this attitude is now common, and that some even cite Mr. Armstrong as the source of their belief.

Here are just two quotes from Mr. Armstrong about the need to continue the Work until the Tribulation. Many others could be included. They demonstrate that those quoting Mr. Armstrong as proof the Work is over, are terribly misguided. As the understanding of what is my office became more clear, this became its own proof that the Work of God is far from over until there is no more time to do it:

“Brethren, if we are to continue to grow—and to grow SPIRITUALLY as well as in numbers—we must remember that the PURPOSE of the Church is, first, to GO INTO ALL THE WORLD and preach Christ’s GOSPEL. The FIRST commission to the Church is just that. Anyone who looks on that Great commission of Christ as ‘Armstrong’s private work’ is just not a member of GOD’S Church. Anyone who does not have his whole heart in that work IS NOT A MEMBER OF GOD’S TRUE CHURCH, and has no right whatsoever to attend or fellowship in any of its local congregations.”

*“Why Local Assemblies?”*, GN, March 1954

“We CANNOT AFFORD TO BECOME LUKEWARM! We cannot afford to let our minds drift from the intense NEED for this very special mission of this particular time in world history, so shortly before Christ’s coming and HIS KINGDOM!

“Now about the Work itself.



“Few understand just what IS the Church. There are so many churches in the world. People just take churches for granted. But more than 1,953 years ago, Jesus Christ said, ‘I will build my Church.’ Few know WHY He built it—for what PURPOSE. The purpose, primarily, was dual:

“1) to proclaim to the world the Gospel Message God sent to mankind by Jesus as God’s Messenger (Mal. 3:1) of the coming Kingdom of God,

“2) to call and prepare a chosen people...

“I have NEVER SAID I expect to live until Christ comes.”

*Co-worker Letter, March 19, 1981*

We will continue the Work to whatever size and degree *God* permits. Of course, RCG already has a sizeable staff, and is continuing to hire more. As mentioned, we have a tremendous amount of literature, and have already employed many ideas about *how* to do the Work.

For instance, *The Plain Truth* Newsstand Distribution Program was a project I largely developed, almost from its inception (others actually started it). I loved working with this program in conjunction with conducting Public Bible Lectures in every major and medium-sized city in all of my pastorates. RCG now has a similar worldwide Newsstand Distribution Program with our magazine *The Real Truth*. The full magazine is also available on our *realtruth.org* website. We have also produced over 120 *World to Come* broadcasts, which are available on our *worldtocome.org* website. There are also hundreds of *World to Come* broadcasts in audio.

Jesus Christ is the active Head of His Church. Although all of the indicators suggest that an absolutely immense Work will continue to ensue, only He knows how much time is left in this age and how big we will grow before the Two Witnesses appear. Certainly, the *warning* message God will issue to the nations of Israel will be the greatest that has *ever* occurred. However, we also recognize the prophesied “famine of the Word” may not be many more years ahead, so we are careful to follow Christ—neither getting ahead of Him nor falling behind His lead, yet always ready to step out in faith to go through *any* open doors presented to us. This will not change!

### “What Else Is Different About RCG?”

The Headquarters of RCG truly strives to do everything “decently and in order” (I Cor. 14:40), and we are determined to eliminate the confusion

Satan always injects wherever he can. One identifying characteristic of RCG is that we all “speak the same thing.”

Notice again Mr. Armstrong’s words:

“But during these 43 years, I have frequently been pressured to compromise—‘just a little’—with God’s TRUTH. “[God] entrusted me with this precious TRUTH...But honestly, now, WHAT DO YOU THINK?

“Wouldn’t it be all right to compromise, ‘just a little,’ on some ‘unimportant minor point?’ Especially on some ostensibly unimportant point where we appear ‘crazy’ to the world.

“Nevertheless, if we begin to compromise with God’s TRUTH, even in the smallest, slightest manner, we have allowed Satan to get a foot into the door of the Church, and soon he will push open the door (he is stronger than we) and take over the whole Church. ‘A little leaven leavens the WHOLE LUMP!’...I have NEVER compromised with God’s truth...I never shall!”

*“Personal,” GN, Dec. 1976*

Reread this last statement. The honest person knows that Mr. Armstrong would *disfellowship* most ministers in the splinters today. Raymond McNair, who eventually went on to lead his own small splinter (he is now deceased), asserted that Mr. Armstrong “tolerated alternative views.” The above statement disproves this. He *never* “tolerated alternative views.” I was disfellowshipped from two organizations (and marked by others) for *not* compromising—*not* tolerating “alternative views.” It is astounding how quickly so many leaders seemed to revert to the same tactics of Mr. Armstrong’s successors!

As stated, RCG promotes and practices true brotherly love. One cannot be of the era known for this unless he himself is known for this vital companion to avoiding all compromise. We accept those who picked up different splinter “cultures,” but only if they are determined to return to the full truth and to this crucial quality of the sixth era.

Everyone traveled different paths from the WCG to the RCG. All absorbed different ideas, attitudes and practices. We work patiently with brethren to help them *unlearn* these. Mr. Armstrong taught that conversion is two-fold—*learning* the truth and *unlearning* error. In this way, we “stand fast in *one* spirit, with *one* mind” (Phil. 1:27), striving to actively polish our unity. Most have had to do this *unlearning* for the SECOND TIME.

We make certain that RCG is the best-informed organization. God’s sheep are not dumb. They appreciate honesty and forthrightness—and

recognize it when they see it. Brethren are being repeatedly betrayed by leaders they once trusted. Sadly, suspicion toward authority runs rampant, with people having been disfellowshipped after merely questioning leaders not upholding the truth. We are striving to be “squeaky clean”—to stand on integrity, principle and Christian ethics. For this and other reasons (John 15:14-15), I strive to be as *open* as possible with the membership of RCG. Besides, I can no longer be fired for it!

Headquarters and all departments within it also strive to be good stewards of God’s tithes and offerings. Much care is taken to never spend beyond what God sends. No leader is authorized to do this. Just as Mr. Armstrong did, we maintain prudent reserves. Also, we do thorough and honest budget projections to carefully control spending and cash flow. I am aware of the staggering size of some splinter leaders’ salaries, and am paid much less than what most of them receive.

Tithes belong to GOD—and they must be treated as such!

In addition, RCG brethren are experiencing—and demonstrating—real, genuine HAPPINESS. Before the age ends, it will be said that we were the HAPPIEST group—although we will almost certainly also be the most *persecuted* prior to the Tribulation. When all believe the same things and truly practice God’s love, two *giant* reasons that the Church of God ceased to be a place of joy are removed. Making Christianity the way of joy again is its own high priority with us. The Bible is filled with verses showing how truly *happy* human beings become when fully obeying God.

Examine our overall fruits!

Finally, we do not declare ourselves to be Philadelphians by simple assertion, thus “coronating” ourselves to this status. *That is God’s job!* We fervently strive to *be* Philadelphian. The greatest reason lukewarmness is dominant at the end of the age is that everyone starts with the same general assumption—Laodicea is SOMEBODY ELSE, SOMEWHERE ELSE! There is no more dangerous assumption! Being Philadelphian is a direct *by-product* of what you *do* and what you *believe*, including membership in the one, unified, organized Body of Christ—and nothing else.

Do not be seduced! Do not fall prey to the idea that you can be Philadelphian by simple declaration or by mere membership in a particular organization. This trap is snaring many thousands of unsuspecting people!

Each organization has its own, usually highly creative and wrong theory of, “Here’s why we’re Philadelphia and everyone else is Laodicea.” We ask God to help us meet the *biblical earmarks* of the sixth era, and then pray that *He* finds us worthy of this.

We believe the one true Church and the one organized, unified Body of Christ understanding! We know that all who hold to what Philadelphia

once believed will eventually have to WALK TOGETHER—in ONE ORGANIZATION. Many verses make this unmistakably plain (I Cor. 1:10 and 12:1-31; John 15; Eph. 4:2-16; Phil. 1:27; Acts 2:42; Matt. 12:25-30; and so many others)! The interested reader will also want to read my splinter book on *THE TRUE CHURCH*.

### “What Do You Teach About...?”

I am often asked questions starting with “I know that you intend to teach what Mr. Armstrong taught, but what do you teach regarding...?” While the rest of the question varies from person to person, these two introductory phrases usually do not. This subject bears repeating in a different way. The answer to *all* the questions that follow this lead-in is the same: We teach (and do so actively) what God taught His Church through Mr. Armstrong! There are no exceptions!

In this regard, some see *solutions* where others only see *problems*. Many express that they see “problems” with anyone trying to hold completely to what Mr. Armstrong taught. They offer various “reasons” this cannot be done, or why no one should even try anymore, asserting that some policies and doctrines he taught were “problematic”—or plain wrong. Yet, few said this when Mr. Armstrong was *alive*! Now that he is gone, there seems to be no end of those who feel this way.

Think! Why would 150,000 (in the WCG) believe we could be united under what God gave His Church through Mr. Armstrong—that people could routinely and confidently practice this understanding *when he was alive*!—and now feel this is *virtually impossible*? It is incredible that only a few percent (at most) even appear to be *able* to understand—and in the case of thousands, even *recollect*—what *all* brethren believed for decades. We were often told to “PROVE all things; hold fast that which is good” (I Thes. 5:21). How many actually did this with every doctrine?

Why does this same way of life *now* seem so incomprehensible to so many?

The Restored Church of God officially disregards all naysayers and does not tolerate the division that false doctrine and the rejection of established Church traditions inevitably bring!

### “Why Do You Say That All Other Groups Are in Error?”

All of the other groups have compromised or directly thrown out numerous doctrines, and justify these changes with the *same* clever ruses used

by the apostates. Gimmicks and ploys used by the WCG have been reinvented and are being employed on God's people *again*. Yet, and this is unbelievable, only the most perceptive seem to see this—or even *care* to. Do some of the following phrases sound familiar? Are you still hearing them in your organization?

- “This is new understanding.”
- “Mature Christians will see it.”
- “It is not a big change or the trunk of the tree.”
- “We must grow in grace and knowledge because Mr. Armstrong did.”
- “This change is not essential for salvation.”
- “This is a minor change”—or “only a clarification.”
- “Mr. Armstrong often changed doctrine. We need to follow his example.”
- “This is just speculation.”
- “This is not a core doctrine.”
- “There are no changes.”

In *There Came a Falling Away*, I carefully list 43 different ways—methods—that changes were explained away by the WCG leadership, either as or after being introduced. Consider! Anyone can change virtually anything, after first declaring it “minor.” I watched two leaders do this repeatedly with great success, and without the members knowing anything had happened. Most groups have an “official” statement of beliefs. These are invariably anemic, incomplete and broad enough to satisfy most factions within their respective organizations, and also permit a wide diversity of teachings within their groups. Actually, most groups could swap statements and find them virtually interchangeable!

In addition, splinter leaders tend to look the other way while their more popular, well-known ministers promote unscriptural pet theories. In this way, tithepayers who enjoy and prefer these kinds of “ministers” remain “in house” (at least temporarily).

Understand that false teaching exists at two distinct levels in all the splinters—*official* and *unofficial*! What does this mean? The *official* level consists of errors taught and sanctioned by Headquarters. The *unofficial* level consists of a wide range of strange, quirky, even bizarre (but often superficially attractive) ideas, with which rogue ministers are allowed to freelance from their own or others’ pulpits, unimpeded by official restraint or discipline.

On the other hand, almost 2,000 years of Church history have shown that ministers who will *not* compromise *will be* restrained and disciplined by leaders who *do*! This happened to me three separate times.

### “PCG Claims to Hold Fast—How Are You Different?”

Strangely, despite our almost unending list of differences with the organization known as The Philadelphia Church of God (PCG), we are often thought to be at least similar to them, if not the same. This view could scarcely be more incorrect!

The leadership of PCG has now probably departed further from the truth taught by Mr. Armstrong and the Bible than any other splinter. What *may* have begun as an attempt to uphold the truth has become something very, very different. A fair-minded look at just the keynote book about the book of Malachi reveals this, yet his book on this subject has been the veritable anchor of PCG's teaching from its inception. To those who know their Bible, it is ridiculous nonsense and, of course, was certainly *never* the “little book” of Revelation 10, as claimed! Mr. Armstrong more than once identified this as the book of Ezekiel.

Take time to review Revelation 22:18 and Proverbs 30:5-6 in this regard! (Our book *Is “That Prophet” Alive Today? – The Rise of False Prophets* explains the truly grave spiritual danger to those who remain in PCG and support rank blasphemy pouring from the leadership! There are several sections in this book, and some of these deal with the growing danger of false prophets and false prophecies within the splinters and slivers.)

Also, while we have clear standards, as did the WCG under Mr. Armstrong, people are not made to “run a gauntlet” to join The Restored Church of God.

I have learned that many brethren who went with PCG are among the most zealous I have seen. I commend them for this! But sadly, terrible fear exists among many of them because of tactics used on them by their leaders. Thousands have either left or been disfellowshipped there due to the brutality and outright spiritual terrorism—besides much false doctrine—practiced there. Since “perfect love casts out fear,” then it could also be said, “perfect fear casts out love.”

PCG proves this with so many!

I have seen many, many people who leave groups that continually attack others end up no longer even capable of loving other human beings. Tragically, it is as though some of them have been spiritually “ruined.” Bitterness and a puffed-up spirit of criticism has been the results in minds unable to see what happened.

Brutal treatment generally produces a lack of love and instills fear and mistrust within its victims. Because of past abuse, some people come to despise *any* form of government, becoming literally unteach-

able and ungovernable. PCG has destroyed brethren—and has done this relentlessly! Those who remain there will eventually be spiritually ruined. Many are taught that Mr. Armstrong forbade members to talk with ex-member relatives, or those of any other groups.

In Ezekiel 34:4, God speaks of this world's shepherds: "...*but with force and with cruelty have you ruled them.*" Woe to leaders who routinely discipline brethren without cause. Mr. Armstrong was no shrinking violet, and neither am I. But he was often accused of being harsh when he was not at all—when he was merely defending and protecting the truth or God's flock. I have certainly experienced the kind of accusations that were leveled against Mr. Armstrong. However, this is very different from what is occurring in PCG.

### **"Who Are You?"**

Before answering who I am, here is who I am *not*. I am not an evangelist. I am not the Elijah or Elisha following him. I am not a "Presiding" anything. And I certainly am not one of the Two Witnesses—actually cannot be, because they are prophets. I was led to organize The Restored Church of God believing I was merely a determined Senior Pastor who would not compromise with God's truth or the need to continue His Work. The sermons referenced earlier explained in detail what God eventually showed my office and responsibilities to be—just as He did with Mr. Armstrong in late 1952, a full 19 years after he had begun the Work. I have always felt that in the resurrection, I will face God and Christ (and, for that matter, Mr. Armstrong), and I am resolved to give a good account of myself. God alone will continue to decide exactly how He uses me. I have complete faith in this!

My first assignment in the ministry was in the summer of 1970. After that time, I served in Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, New York, New Jersey and Ohio, working directly with 10,000-plus brethren. Except for my final assignment, I always replaced ministers who were either fired or suspended, or who had resigned. These circumstances forced me to face and learn many lessons about division, confusion, heresy, corrupt conduct and vile practices by both ministers and members. In each case, I inherited a series of chaotic and very challenging circumstances. Just having to solve one serious problem after another was enough to give me a *reputation* for being harsh and abusive—and perception became reality in the minds of many who have never known me.

I have had to accept that I will never outrun this perception. Of course, many seem to look for "corroboration" of my reputation until

they "find" it. But Christ's sheep hear His VOICE OF TRUTH through the fog of murderous false charges and lies. These attacks remain part of the test for *every* Christian for the remainder of the age.

I decided years ago that I would compromise nothing. I have certainly not always done this perfectly. Some claim I allege that I have *never* compromised doctrine, but that is untrue. I accepted a couple of false ideas in the early nineties. I apologized to my pastorate *in writing*. That letter was once cited as "proof" that I "compromised." I freely admit this, and took responsibility for what I did.

*Where are the others who have done the same?* I am not aware of any other minister who wrote a letter of apology to his congregation. As the first WCG pastor fired for not supporting the apostates, I taught *much less* that was wrong (two doctrines)—and for a far shorter period of time—than any other minister. Most taught *many* wrong doctrines, *and still do*, and have apologized for *nothing*! Certainly no one can accuse them by pointing to their letters of apology. Such letters do not exist!

It is a source of continual amazement that ministers who still teach *many* false doctrines get a virtual free pass merely because they are not *claiming* to hold fast. Four former "friends," who all later went with the United Church of God, turned me in to Pasadena and secured my termination from the WCG. These same men taught, *and still teach*, *MANY* false doctrines. They have never apologized. But I have had to realize that the longer I will not compromise, the more I will probably be attacked by certain people for having done this imperfectly. Having no choice anyway, I accept this as a cross I have to bear.

As mentioned, my policy of no-compromise has repeatedly gotten me *fired*—and *demoted* three other times. And I have also been literally put on trial by Church leaders five separate times, and been threatened by Pasadena, and later San Diego (the Global Church of God headquarters), many other times. I have been "marked" for "sowing discord and division"—*always* over doctrine, although this was *never* the given reason announced publicly. (Eventually, all the groups may mark RCG brethren and/or our leaders and me.) I am still teaching the *exact same truths* I have taught for the past three-plus decades. It was this that drove me, in 1993, to collate in *There Came a Falling Away* all the heresies taught by Mr. Armstrong's successors. (For those who wish to know more about me personally than contained in the brief comments here, my 2-volume Biography is available.)

I had the unique opportunity to have had a close personal relationship with Mr. Armstrong. I was not as close as his most personal aides at Headquarters, but I was privileged to spend many wonderful hours dis-



cussing with him doctrine, prophecy, administrative matters, and numerous other things, over a 15-year period. This relationship began when I married his secretary (the former Miss Shirley Ochs) in 1971, and it slowly grew from that time. In late 1978, Mr. Armstrong made me promise, personally, that I would never preach anything other than the truth. Though I never dreamed this promise could lead me to my current position, it is one that I am still determined to keep.

I treasure the hours spent with Mr. Armstrong during the time he was putting the Church “back on track.” We sometimes discussed this process at length. More was learned from this time with him than I could possibly relate here. He would occasionally write articles and letters, and then call to read them to me. We also discussed strategy, liberalism, job appointments, and much more through those years. Obviously, although I was certainly appreciative at the time, this experience has vastly more meaning and value to me today than it did then.

I watched Mr. Armstrong courageously face and make bold decisions time and again. He *never* shrank from the “tough calls,” and always strove to do what was right! I observed his unwillingness to compromise—no matter the cost. He did not care if people left the Church or income dropped due to doctrinal or administrative decisions. He absolutely would not *ever* compromise on *anything* doctrinal. He was concerned about pleasing God—not men!

I have learned that many will *say* this, but Mr. Armstrong *PRACTICED* it—and simply did not fear men!

Shortly after I went with GCG, as mentioned earlier, I gave three “30 Reasons to Follow the Truth” sermons. They helped thousands around the world understand that they had to leave the apostasy in the WCG. Of course, many came with GCG. Those sermons, with the early book *There Came a Falling Away*, demonstrate that I have certainly sought to teach God’s people not to deviate from His truth. Having gone on record for so long in this way, I could never get away with false teaching. God’s people—and my detractors—would immediately “call me on it.”

God called Mr. Armstrong out of the business world. He repeatedly told the Church that his training was in advertising. In this regard, some may know I inherited a small company upon my father’s death in 1995. (I sold it in 2000.) Also, I have been exposed to successful businessmen in my family throughout my life. Though not Bill Gates, Warren Buffet, or a “captain of industry,” I do have a solid working knowledge of the *corporate*, business side of the Church and Work of God. But only God, not human beings, sustains the Church. Yet, He does give His leaders and

people certain experiences so we can become His tools. I was given certain business experiences that are invaluable to me now!

Again, when the GCG leader established a Council of Elders in 1995, I was included and served for over four years until my termination. I strove to work *within* to influence the leaders to remove false teachings (and false teachers, when necessary).

At one point, there was offered a very high position at GCG headquarters. I declined because I did not want to leave the brethren in Akron, Ohio. I have always considered myself a field pastor, and to some degree still do. But I have had to adjust to a role requiring me to do things other than my first love of pastoring. Nevertheless, I was able to gain experience as a Regional Pastor over the northeastern United States for several years. Eventually, addressing false teaching and false teachers in my region resulted in my removal from this office. I was repeatedly told, in no uncertain terms, by Roderick Meredith that my actions were “costing the Church money.” This led directly to his decision to systematically work very quietly toward my eventual removal from the ministry.

I have tried to protect those entrusted to me. Many have accused me of being harsh, simply because I would not permit God’s people to be harmed by division and false doctrine. Obviously, those who cause division can sometimes be worked with, and shown how they are hurting Christ’s flock. However, when they are of a different spirit, a pastor’s first duty is to the flock. He cannot worry about what people—let alone enemies!—think. In those moments, a minister is in a certain catch-22: protect the flock, but be thought harsh—or do not protect it, and be viewed as a “nice guy.” (Yet, I have had to actually disfellowship no more than five people throughout the last 20 to 25 years, since the early 80s.)

Ultimately, it is the difficult decisions made to shield the flock that *define* leaders!

After seeing so many evangelists and senior ministers compromise doctrine and conduct, I had no choice but to proceed alone, knowing Christ had selected me for an extraordinary purpose. But in the end, the response of courageous, convicted people who joined us sent its own message. This said, I am determined to always remain “little in my own eyes.” I have seen what happens to those who forget this.

### “Why Are You So Often Attacked?”

It should be no surprise that taking a stand for the truth brings persecution. Mr. Armstrong fearlessly taught God’s Way and was—and still is—more persecuted than possibly anyone in the history of God’s

Church. During the events surrounding my GCG termination, all sorts of accusations were directed at me as part of a scare campaign to deter people from leaving GCG. Here is a small sampling:

- “He wants to promote himself and gather a following.”
- “He advises members not to tithe so GCG will fail.”
- “He lacks faith when he predicts bankruptcy for GCG.”
- “He doesn’t practice Matthew 18:15.”
- “He sows division and discord.”
- “He is disrespectful and rebellious.”

While these accusations are ridiculous, they were predictable. Actually, the behavior imputed to me for so long by my detractors has virtually made my ministry a subject of legend. If even a quarter of the things ascribed to my character were true, no one would have followed me to the kitchen, let alone stayed in my congregations—trusting they were following Christ. The people who call me harsh all fit the same description—they compromise God’s doctrines, teachings or law, in some clear way, and would not be instructed or corrected when necessary. Circumstances often required me to address wrong conduct, usually when other ministers would have found such decisions politically incorrect or “unsafe,” because of headquarters’ probable reaction.

Many ministers find reasons to avoid “hard call” decisions. And I have had to learn that leaders are often *lonely*. But I have never forgotten what my father taught me, time and again: “When the going gets tough, the tough get going.” This motto has served me without fail.

Consider. Satan’s hatred toward those teaching and believing God’s truth is directly proportional to HOW MUCH truth they teach and believe. Do not expect people to understand those who love, are zealous for, and courageously protect and defend *all* of God’s doctrines when they do not feel this way themselves. On what basis *can* they understand or relate to us? To them, we seem strange—rigid—intolerant—stuck in the past—unable to grow—narrow-minded—self-righteous, etc. Their spiritual values will not permit them to see us otherwise. In their misguided zeal, they attack and persecute what they cannot comprehend.

*Philadelphians never respond in kind!* They accept that their “tribulation” is NOW—that they “through *much tribulation* enter into the kingdom of God” (Acts 14:22)! We treat with brotherly love those who choose not to join us, while willingly taking their “shots” at us as “blessings with rejoicing” (Matt. 5:11-12). (Carefully read our thorough book *Should Accusers Be Answered? – Do You Believe Obvious Lies?*)

The Proverbs state, “The righteous are bold as a lion” (28:1). We are not intimidated by attacks. The psalmist said, “The LORD is on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me?” (118:6).

Understand this point! I will not buckle under persecution or false charges, no matter how relentless or intense!

Satan’s effort to attack me and scare off God’s people seems to have had the opposite effect for some. Sadly, when others have become confused or are deterred merely by false accusations, the truth suddenly becomes less important.

### “Do You Want or Expect Other Groups to Fail?”

Many organizations formed in the wake of the apostasy. They play a role in prophecy, and are home for the vast number of true Christians—those who are not *fully* holding fast. Together, they form Laodicea—God’s people! These people need a place to go or they will give up and quit. No Christian, let alone one with brotherly love, can hope any of these groups fail. These attitudes are incompatible, so we hope they survive.

But consider! On the other hand, those who: (1) Will not do the Work, (2) reject God’s government and all ministerial authority over them, (3) generally do not assemble together, (4) do not pay God’s tithes, (5) reject the one true Church doctrine, among other teachings, etc., are simply no longer Christians. In addition, these tend to accuse and slander others, and almost by routine. No one has to wish for their demise because they have already passed beyond the seventh era and *out of Christianity* altogether. Lacking deep repentance—THEY ARE GONE!

We in RCG want *all* lukewarm corporate groups to survive—in whatever doctrinal state. The *alternative* is that many there would otherwise fall away *completely*, no longer even being part of the last era. A Christian prays for *all* God’s people, no matter their spiritual condition. We should want to see all brethren repent and in the kingdom of God. God is “not willing that *any* should perish” (II Pet. 3:9) and would “have *all men* to be saved” (I Tim. 2:4). You cannot want less!

### “Why Have You Written So Much About GCG and LCG?”

There is only one reason I originally focused on the doctrinal problems of GCG and LCG. Many of the questions we initially received were from brethren in those organizations or from those leaving them to join RCG. After all, it had been the center of my focus for six-plus years. If I had

come through another group, I would be answering questions about *that* group instead of GCG and LCG. These organizations are no different from others, having taken their place among the various corporate segments constituting Laodicea. This is not to say that all the people in these organizations will remain Laodicean. I know some will not. But the corporate LEADERSHIP is another matter. Actually hundreds have left them to join us, with this exodus having accelerated for some time.

It is absolutely critical to see that, in time, all those of Philadelphian thinking—those who are willing to “anoint their eyes”—must join one organization—The Restored Church of God! Many more faithful brethren and more ministers in these organizations *will* eventually vacate to hold fast and finish the Work with us.

After questions about why I left GCG/LCG subsided, it was no longer necessary to focus as much on the doctrinal problems of *these* groups. (Reading the article “Endless False Doctrines” in *Surviving “Perilous Times”* is invaluable.)

These organizations may feel I am attacking them simply because their errors are being identified. But they are *not* our enemies. They feel threatened by my unwillingness to compromise where they do, and are left with no recourse but to treat *me* as an enemy. Nevertheless, we strive to “turn the other cheek...love our enemies...bless them that curse us” (Matt. 5:39-44), and continually pray for them.

### **“Are You the ‘Doctrinal Watchdog’ For All the Groups?”**

Some few have written suggesting that I fulfill this role. This idea came from reading my books on the WCG doctrinal changes. In a sense, I have been doing this since early 1993. But God has not specifically designated me to count every false doctrine without end.

The difficulty with this is that many false teachings are given in sermons instead of writing. This makes “proving” them much more difficult. Think of the hours necessary to hear *every* sermon by *every* minister in *every* organization. Then I would have to transcribe them in some documented, organized form. This would be a *staggering task*, requiring tremendous time. Even a whole *team* of many full-time people could never accomplish this. Keeping RCG doctrinally pure is my *primary* responsibility—and the all-powerful Christ is well able to find those who will anoint their eyes and bring them here.

The two-part sermon (especially the second part) “Foretold: Watchman to Israel—Messenger to Laodicea” explains that God select-

ed one to carry the final warning to the last era of His people. The sermons and books in the SEP fulfill this responsibility.

We have done our part. It is the responsibility of those in the other organizations to evaluate their own headquarters’ teachings and compare them with God’s doctrines. It was always the intent that *There Came a Falling Away* would greatly assist in this. In the end, you must take *personal* responsibility as your own *watchdog* of doctrine and tradition, and “work out your own salvation with fear and trembling” (Phil. 2:12).

### **“Where Is the Church in Prophecy Today?”**

I left the WCG thinking it would remain Laodicea instead of becoming fully apostate. My first “30 Reasons” sermon plainly reflects this. Soon after, I realized that, after Christ called all His people out of the apostasy into various organizations, He then must call those who will anoint their eyes from Laodicea before taking them to the Place of Safety. Understand! Mr. Armstrong had to *leave* Sardis to be Philadelphian—though he only fully understood this much later.

It is apparent that there are those striving to be Philadelphian, those who are willing to “anoint their eyes,” in virtually all the splinters. The fact that *organizations* are Laodicean does not mean that all of the *people* with them will remain so. Again, those who return to a Philadelphian spirit and condition eventually must leave their group. We have long known—and this was always plainly understood!—that God does *not* co-mingle people of different Church eras, or conditions. People must leave Laodicea to *become* Philadelphian again. If not, they will retain and worsen in the characteristics of Laodicea. In time, all brethren assume the spiritual temperature of the corporate “rooms” in which they reside.

God’s people scattered as they lost zeal for holding to all of His doctrines. Laodiceans lack the understanding and ZEAL to protect the truth Christ calls “hidden treasure.” Many are allowing *some* of this to fall from their treasure chest. For this reason, people are unable to agree on which doctrines to keep, and cannot “walk together” (Amos 3:3). Hence, groups keep splitting.

This condition is part of a great MASTER PLAN playing out in a remarkable way. Nothing is out of control! God’s Plan is fully UNDER CONTROL! There are two groups at the end: “The wise that understand” this plan (Dan. 11:32-34; 12:10; Matt. 24:15), and the “*blind* and naked” who do *not* (Rev. 3:17).

The big corporate splinters have become a lesser partner of the apostasy. People went to many organizations, believing these would help them *uphold truth*. Invariably, all held to *some* things, but not *everything*. Within each group, perhaps a tiny few strove to *fully* hold fast (be careful of this assumption about yourself), but most did not.

People of *two separate conditions* emerged from the apostasy. When counted together, one will be large, but split up—“scattered” (Dan. 12:7)—unable to be united in doctrine because it cannot agree on what is thought to be *error* and what should be accepted as *truth*.

Also, if new converts receive God’s Spirit in any of these groups, Christ promises to “knock on their door” (Rev. 3:20) and bring them to His Church. Remember, He calls “His sheep *by name*” when in danger. *If* they answer, He then places them into the smaller group—the Body of Christ—comprised of those “holding fast to what they have” (Rev. 3:11).

I often hear people declare they are waiting for someone, a “mighty man” of sorts, to come and unite the churches. Some even think this may be the role of a yet *future* Elijah, because they forgot or did not recognize Mr. Armstrong fulfilled Malachi 4:5-6 and Matthew 17:11.

It is certainly natural to want everyone together again. But this is a false hope. Reunification is *not* foretold to happen, and the scattering will only grow worse—MUCH WORSE! But nostalgia is a powerful human emotion. Who is not nostalgic for the good times all shared when Mr. Armstrong was alive?

The Bible does not describe a “coming back together” within God’s plan of two *co-existing*—but not *co-mingled*—end-time categories of brethren. Since Laodiceans lack zeal for all things of God, those of this era will likely not remotely be able to sufficiently agree to walk in one organization. The idea that organizations could unite, *and* merge with Philadelphia, is impossible, because of Amos 3:3 and other verses. Philadelphians *will* unite because they all believe the SAME THING! Laodiceans agree with neither Philadelphians, each other—nor God!

Is this clear? Read and reread it until it is imbedded in your mind.

Now understand! History will record that RCG did much more to GATHER the flock than *scatter* it. But I do not believe for an instant that all entering RCG are automatically Philadelphian. Just joining the right organization does not make one a part of the sixth era. However, absolute doctrinal unity within the teachings God gave the Church through Mr. Armstrong is the *only* correct STARTING POINT! This *must* be understood. Also, Philadelphians must be gathered *before* flight *together* to the Place of Safety. There are numerous biblical reasons that Christ must *gather* them FIRST, well before departure!

Therefore, God raised up The Restored Church of God to finish His true Work and to gather *before* they flee to protection those who will anoint their eyes and who will not compromise.

All of this is thoroughly covered in *The True Church – One Organization, or Many?*

### “How Big Do You Expect RCG to Get?”

Many have asked how “big” we are—what is our attendance. I have no plan to answer this! Though I have a general idea, I do not know for certain and do not really care to know. The Restored Church of God is not concerned with “numbers.” They are no longer important at this point in prophecy—except that the LAST era is numerically much LARGER! We are certainly growing rapidly—and more so than any other organization—and this has been true almost since our beginning.

King David learned a painful lesson when he numbered Israel—and I have often made this mistake, thinking size is important. God is gathering those determined not to compromise. That number will be whatever it is—and we know it will be much *smaller* than the number who are *not* as convicted. I have been amazed to hear of many trying to stand firm under extraordinary conditions. Sometimes individual circumstances have been difficult, requiring people to demonstrate great courage, patience and conviction to ENDURE. But people of the same mind have often been able to find one another—no doubt with God’s unseen help. This has been an aspect of the unfolding story of RCG.

In RCG, we do not “number the armies” or have a goal to “get big!” *This is no longer Philadelphia’s time!* Those of Philadelphian attitude must expect to be greatly outnumbered, the *least* of the larger organizations—and the most persecuted!—the group with “little strength” (Rev. 3:8). Recognize that since people join us *from* all the groups, we are attacked *by* all of them. Of course, most prefer the “security” of larger organizations and bigger numbers. This alone indicates we will remain *relatively* small. Also, holding fast is *too hard—too difficult*—for most!

Consider the following trend has been growing for decades within the politics of the West. The Church has long understood that social and political trends directly impact God’s people—whether they realize it or not. Politically, most citizens think in terms of *liberals* and *conservatives*. A well-established, 30-plus-year political trend *has been affecting* God’s people, almost entirely without their recognition. Let’s understand.



Many analysts and observers have noted that politicians and the general populace have been moving to the left for nearly 40 years! This swing in thinking has been so dramatic that liberal Democrats of the 60s would now be considered *conservative Republicans*. Many voters today may *think* they are conservative, but they are actually ultra-liberal by the political standard of the 1960s, or even the early 70s. This trend has directly affected all God's people—and also directly served prophecy!

One reason holding fast is now so difficult is it simply seems too conservative in a world constantly moving to the left, away from values of *every kind*! God's people would not be exempted from this subtle process! Conservatives are being pushed from the "church."

Basically, everyone wants to be considered a *progressive* thinker! No one wants to be considered "stuck in the mud" or "lost in the past." People want to be viewed as "in step," not "out of step." Let's speak plainly. To most, holding fast *feels* out of step. Doing this will not permit them to be seen—and ACCEPTED—as "progressive" by peers among God's people. Of course, being accepted by others is the motive behind 90% of all human decisions. Peer acceptance—real *pressure*—is often, by itself, enough to make people unwilling to take the HARDER, MORE DIFFICULT path of non-compromise!

Honestly examine yourself—your thinking—in light of these last paragraphs!

Many are waiting to see our "fruit" before joining us. Be certain *your* definition of "fruit" does not include *size*. While numbers are irrelevant to your decision, one look at just our websites reveals an explosion of *fruit*—that we are already doing an immense work that towers over organizations much larger, older and wealthier than we. Our websites describe the who, what, where, when, why and how of RCG. Also, consider that if *everyone* waited to see whatever is their definition of "fruits," for months or even years, no one would have come to help produce the "fruit" others—and possibly you—want to evaluate today. So, there are two types of people who will join us. In the end, both belong.

*First:* Those who will come through fire, hail, wind and storm to be at the right place—as long as they *know* it is right. Size means *nothing* to them! *Second:* The many additional people who must see many *others* do this before they will. They will want to see a certain amount of size before coming. Right or wrong, this is historically the way of human nature. Of course, RCG is well into this second phase, with most still recognizing and accepting they are joining a relatively small group. But

realize that many brethren in the splinters are simply not yet aware of RCG, or *are* aware but still do not know much about us.

### **"What Is RCG Headquarters Like?"**

The many details of starting a new organization fell rapidly into place, from the outset. God moved swiftly to provide a wonderful facility ideally located along a major highway outside Akron, Ohio. The layout accommodates 140 for services. The owners did not even seek a standard security deposit. Also, to help us get started, the former tenant sold us good quality, used furniture and office equipment at a fraction of market value. We know that this was clearly of God. I could never have dreamed such a facility would come available so quickly, and be so perfect for our needs. We have since been able to remodel all of our space into a beautiful office complex of over 19,000 square feet.

Incorporation, securing a post office box, establishing bank accounts, acquiring insurance, writing the by-laws, etc., all happened quickly. The first year and a half brought many roadblocks and hurdles that God always seemed to help us through. Miracle after miracle could be described for the next several pages, and each would demonstrate God's intervention in its own remarkable way! Christ has sustained His Church—and will continue to do so!

Again, God has provided a sizeable and growing staff to help serve the brethren and do the Work. The staff's zeal, enthusiasm and willingness to tackle new things wonderfully complements the needs of the task before us. While we had some initial employee difficulties, our current staff has been an answer to prayer. This is critical, because Headquarters exists to serve the brethren—not the other way around!

We are incorporated and have tax-exempt status in the U.S., Canada, and other countries, with more to follow. In addition, we have established Feast sites throughout the world. When brethren come with us in other countries, we establish local congregations and sites. Christ continually guides these matters!

We provide a thorough *Host Information Manual* for each person, family or congregation that meets so everyone conducts services in the same way. We also operate Ambassador Center, a selective training program with a full two-year curriculum for those God is training for greater service in His Work. RCG also holds annual summer Ministerial and Leadership Conferences for ministers, elders and deacons. *Many* other projects and programs have been developed, with more always in the works.

### **“Who Should Join The Restored Church of God?”**

The second section of this book, *Should You Join The Restored Church of God?*, which the INTRODUCTION explained was once a separate booklet, systematically answers this question. It is far more thorough than the few paragraphs here, written before that booklet existed.

Understand that RCG is certainly *not* for everyone! Many former brethren do not want *all* God’s doctrines back. God is allowing people to choose their own paths. I have had to periodically suggest to some that they look elsewhere, knowing we would lose tithes and offerings as a result. We do not compromise Christian principles and doctrine to attract members or income. I have witnessed far too much of this elsewhere!

The dominant, final era is not zealous enough to choose the difficult path. Many prefer to “heap [Greek: *pile*] to themselves teachers, having itching ears” (II Tim. 4:1-3). They do not have enough strength to *care* about “enduring sound doctrine” (vs. 3). They find it much easier to “go along to get along.” In the end, most will be content with three-quarters or “half a loaf” of doctrinal purity—and will stay with the majority.

We encourage some people to find another place where they could be more “comfortable.” This does not mean some few others will not join us importing *other ideas*. Although rare, this has already happened, and we remain alert to this. Since we have a relatively small (yet rapidly growing) ministry, we realize the need for God’s special protection.

There is a particular mistake that most make when facing the decision to leave one organization for another. It has two equal but opposite applications. Let me explain: Though people should focus on *God*, most human beings watch *people* and *personalities* to gain a signal for what to do. While some make decisions solely on conviction, most watch to see *who else* joins before they will. Some say, “Well, if so-and-so goes, I will”—*sometimes* referring to either more ministers or particular senior ministers. The other application is the opposite: “Well, if so-and-so joins them, I won’t.” Both kinds of thinking are terribly wrong.

Go back 20 years. We now know that the vast majority in the WCG probably never believed *or* lived the truth in their personal lives. About 75% of those we thought were God’s people have now left the truth—but this did not mean that true brethren attending at that time were incorrect to do so. *Headquarters* was on track! *People’s conduct* and personal *decision-making* were never to be the standard keeping others in the WCG when it was on track. (The two letters to Corinth prove this!)

Tares, flatterers, wolves and false brethren *will* come and go among RCG (Matt. 13:24-30). Of course, some already have. BUT THIS SHOULD NOT BE THE BASIS FOR YOUR DECISION. Again, we strive to be alert, and God has to watch over us to minimize how often this happens.

Take your eyes off people—brethren and ministers. Put them on GOD, and keep them there!

Grasp this all-important point. No one can *make* human beings care about things they do not or will not care about! This book is NOT written to change people’s minds—to get them to care—to love God’s truth again, if they do not now. Believe me, I have tried this! God Himself cannot *make* free moral agents care about, be zealous for or love righteousness or truth, if they are not interested. Do not try to do this. People must take responsibility to “anoint [their own] eyes with eye salve.”

You *should*, however, inform people of where you stand in a firm but gentle way. If you come with RCG, tell your friends what you are doing and *why*! Do not just “disappear.” But do not try to *convince* them to do the same. If they want to talk, be available—be helpful. Understand the decision they face. You faced it and it was probably a struggle. It will likely be no less for them. So please be careful. Above all, do not aggressively *push* people.

A word to all the “unaffiliated”—those who chose to “stay home”: Many of you may have recognized very early that heresies or improper conduct were condoned by every “corporate” organization that left the WCG. You chose not to join any of them (or did and then felt compelled to leave), but perhaps tried to hold firm, either on your own or in small, loose groups. Many of you have been abused, as a direct result of the politics in the WCG, but also later in other groups. You are urged to carefully consider what God is doing in The Restored Church of God! Do not forget this vital passage: “And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: *not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together*, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as you see the day approaching” (Heb. 10:24-25).

All who truly hold firm—all who return to and remain Philadelphian—must eventually be brought together, as the unified Body of Christ, preparing itself as “His wife,” making “herself ready” (Rev. 19:7). If you come here, *you will be fed*! We *will help* you get ready. But you will have to diligently do your part.

A final word of caution: Brethren considering coming with us need to be sure of both *our doctrines and us*! But we are also careful to see that people coming with RCG are holding to all of God’s doctrines

*themselves*. This means we want to be sure people are not coming with us *unknowingly* or *unconsciously* bringing false teachings. This is why we list 200 false ideas in the splinters in *Surviving “Perilous Times.”*

Many *think* they are holding to what Mr. Armstrong taught, when they are not! They have been *told* he taught things he *never* taught. This is why I recorded as many of his teachings as possible, in exhaustive fashion, in *There Came a Falling Away*. God wants His people to truly *know* what was taught, and we want them to *know* that we teach the same!

There are two kinds of deceived people: (1) Those *willingly* embracing different doctrines, believing others are “stuck on Mr. Armstrong”—are “unable to accept that he was often ‘wrong’” and (2) those who have *unwittingly* bought into different ideas they *think* Mr. Armstrong taught—but cannot be convinced he did *not*! This is particularly frustrating to witness. But it *is* one more way Satan has deceived some of God’s people into accepting false ideas. Believing Mr. Armstrong taught the Work would end when he died is just one of *many* examples.

Carefully ponder, analyze, comb through and honestly reflect upon all the beliefs you hold. *What you discover may surprise you!*

### “What Would Mr. Armstrong Do Today?”

All of the older members from the WCG recall “the liberal years” of the mid-70s. (Most others have heard about them.) This period almost precisely parallels the general condition, collectively, of ALL the splinters today! To fully see this equation for what it is, *merely subtract from the picture the current WCG*, because it is no longer part of the OVERALL EQUATION in the last days. Now look at the remaining picture—two identical periods—30 years apart—best described as “liberalizing” and “watering down the truth.” Any fair-minded person cannot escape the parallel, and how it has replicated itself in the late 90s and beyond.

But there is one big difference. Conditions in the splinters have actually grown *worse*—in fact, *much* worse—than the mid-70s!

Setting aside that wrong doctrine is worse today—and this includes your organization whether you see it or not—once you can accept that each period *mixed* true doctrines with false, you know exactly what Mr. Armstrong would do! Just consider what he DID do when he faced what God’s people face today.

He told the brethren repeatedly, and in absolutely no uncertain terms, that the Church and Work were “off the track.” He explained that

Satan had gotten in the door, and he warned that the Church had become liberal—Laodicean! He thundered that God was withholding blessings! He also repeatedly explained *how* all of this had happened, and often reminded that CHRIST was putting His Church back on track. He focused on the TRUTH, not tolerating *any amount of false doctrine*—no matter how small and seemingly insignificant! This sometimes meant removing high-ranking or senior ministers—on the spot! Looking back, we now know that one, lone, very elderly man, empowered by God, led well over 100,000 people back onto the “track.”

The result?—the Church took off again, absolutely exploding in statistical growth of *every* kind!

How could so many people have so quickly forgotten this great lesson? Remember, “Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.”

In his latter years, Mr. Armstrong appeared “stuck” on the “two trees.” I confess to having thought, “Here we go again,” when he would start into this topic. Yet, I am now convinced God inspired Mr. Armstrong to continually repeat this account, at least in part, as a WARNING for today—and as a witness *to* and a witness *against* the seventh era just ahead. None could have known then what would happen upon his death—but God did! In no uncertain terms, Mr. Armstrong explained the extreme danger of mixing good and evil knowledge (doctrine is *spiritual* KNOWLEDGE). You must become convinced this is the greatest lesson of the two trees!

When God called me in 1966, I heard Mr. Armstrong speak *then* of these trees. He explained how, if one baked a cake, consisting of good ingredients mixed with a little arsenic, cyanide or strychnine, it would *always* kill the one eating it. The good ingredients could not overcome the poison the cake contained. I was 17, and that lesson struck me like a ton of bricks. Remember this lesson and how often Mr. Armstrong repeated it. It could save your crown!

The name *The Restored Church of God* should now make clear WHO and WHAT we are. All God’s restored truth is upheld and actively taught here. You now understand the title—“*Why the Restored Church of God?*”

I conclude with a quote from Mr. Armstrong. All should (but many no longer do) remember that he believed there was only one true Church. This statement (among many others) proves this emphatically. Our book on *THE TRUE CHURCH* proves this truth in exhaustive detail:

“What about the ‘loner’ Christian who says, ‘I will serve Christ in my own way’? What about the one who *leaves* God’s Church to have *his own*

*private relation* with Christ—to *get his own salvation*—without *giving* his part of the Church’s effort to send the true gospel into ALL THE WORLD?

“Or, what about the one who follows a MAN because of that man’s personality, charisma or attractiveness, or some other group?

“Stop and THINK!

“Is Christ going to marry a number of differing groups, not in complete harmony with each other—yet all ‘professing CHRIST’?

“Jesus said, ‘He that is not *with me* [and since He is the Head of God’s one and only Church, He plainly meant with Him where HE is working– in God’s one Church] is against me; and he that gathers not *with me* scatters abroad’ (Matthew 12:30).

“Jesus Christ is going to marry THE ONE AND ONLY TRUE CHURCH—not a number of scattered groups or scattered individuals.

“God’s law and way of life may be summed up in the one word ‘LOVE’— which is outflowing—the way of ‘GIVE’—while Satan’s way is that of ‘GET.’ The one who tries to GET his salvation apart from the one Church Christ is going to marry is on the ‘GET’ way. Those loyally in the Church are GIVING of their prayers, loyalty, encouragement and support...in GIVING the GOOD NEWS to the world—its ONLY HOPE!”

*“7 Proofs of God’s True Church,” PT, Sept. 1979*

Throughout my ministry, regarding people facing crucial decisions, my single greatest observation has been: When facing a clear choice between doing what is right or doing what is wrong, most choose the easier path—WRONG! What will *you* choose?

## SECTION II



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By now, you know we are not just another “splinter.” These questions arise: Who should join The Restored Church of God? What does membership in RCG *mean*? What should you *expect* if you come with us?

You may have already studied much material from us. Do you have other questions? This is a *final* checklist of the most important issues and most-asked questions of those considering The Restored Church of God.

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## SHOULD YOU JOIN THE RESTORED CHURCH OF GOD?

We are certainly pleased that you are considering coming with The Restored Church of God (RCG). It is important to understand that in the past some came with us for the wrong reasons, having not fully counted the cost. To avoid their mistake, you must *know* that you are making the right decision.

On May 3, 1999, RCG was officially established. Soon thereafter, as explained, I wrote *Why The Restored Church of God?* to answer the most common questions on people’s minds *at that time*. Since then, many have joined us from virtually all the splinters, with others continually inquiring about us. This resulted in another series of questions for people making their *final* decision.

Anyone considering us should read this section carefully. It answers these questions, and removes any remaining mystery about *who* and *what* we are. (Recognize that if you have still not read them, our books *The True Church – One Organization, or Many?* and “*Anoint Your Eyes*” – *Christ’s Warning to His People* go FAR beyond what is addressed here. So do *The Government of God – Understanding Offices and Duties* and *The Work of God – Its Final Chapter!* Everyone should read these first.)

Understand! We are not *competing* with other groups for members. Though other organizations may compete with us—some do try to “get” members, seemingly at any cost—we do not compete with them. While we do not attack them, neither do we *copy* them. RCG is totally differ-

ent—and this book describes what we *are*. God constituted this reorganization of His Church for those who want to leave the doctrinal compromising, division, confusion, name-calling and resultant unhappiness and misery prevailing in the splinters.

While RCG *is* what some are looking for, it is clearly *not* for everyone—or even for most. Just as we must know what you believe, you should know what to expect upon coming with us. Therefore, this section is intended to be plain, in fact blunt!

Most of the splinters do not care who comes with them, and prove this with a *wide-open-door* policy. While not “exclusivist,” we are determined to avoid accepting those who want to “water down” what we are.

You may be considering RCG partly because you have experienced this and are tired of it. We understand. However, some have come with us claiming to be one thing, only to prove later (sometimes quickly) that they were something very different. Some had significant differences, or were even at *great variance*, with what Mr. Armstrong taught, while apparently unaware of this themselves.

While the great majority who have come with us are wonderful, faithful brethren, some have been religious hobbyists. A few were contentious nitpickers. A few were extremely self-righteous and eager to attack the shortcomings of others. A few were simply unteachable and ungovernable. A few looked for a church that would recognize and accept the special “new truths” that God had “shown” only to them. A few felt the Work is over and hoped we felt the same, with some of these neglecting to pay God’s tithes. A few came just to follow friends or family. A few actually attacked Mr. Armstrong. Others worshiped him and became offended when the rest of us would not. A few came because they thought “vast throngs” would join us and were disappointed when this did not happen. Others came seeking excitement—something new. You see the point.

This section is unlike our other material. It is intentionally not written in an in-depth fashion. By now, you have probably done much study about us. Let me caution that some answers here will be misunderstood if you have *not* done this. In fact, you *cannot* grasp this next material. Therefore, read this section only *after* you have examined our other splinter-related material. Also, recognize that the issues addressed are not listed in a particular order of importance.

We hope that what is written here will help you make the right decision in a careful and prayerful attitude, and to truly “work out your own salvation with fear and trembling” (Phil. 2:12-13). Think about the decision you face. While you should not drag your feet, do take sufficient time to be thorough! Be sure of what you are doing. You “cannot

serve two masters” and “must not halt between two opinions.” Be honest. Admit that your crown is at stake. Then make a clear decision one way or the other—recognizing that *no* decision *is* a decision to do NOTHING!

If you decide to enter RCG, you are saying that you agree with all that you have studied. Understand that, to a degree, we are taking you at your word, more than you are taking us at ours when we have so thoroughly told you who and what we are!

## The Shepherd’s Voice

By now, you have read and heard about Christ’s *voice*—and that His sheep know their Shepherd. Are you *certain* that the living Jesus Christ is directing you to The Restored Church of God? If so, *why* are you sure—what are your reasons? Continue asking yourself these questions as you make your decision. Consider hearing the sermon “The Great Shepherd’s Voice.”

## “Open Door” Policy

Mr. Armstrong never permitted an “open door” policy regarding who could attend the Worldwide Church of God. (He slammed it shut when the liberals of the mid-70s instituted this.) This was done for the good of both the Church and individuals who might attend before they were ready. We ask everyone who is prepared to join us to contact our Headquarters or an RCG elder first. Though we do *not* require you to run a gauntlet of extensive counseling to join us, we *do* want you sure of your decision—so that we *both* “know what we are getting.”

The apostasy spawned a generation of religious hobbyists wanting to be unfettered—free to hop from organization to organization. Despite the obvious problems that spring from this, other groups seem happy to receive such people. I have pledged to God and His people that our ministry will protect them from false teachers and false doctrines.

Recall again that Mr. Armstrong wrote, “It is the duty of Christ’s TRUE ministers (and *how scarce today*) to PROTECT the begotten but yet unborn saints from false doctrines, from false ministers” (*MYSTERY OF THE AGES*, p. 262, emphasis his). This statement cuts both ways. Once you come to RCG, we are dutybound to protect you from these things. But, until one is actually with us, we must be as sure as possible that any wrong ideas he or she may hold are left behind, unable to create division here.

### “Holding Fast”

God states, “How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in UNITY” (Psa. 133:1). By now you realize that RCG holds to *every* doctrine that Christ taught His Church through Mr. Armstrong. *This* is what creates the extraordinary unity that we enjoy, and it is the only true basis both for holding fast *and* maintaining that unity—and not opening the fatal doctrinal “Pandora’s Box,” now continually splitting the other organizations. Amos 3:3 makes clear that people who disagree *cannot walk together!* We have no need or interest to take RCG back into old, wrong, Protestant beliefs—or bizarre new ideas—as so many of the splinters are now sometimes unwittingly doing. For those who fully understand God’s marvelous truth, it is fascinating and exciting enough to hold one’s interest for a lifetime. Of course, we can certainly grow (II Pet. 3:18) to see *existing* truths more clearly.

Many have drifted into pet theories and prophetic speculations of every stripe and color. Some try to fit these into Mr. Armstrong’s teachings, and then try to get us to see them. We regularly receive long “doctrinal” papers detailing personal ideas and theories. I cannot begin to *read* them all, let alone find the hours to *answer* them. This has offended a few and also been enough to keep some from joining us. Yet, when I *did* answer, most were offended because I did not *agree*. These wanted to be the teacher (presumably of me and others) instead of the student (disciple). If you are determined to be a teacher, and are not an elder, then we are simply not for you.

People often ask questions that border on strange, odd, goofy or at the least unimportant. The same is true of some of the “research papers” that we receive. As I read some of these, I find myself asking, “What are people thinking?” I do not say this to demean sincere questions—because we hope God’s people will always feel free to ask basic questions—but because it illustrates the many ways in which people have wandered off track, often seemingly without an inkling or clue of what they have drifted into.

RCG still holds to every doctrine taught by the WCG as of January 16, 1986! Many *claim* this—only we can *PROVE* it!

### Being Ready to Unlearn!

Mr. Armstrong often stressed the importance of *unlearning* error as part of *learning* the truth. When first called, we all understood this critical

principle. But some have forgotten it. Retaining this concept is of great importance for the rest of your life.

The RCG has literally “restored again what was restored.” This is not a play on words, because much of what Mr. Armstrong taught has again become as lost to former brethren today as it was for the 1,900 years before the Philadelphian restoration. The first great step to getting completely “back on track” with God’s hundreds of doctrines is to recognize that you have almost certainly drifted into a variety of things that you may not realize you have accepted. The apostasy and conditions in the splinters have almost certainly affected you much more than you can yet recognize. While you apparently want to change this, it may or may *not* be as easy as you think. You may still have more to unlearn than you suspect. It is much safer to assume this is true than vice-versa! If it is *not* true, you have not been harmed—and are probably going to feel more humble for having taken this approach. Open your mind to the probability that your “toes could get stepped on” in this unlearning process!

All—every one!—of God’s people picked up “baggage” in the Worldwide Church of God, and then added to it in their later affiliations. So we all came from various splinter “cultures” with thinking that must be unlearned, such as: approach to doctrine, attitude toward other groups, prophetic scenarios and freewheeling speculations, the role of government, attitude toward the superiority of one’s previous organization above others, how the Work is to be continued, exactly how the government of God functions today, and possibly more.

Finding out what you have picked up, and must unlearn, can be a real “shock to the system.”

Having worked directly with several thousand brethren since being fired from the WCG, I can tell almost instantly what organization a person is or has been a part of. When I am wrong, it is usually because the person contacting us has been in more than one group, making them sort of “hybrid” in a sense. People become “flavored” in ways they usually do not recognize. This can be in their tone (letter or voice), the nature of their questions, how they reference Mr. Armstrong, terms used to describe others they see as “less faithful,” and in numerous other ways difficult to quantify. But these things are real.

God has brought His people to The Restored Church of God through many organizations. Our common experience ended when we left the WCG. Consider! We did not all leave at the same time, or join the same splinter. Also, all of God’s people did not leave for the same reasons—over the same issues. For each of us, the timing, circumstances and

issues were different. Generally, the only thing that we had in common was our determination to hold on to the truth as best we could. All have learned that this meant different things to different people—and different organizations!

In working with people from all of the splinters and slivers, it has become evident that this experience has had a profound effect on even how we view *what was* our common WCG experience. Christ warned of “pouring *new wine* into *old bottles*” during our original calling, and we all know the problems that can result from this. But a reverse problem is occurring today. I have watched hundreds attempt to pour *old wine* (what we learned from Mr. Armstrong) into a *second*, new, altered “bottle,” given to them by the organizations that they attended *after* the apostasy. Now, in a strange twist, sincere people unconsciously fulfill the *opposite* of Christ’s warning.

Let’s make this clear. You may have picked up *errors*, believing them to be part of the *original* new wine learned at and from conversion. Do you see this? Are you prepared to root them out?

Are you determined to be taught, corrected and returned to the full truth and way of life we all practiced? If so, try to drop your self-defense mechanisms by telling yourself that you did not come through the apostasy *unscathed*. Challenge yourself to see how many areas you can find—in doctrine or character—in which you have slipped off track!

### Brotherly Love or a Judgmental Spirit?

Philadelphians are known for many things (Rev. 3:7-13). But the attribute that God uses to identify them—for *all time*—is “brotherly love.” Paul wrote that we could actually have “all knowledge”—and this would certainly include all *doctrinal* knowledge since it is merely a large sub-total of *all* knowledge—but that if we “have not love, we are *nothing*” (I Cor. 13:1-3).

Grasp this! In theory, one could achieve and hold to doctrinal perfection, and yet his life could still add up to absolutely *NOTHING*! Now which do you think is more important to God—love or knowledge? Believe me—and you surely realize this by now—I am not de-emphasizing the importance of correct, precise doctrinal steadfastness as the only proper STARTING POINT for what is God’s Church! However, I do want to reiterate what Paul said, and emphasize the supremely important implications for our *lack of worth* in God’s sight if we do not have both brotherly and godly love!

John wrote, “Perfect love casts out fear.” How true! I have also learned that conversely, therefore, *perfect fear can cast out love*! Some came through organizations that were shot full of fear, generated from the top. There was certainly plenty of this in the one that I came through. If your experience was similar, recognize that it may have cast more love out of you than you realize. Ask God to help you renew this greatest of all character attributes. Since God states that He “*is love*” (I John 4:8, 16), and that He is the Giver of “every good and perfect gift” (Jms. 1:17), expect that He will do this—if you fervently ask for His help, and if you do your part. In time, God *will* also heal you of the wounds and bruises from previous betrayals, which may be keeping you from truly loving and caring about people as you once did. This will have a big impact on how much your heart will be in the Work.

The death of Mr. Armstrong is the point from which our beliefs must spring. This is the last moment that the Church was absolutely “on track.” There is no denying this, or the problems that spring from ignoring it. Recognize that all have picked up practices, beliefs and ideas, perhaps unconsciously. The fact that some do not *know* this does not change it! Here is the point: Many have also picked up *attitudes* prevalent in their particular organization. Each member could write a book on why *his* own group was the “best” organization to have come through—and this would be *dead wrong*! Any who come to RCG must not come as a *judge*, trying to evaluate how many others did not avoid all compromise as perfectly as they think themselves to have done!

A Christian copies and imitates Jesus Christ! He is one who directly, through his conduct and words, which spring from his *thoughts*, directly exudes the very mind and life of Christ! This said, we all know that Jesus did not give His life for our sins in order to pick us to pieces. What would be His point? He would be countering His purpose to *cleanse* our sins and imperfections. It would make no sense for Him to say, “I love you and I died for your sins, and now I’m going to cut you to ribbons with accusations.” God does not do this and *neither should we*!

You must not come to RCG ready to be contentious, nitpicky, accusative or self-righteously “holier than thou.” Try as hard as possible to leave pride, vanity and a “know-it-all” attitude behind.

Your previous organization may have *trained* you to become a virtual “attack dog.” It may have *trained* you to slander, accuse, attack, blast, and lambaste all the “evil sinners and Laodiceans” that are not as “perfect as you or the organization that you came from”—or to put this in the most graphic way, to practically “kill” in the name of “doing God service” (John 16:2). Conversely—and this is the important other side



of the coin—do not be willing to tolerate endless heresies where you are because, in your thinking, they are somehow all overridden by the *Protestant* emphasis of “just having love.” Neither mindset will fit into RCG. We live when Jesus said that His Church would experience “hatred, betrayal, offense and lawlessness” (Matt. 24:9-12) to such a degree that “the *love* of many [people] shall wax [grow] *cold*.” Of course, this is well below the temperature of merely “lukewarm.”

Determine to actively fight this terrible trend devouring so many of God’s people!

Consider further! You carry a certain loyalty to those who share your pre-RCG affiliation. While this is natural, determine to overcome it and stand with *all* who have chosen to stand with you on the same doctrinal foundation. Recognize that all of us must be “set to defend the gospel” *together*. Are you ready to *blend*—to *merge* yourself with many brand new faces—who went different routes than you during the apostasy? No one here is better than anyone else—and neither do any have spiritual leprosy! This is not to suggest that evil, sin or heresy should be condoned. But strive to love, forgive, overlook, encourage and support both Headquarters and one another.

At this point, I am including a paragraph from a Member Letter sent before our first RCG Feast (1999). It reflects the goal and approach of integrating smoothly, over time, with all kinds of brethren, and how we should feel *every day*, not just the eight days of the Feast:

“Seek out people who came from groups other than the one through which you passed. Do this actively and consciously. Share your experiences. Learn from one another. See how many ways you can find to benefit one another by all the different experiences we lived through after our COMMON experience in the WCG. I suspect you will find that this may make your Feast...fascinating. Think how much there is to learn about the lives of the brethren sitting around you. Don’t sit there wondering what they are thinking. Find out! Wouldn’t it be wonderful if we all left the Feast having met every single person who was there? Wouldn’t that be a story to tell? And it would set a precedent that would last for years. You will take home friendships that can be nurtured all through the coming year and the years to follow. And may I suggest you always try to start with people who are standing alone or who may be overlooked. It may not be quite as easy for them to ‘break the ice’ as it is for others, or even you. Some of us could crack the ‘polar ice cap’ with the bow of our ship and others have more difficulty even dealing with ‘a little frost.’ Let nothing stop you in your determination to practice this approach.”

Finally, those of brotherly love are also required by God to try to help those languishing in confusion, but seeking the full truth. Possibly review the sermons “Known for Brotherly Love” and “Should Christians Avoid Proselytizing?”

## Leaving Wounds Behind

Recognize that the events of the last decade may have left *you* wounded or even *deeply* wounded—in other words, injured beyond what is easily seen. Try to accept this. By now, none of God’s people view brethren, ministers or the Church in the same way. You must recognize this condition in *yourself* to recover from it.

See your battle scars, wounds and hurt feelings for what they are. Strive with God’s help (John 5:30; Matt. 19:26; Phil. 4:13) to overcome them—to recover fully!

## Mr. Armstrong’s Role as Elijah

The man prophesied to be the final Elijah (Matt. 17:11) was to “restore all things.” Those who do not believe this would never be happy here. Their position invariably *guarantees* that they will, over time, drift into various *other* false doctrines. I say, “other” because rejecting this understanding is its own fundamental error. Mr. Armstrong was the Elijah, and our related book to the splinters proves it conclusively! Those not convicted that he fulfilled this role cannot understand the far-reaching *implications* of their conclusion.

Some have written clever papers trying to disprove Mr. Armstrong’s fulfillment, generally because their doctrinal agenda precludes accepting this as their foundation. Certain “respected” ministers, to validate their personal ideas, *must* find a way to subvert Mr. Armstrong’s role. You must see the threat they pose to many more doctrines than just Mr. Armstrong being the Elijah! By obscuring his vital role, they directly *indict themselves*, because they know that they have accepted numerous *other* different teachings! This includes the belief that truth only enters the Church through apostles.

Many things that have happened in the last twenty-plus years are connected. Most cannot, however, “connect the dots” without assistance. By now you should see that my role is to help in this. God’s people must grasp the grander view of God’s Master Plan—and of Satan’s.

Many “dots” connect through Mr. Armstrong’s office and role.

## The One True Church and Body of Christ Doctrine

The Bible teaches (and Mr. Armstrong taught) that there is only *one* organized, true Church! It also teaches (as did Mr. Armstrong) that Christ is *not* divided—that there is only one unified Body of Christ! RCG teaches these without equivocation. Doing otherwise automatically introduces a huge *false teaching* and, by implication, other inseparable related heresies—doctrines that “connect” to it. We know that we are accused of exclusivism. The alternative, if we do *not* teach it, is that *God* will judge us for teaching the now prevailing Protestant counterfeits!

I have given at least six sermons, and written a thorough book, clarifying, detailing, restoring and PROVING this enormous, overarching doctrine. This is another reason that we do not have an open-door policy, or allow people to hop in and out of RCG. Jesus Christ puts people into His Church. He does not authorize His ministers to take this prerogative to themselves by throwing open the door as does the world.

Brethren need to understand that they are returning to the only place—the ONLY ORGANIZATION—in which Christ is truly the “Head” (Col. 1:18, 24; Eph. 1:22-23). (The book on *THE TRUE CHURCH* covers this in detail.)

## Hierarchical Government

Mr. Armstrong taught government from the top down, and that it is inseparable from the one true Church, and how Christ leads that Church. God has *always* worked in *one* place at a time. If we do not teach government correctly, He will judge us as confused—and not holding fast. But this has become another reason we are accused of exclusivism.

The gospel of the kingdom of God is about GOD’S GOVERNMENT—how He will rule the nations of earth through the *right form* of government! People who do not *understand* this government cannot enjoy the blessings and benefits of properly *practicing* it. Consider this in your decision, remembering that Laodicea is the era in which “the people (not Christ) rule, judge and decide.”

It takes faith to believe that God works from the top down, beginning with just one man. Leadership through one man at a time cannot be divided between several organizations. Have you proven and come to grips with our form of leadership, including my office, but also of all the

other offices in Christ’s ministry? Betrayed people—those whose trust has been violated multiple times—do not easily trust again! The greatest aspect of Satan’s assault on the Church was his nearly universal success in destroying the trust that God’s people once had in Christ’s ability to lead His Church. Of course, we have long known that the devil is the author of doubting God.

The state of many brethren can be compared to that of an abused wife who has escaped her husband, and possibly several, using today’s analogy, but become reluctant to ever again put herself under another husband’s authority. This may explain the greatest reason that Jesus asked, “When the Son of Man comes, shall He find *faith* on the earth?” (Luke 18:8).

I do not ask you to trust me or other RCG leaders. The Bible says not to do this. But God *does* require you to trust *Him*. If He has selected leaders, after carefully training, humbling and preparing them for their responsibilities, then we—YOU—must trust that He knows what He is doing! If you feel that you should have a “voice” in Headquarters’ decisions—or that you want God’s tithes spent “to your liking”—then many *other* groups will welcome you. You would feel frustrated—or possibly stifled—here.

It would be easy for me to take the political position of offering the membership a “say” in matters in order to receive their tithes and enhance our “bragging rights,” because we would be bigger in both number and income. While this might translate into more “respect” and “approval” from other groups, what would *God* think?

As mentioned, I am determined that RCG will never “number Israel.” During Mr. Armstrong’s ministry, counting attendance was natural—and right. But the next stage of prophecy changed that completely! Philadelphians are now vastly outnumbered. Size—numbers!—mean nothing to God, and we do not emphasize or talk about how big RCG is!

When RCG began, I made a public promise that, unfortunately, I have kept. Let me explain. I promised to make mistakes in certain decisions. I have “kept my word,” so to speak—I *have* made mistakes! To the degree that I remain “little in my own eyes,” and stay close to God, these will be minimal. For instance, I sometimes misspeak in sermons. However, Moses stuttered and Mr. Armstrong also misspoke in sermons. Even God’s *greatest* servants were imperfect. But you must come willing to focus on your own mistakes.

I also determined to repent of doctrinal mistakes I drifted into. Will you? An example for me was the re-acceptance of makeup in 1988.

Although very unlikely at this point, there could still be a time when we may have to correct a teaching adopted inadvertently. Understand that Mr. Armstrong had to do this (such as his 1981 change correcting the Church's position on makeup). He admitted to mistakes in judgment. Where does that put me?—or *you*?

Christians assemble together, pay God's tithes, do His Work, and are actively taught by His ministry. These become hard to do again for those who have been on their own for long. If you have been an "independent"—either in thinking, or reluctance to affiliate with anyone—you will have a difficult time yielding to government again. Though certainly not impossible, this may be difficult. This is also true of those who have spent a long time in a group practicing voting. Assess your thinking, and whether you will alter it.

Mr. Armstrong explained many times that "Government is everything." Our absolutely crucial book *The Government of God – Understanding Offices and Duties* explained to you what the Bible teaches and Mr. Armstrong taught about ministerial offices (ranks), roles and duties. This is the foundation you are returning to upon coming with RCG.

## Doing The Work

All God's servants preach the gospel. They do not craft "theologies" about why the "Work is over"—or that "only Mr. Armstrong could do it." Neither do they try to overtly or subtly alter its definition or priorities. Our book *The Work of God – Its Final Chapter!* explains what Mr. Armstrong believed and taught about this ongoing obligation—and this obligation has not changed. Doing the Work *is* work. This is why many will no longer put forth the effort! Hopefully, my book inspired your thinking to new heights.

On the other hand, the Living Church of God believes, in effect, and has reflected that doing the Work is more important than teaching correct doctrine. This is the *opposite ditch*. God will only bless the Work where people have the details of His truth correct. Truth comes before the Work, not the other way around. Some twist this to claim RCG does not properly *emphasize* the Work (whatever that means). This is plain wrong! The Restored Church of God actively preaches the kingdom of God (and the role of Jesus Christ is *not* part of the gospel) to all nations of the world *and* fulfills its "Watchman" responsibility to warn (Ezek. 33:7; 3:17) the modern nations of Israel! We *will* be found "so doing" when Christ returns!

Is this your unwavering position?

## Paying God's Tithes!

As with most doctrines, many have become lax about tithing, thus keeping themselves from receiving the resultant blessings of obeying this law. A tiny few have joined us and left, *never tithing a single time*. A few others have either tithed sporadically, split tithes among groups, or waited months to begin. Eventually, these people also left.

I must be blunt. If you are joining RCG, it must be because you believe this is God's Church—where His government, truth and Work reside. *Tithes belong to God* (Lev. 27:30). They help feed the flock (John 21:15-17), do His Work and create the tools to gather scattered brethren to the place that is *fully* holding fast! To withhold them (including offerings) is *stealing* from God!

I often hear people say, "But tithing is between me and God." This thinking becomes their license not to tithe—either faithfully or at all. Consider! Is *adultery* just "between you and God?" Is *Sabbath-breaking* only "between you and God?" Is *drunkenness* merely "between you and God?" How about *wife-beating*, *lying* or practicing and *believing false doctrines*? If you *gossip* and *slander*, is this just "between you and God?" What about *keeping the Feast*?

Do not be fooled! Like every other sin, if one does not tithe and give offerings, he is stealing (Mal. 3:8-10; Matt. 23:23), and will not be in God's kingdom!

While it is "politically incorrect" to be so forceful today, as you surely now see, I do not apologize or preach "smooth things" concerning tithes and offerings so that people may feel "comfortable" joining us. God's people are **COMMANDED** by Him to pay His tithes *and* to give Him offerings.

Third tithe is also a commanded obligation for everyone whom God does not exclude by specific category from this duty. Here are the exceptions as they have always been taught: (1) Those who *receive* third tithe, (2) those who are *eligible* for it and (3) those who *would need to receive* it as a result of paying it.

Also as previously taught when Mr. Armstrong was alive, individual members are not free to excuse themselves from third tithe on their own authority. Headquarters is happy to help anyone who needs help recapturing an understanding of how to count your third tithe years, among other related questions.

Matthew 6:21 states, "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." Similarly, only when your *heart* is fully in RCG will you

be ready to bring your “treasure also”—and this is what God requires. Do not come to RCG until you have determined that your HEART is here.

Questions arise about tithes sent from other countries. International brethren (excluding Canada) should regularly mail tithes to our world Headquarters. This should be done in the most practical fashion, depending upon your country.

### What About the Place of Safety?

Some have asked if we believe that those in RCG are the only ones going to the Place of Safety. Here is our answer! The Bible teaches—and Mr. Armstrong taught—that there are Philadelphians and Laodiceans at the end of the age. We agree with this! That Philadelphians will be protected, and Laodiceans will not. We agree again! That Philadelphians are few in number, and Laodiceans are so dominant that they constitute their own separate, final era. We also agree with this! That Philadelphians are primarily known for holding fast and for brotherly love, while Laodiceans compromise. We agree yet again! That holding fast includes the doctrine that people doing this not only agree with God and each other but, as a result, can *walk together*. We still agree! The Bible teaches and Mr. Armstrong taught that there is one true Church—one unified Body of Christ—that “Christ is not divided” (I Cor. 1:10, 13), and that His government is only located in one organization. And we continue to agree! To believe otherwise is to immediately disqualify ourselves from holding fast!

You may now conclude what we believe about the Place of Safety. Those who believe God on the above matters enter a kind of “box canyon,” regarding who will go to the place of supernatural protection and who will not. *You* decide what *you* believe—and whether *you* will enter the same box canyon.

Having said this, I do *not* believe that *all* people in The Restored Church of God will *automatically* be protected, anymore than you believe that everyone in the Worldwide Church of God was Philadelphian when Mr. Armstrong led it, and it was “on track.” At that time, it *represented* the Philadelphian era. Yet, we now know that up to 75% were probably not even *lukewarm*, let alone Philadelphian. Of course, the percentage of converted people in the splinters is much higher.

Consider re-reading sections of *THE TRUE CHURCH* and “*ANOINT YOUR EYES*” to better understand why all those who go to the Place of Safety must come from one organization! Our booklet *Promised Protection – Secret Rapture or Place of Safety?* is also important to study because of its careful detail in related matters.

### Use of Cosmetics

Almost all of the splinters and slivers (there are a few exceptions) were seduced by the apostates into believing that “makeup is okay”! This is absolutely not what Mr. Armstrong taught, or what the Bible teaches.

Women who are coming with RCG need to consider whether they are prepared to return to the correct understanding of this doctrine. It is more important than thousands have been willing to remember.

I have carefully prepared a special, thorough article on the history of the doctrine of the use of cosmetics in the WCG. It is found as Article Two in *Surviving “Perilous Times.”* The facts presented remove all doubt about what Mr. Armstrong taught and the Church administered. They also eliminate the silly notion that this doctrine can be easily dismissed because “Mr. Armstrong went back and forth about it.”

You will see he was *most clear* about God’s view of this subject!

I have also written a thorough booklet on the subject for those learning the truth for the first time—*The Truth Hidden Behind Makeup*. If necessary, be willing to read or review these materials to get straight in your mind what thousands have forgotten or rejected.

### Intense Persecution

The biggest reason that God promises to protect Philadelphians is because, in their determination not to compromise and “blend in,” they willingly suffer intense persecution for their beliefs NOW! They willingly go through their tribulation *now*, to avoid the Great Tribulation *later*. I would rather endure *this* tribulation than the *other one*. Do you feel the same?

Make no mistake! The majority in RCG are wonderful people. I am inspired every day by their courage, commitment, dedication and love, and you may soon see this for yourself. But we have had wolves “creep in unawares” and *then* shed their “sheep’s clothing” (Acts 20:29-30). One man left, actually writing me that he hoped to destroy the entire RCG “sheep pen.” Several have tried—of course, all failed (Matt. 16:18)!

I relate this example so you can recognize there may be people who go “out from us, but they were not of us” (I John 2:19). When they leave, they may seek to wound and destroy—and to confuse or weaken you. While rare, you must expect this.

The Bible speaks of *tares* (Matt. 13:24-30), *flatterers* (Dan. 11:32), *murderers* (John 16:2; 8:30, 37, 40, 44), *false brethren* (II Cor. 11:26)



and even *stones* (Matt. 3:9) that God permits to enter the Church—or that He uses for His own purpose. These are a permanent reality across the “church” landscape. Never forget the destructive, destabilizing impact that they can have on all the *unsuspecting* and *unprepared*!

This is one reason Christ cautioned, “In your *patience* possess you your souls [lives]” (Luke 21:19). In a world of instantaneous knowledge, carrying the potential for tremendous upheaval quickly, only the PATIENT will wait for the facts. The future holds *many* uncertainties foretold to strike like Christ’s Return—as a “thief in the night.” Other events—many that will be very bad—will similarly occur.

When these come, there will be two possible responses: (1) “In your patience possess you your life,” or (2) “go to pieces” and “lose it”—to one’s own destruction. You must determine in advance how *you* will handle these.

No man or organization can insulate you from this difficult process (see Daniel 11:33-12:13!), planned thousands of years ago for the end-time Church. I can warn, but *you* must survive these tests—either permitted by or directly *sent* from God. Only *you* control your final spiritual outcome.

Many who have abandoned God’s teachings have accused me of having a “cult-like devotion” to Mr. Armstrong, merely because I believe that God used him to restore “all things” to His Church. Remember, in the process of having to rewrite all of God’s truths, I had to *restudy* all of them at an extraordinary level of intensity. This brought an additional degree of conviction far—*FAR!*—beyond merely “Mr. Armstrong said so.” I cleave to these doctrines because they are *right*, not because “Mr. Armstrong said it, and that’s good enough for me.”

People who do *not* love all of God’s truths cannot possibly understand the conviction of those who *do*! They literally have no choice but to see us as “worshipping” Mr. Armstrong. Yet, when he was alive, and 130,000 or so followed the truth that *he taught*, no one in the Church believed we were a “cult.” But now, anyone continuing in the same truth is accused of worshipping a man.

Where do *you* stand?

Are you ready to be accused of “cult-worship”—and to be called intolerant, rigid, narrow-minded, self-righteous or a “man-follower”? Consider how prepared you are for such accusations—if they have not begun already! Some have left us simply because they found enduring sound doctrine to be too hard—the price too high!

Consider reviewing our book *Should Accusers Be Answered? – Do You Believe Obvious Lies?* and the sermon “The Great Sniper” before making your decision.

## Information from Headquarters

RCG brethren are kept extremely well-informed. Here is what you will regularly receive from Headquarters:

- A weekly *Announcement Bulletin* sent with each sermon (mailed to all scattered brethren and hosts), carrying announcements, prayer requests, a sampling of letters received, and news of the Work, as well as explaining when to play sermons
- A monthly *Brethren/Co-Worker Letter* that is more detailed than what you are accustomed to
- A bi-monthly magazine (*The Pillar*) that is a combination of the old *Good News* and *Worldwide News*
- A monthly *Plain Truth*-style magazine called *The Real Truth*
- A bi-monthly magazine for teens—*Ambassador Youth*
- An annual Manpower Brochure—*The Work of God Around the World*

We also produce a great many books, booklets, articles, and Bible study lessons for both adults and children, including seven levels of *Children’s Bible Lessons* (12 lessons in each level), all of which are automatically sent to members.

All new publications are sent automatically to all members.

## Conducting Sabbath Services

A very thorough *Host Information Manual* is sent to every host and scattered member. It is extensive and answers all of the most-asked questions about conducting Sabbath services, alone or in small congregations. Upon discussing with Headquarters, a minister or an elder your desire to come with us, please describe your circumstances so that we can determine whether you need this manual. Those not close enough to regularly attend with others receive it.

Paul wrote, “God is not the author of *confusion*, but of *peace*, as in all churches of the saints.” It was in that context that he added, “Let all things be done *decently* and *in order*” (I Cor. 14:33, 40). We strive to do this in every matter, but RCG faces challenges that bigger groups do not. We do not have a large number of elders, and this alone presents some big organizational challenges that other groups do not have. While doctrinally divided, these organizations have more elders and/or pastors guiding local congregations and scattered brethren. While the number of ordained men we have is growing, we simply must do more *from Headquarters* than these organizations! We meet this challenge in

any way necessary to properly care for and feed God's flock. We do not, and will never, shirk our responsibility.

Services are conducted just as they were under Mr. Armstrong's leadership. The only difference is size. A *congregation* may be a family or individual in a home, who is assembling *with God*. Again, numbers mean nothing to Him.

Our brethren *dress* and *prepare* just as when they came before God in a hall with a minister! Watering down dress from the emphasis on quality that Mr. Armstrong taught must not happen because only a few are attending. God is just as present in a small room with a small number as He is in a large room with a large number!

Hebrews 10:23-26 reveals that some will "forsake the assembling of themselves together" as Christ's Return draws closer. Verse 26 issues the strongest possible warning about falling into this pattern. The "One True Church" sermon series quotes what Mr. Armstrong consistently taught about this. He stated that we must not compromise by assembling with people, as he put it, "no matter how *close* they are to the full truth," to fulfill the Bible command for Sabbath assembly. In other words, it is more correct to observe services *alone* than to assemble where false doctrine is taught, and be exposed to that danger.

This biblical principle cannot be compromised!

Members of God's Church are never free to attend with other groups. This is a plain teaching from the Bible and Mr. Armstrong. Do not be confused by those who say that, in the 40s and early 50s, Mr. Armstrong allowed assembling with Sardis brethren when the need arose. As in other areas, MR. ARMSTRONG GREW OUT OF THIS UNDERSTANDING! We all watched how the WCG leaders selectively took a "snapshots" of various periods in Mr. Armstrong's *past* understanding in an attempt to deceitfully validate doctrinal changes that took people back into error. Leaders who are unwilling to teach the one true Church and Body of Christ doctrine resent our conviction to do what they are too weak, fearful and uncommitted to administer!

However, understand that it is certainly not wrong to associate (at other times and occasions) with people in other organizations, *if* it is generally working toward helping them leave doctrinal confusion. In fact, you have seen that this is our continual *obligation*.

There is no way to truly love and help God's people if you cannot *wisely*—carefully and discreetly!—TALK to them about matters vital to their salvation!

Some few come with us, very excited, but seem to unconsciously have a "wait and see" attitude regarding others coming with RCG in the

area where they live. Expecting immediate and rapid growth, some have given up and left when this did not happen. Some few may have to bear the cross of being alone for a short or long time. Be prepared for what-ever happens, understanding that God is only working with a few in every age.

A final point: God commands His people to assemble together on the Sabbath. While there are legitimate reasons for missing services—a blizzard, birth of a baby, illness, too far away to attend, automobile accident, etc.—there is no such thing as *keeping* the Sabbath at home. There is only *breaking* the Sabbath at home. Other materials and certain sermons explain this command in greater detail.

Are you prepared to give up your independence, in church-hopping or as a "stay-at-home," and return to regular fellowship with God's people?

## Feast Sites

The Restored Church of God has Feast sites in all parts of the world. "Wherever two or three are gathered together," Christ places His name. Of course, each country presents its own issues and challenges as to how best to do this. North American and certain other sites have live speakers, while others for the most part receive CDs. But all of God's Feast days are kept as before—with only the number present being different. Of course, leaders are always appointed to maintain decency and order. As with Sabbath services, *cooperation* is paramount for things to be done smoothly and efficiently!

Laxity in attendance, arriving late for services, attending more than one site and freely attending other groups, for convenience sake, is *epidemic* today. I have heard senior ministers in the splinters describe that this ecumenical cross-pollination "is good." Consider two points. *First*, God commands His people to keep *all* of His feasts at the place HE chooses—health, distance and finances permitting—and this also assumes that one has faithfully saved second tithe. *Second*, this means that all must attend an RCG site.

Those believing the full truth can never attend outside Christ's Church where any false doctrines are taught. This is bedrock biblical understanding and practice. Though rare, some scattered few cannot attend the Feast because no site is within reasonable distance. All of these brethren are sent a full set of CDs to observe the Feast at home.

Have you considered again that God commands His people to send a "tithe of the tithe"—a tenth of your second tithe, or one percent of your

gross income—to Headquarters for all the costs related to *having* Feast sites around the world? Fewer brethren today seem to faithfully keep their second tithe, and this not only hinders sending their tithe of tithe but also any *excess second tithe* they have, as was always sent in the past to help others who are less blessed be able to attend the Feast.

Are you prepared to reset your hand to faithfulness in these areas?

### Spiritual “Activism”

In the modern age, many people take up “causes” in an attempt to reverse real or perceived “injustices.” This has long been true in the world, where there are many injustices. But the Church has always been different.

Comprehend what follows. A *new* activism has arisen, this one *in the Church*. As discussed, God’s people have all been wounded and betrayed. Most have been the recipients of injustices—some real, some perceived. This, coupled with Protestant “do-gooder” thinking taught to them before leaving the WCG, has caused many to take up “causes” for which they seek solutions, actions or remedies, within the splinters. Of course, many think things are “out of control” in God’s Church or Plan—and that He now needs *their help* to return the status quo to its former condition of happiness, doctrinal unity, peace, etc.

Yet, God’s Plan has never been even a tiny bit *out of control*! It is very much *under God’s control*! Individual people’s *lives* and *beliefs* may be out of control. The beliefs and conduct of *leaders* may be out of control. *Organizations* may be out of control. But God’s Plan has never been out of control—for even a minute in 6,000 years!

God is not trying to fix today’s world. Under Mr. Armstrong, the WCG never participated in ecumenical programs to change or improve the world, or to make its Christianity “better.” Similarly, The Restored Church of God is not trying to change—to *FIX*!—all of the splinters in some pre-determined way decided by us. We do not have an activist agenda for “improving conditions within Laodicea.” Prophecy is plain about God’s plan to “fix” this era. Also, we are not trying to counter the prophesied Daniel 12:7 scattering—of those of the *seventh era*—by seeking to *re-unify* all brethren through this or that “joint effort” or “cooperation.” *God* is not trying to counter the scattering that is afflicting Laodicea, but rather to call His faithful sheep out of it—those who have anointed their eyes. Terrible and worsening doctrinal disagreement ensures this cannot happen! While we are not trying to attack or demean those who seek to “repair” other groups, we simply know that all such

efforts will *fail*—no matter how sincere or diligent the “activists.” Such people are trying to “push water uphill,” and are working against prophecy.

Some others, however, have used the scattering to justify rejection of basic truths. They may seek to convince you that it is actually *wrong* to be part of *any* organization! My book on *THE TRUE CHURCH* addresses how such people come to believe that the “truest” Philadelphians become a veritable “law unto themselves” by withdrawing to a position of independence, meaning, sadly, rejection of God’s government and many other truths, while at the same time believing themselves to evolved to the highest order of doctrinal and spiritual purity.

Be careful of this opposite ditch. It is a deadly trap!

Anyone coming with The Restored Church of God should *not* write letters on the Internet or to various church “newspapers” or websites bantering back and forth regarding what needs to be done about this, that or the other “problem,” “wrong” or “injustice” (I Tim. 6:3-5)! Nor should they send what amounts to slanderous trash to undisclosed lists of people—in or out of RCG—for the purpose of “keeping them informed.” The people of God do not do such things. Neither do they take matters into their own hands, reflecting the very spirit of Laodicea.

I repeat: This is the age of independence. And it is also the age of excuses. Many people hope to be exceptions to the rule, and can offer no end of reasons that they should be an exception. RCG walks together in unity because God offers a way of life in which “one size fits all.”

If you are one who takes up “causes,” thinking “the people have power” (in the democratic tradition), remember *Laodicea* means “the people rule, judge or decide.” If you are determined to pass on emails, “fighting to make things better,” you will *not* be happy or welcome in RCG. We do not participate in these efforts. Again, God is calling Philadelphians *out of* this widespread confusion, division and compromise.

Our brethren cannot and must not do this!

Other of our material to the splinters explains all of this in much more detail, particularly the book *THE WORK OF GOD* and the sermon “Do Christians Give to Relief Organizations—What Jesus Actually Taught!”

The Restored Church of God “agenda” is: (1) Fully hold fast, (2) continue doing God’s Work of announcing the kingdom of God and the Ezekiel Warning, (3) practice true brotherly love, (4) offer vital tools to help confused, scattered brethren anoint their eyes, (5) “watch and pray always” (Luke 21:36) to be protected from the Great Tribulation, (6)

prepare for the Wedding Supper, and (7) prepare to rule the world with Jesus Christ at His Second Coming!

This keeps our schedules more than full!

### Saying Goodbye

Many people seem to think that they should quietly “slip away” from their previous organization. Much could be said about this subject, but here are a few keys and principles.

It is important that you not simply disappear without notice. Often, this has left former brethren thinking that those who, in fact, took the position of standing up for the truth instead fell away!—the worst possible wrong impression of one’s actions!

Be sure that you take the time to say goodbye to your fellow brethren! A respectful notification to your friends and to your pastor is appropriate—and honorable. Individual circumstances often dictate how much should be said and to whom. Sometimes, “short and sweet” is best. For instance, something like this could apply:

“I would like to inform you that we will no longer be attending the [blank] Church of God. We have anointed our eyes (Rev. 3:18) and gone with the true Church—The Restored Church of God. If you want to know more about this extraordinary organization, I recommend you go to their main website *rcg.org*. I simply could not endure any longer the many false doctrines being taught by [blank]. We will miss you and all of our brethren.” You may wish to add a “P.S.” that they may contact you by phone or email.

For those who are leaders—ordained men of various offices—a greater obligation exists to warn others left behind. Per individual circumstances, leaders definitely will, and others may, wish to seek counsel from Headquarters about this.

### The Zeal of Philadelphia

You have received a great deal of material from us for study and review. A certain bulldogged determination and resolve was required to even undertake this most important spiritual project. But this zeal pales in the face of the decision you must now make!

Laodiceans are not known for zeal. Therefore, Christ told them to “*be zealous* therefore, and *repent*.” Recognize that YOUR ZEAL WAS BEING TESTED BY YOUR DEGREE OF WILLINGNESS TO THOROUGHLY RESEARCH THIS DECISION! You could not do this without spending much time and

effort—significant *zeal*—to accomplish it. This includes real, earnest prayer, Bible study and possibly fasting one or more times. If you have used shortcuts, you have only *cheated yourself* out of any chance to reach the right decision, and *hurt yourself*.

In the end, it will have only been a simple lack of zeal that caused this!

### Conclusion

This concludes the checklist of issues at the “entrance” into The Restored Church of God. You may not have thought of us in this way, but, in describing RCG, I have actually described the WCG as it was prior to Mr. Armstrong’s death.

Prophecy reveals that most will never want to go “back” to the Church as we all knew it! They will see this as a step *backward* in growth and time. (This is the same cunning *illogic* used so successfully by the false leaders of the WCG to make plain heresy appear to be “advancement in understanding.”) These are unable to see it as the greatest possible leap FORWARD that they could take!

What about you?

Hold no illusions that you are facing directly into “gale force winds” trying to blow you 180 degrees away from what you are now considering. You are left with one thought—described in a series of questions. In your mind’s eye, go back to the Church prior to January 16, 1986. For a moment, forget everything the false leaders did after Mr. Armstrong’s death:

- Were you convicted about the truth of all God’s doctrines and that *all* compromise is wrong?
- Did you feel that you had found the “hidden treasure” of which Jesus spoke?
- Did you feel that you had correctly sold all you had to buy the “pearl of great price”?
- Were you generally happy and at peace?
- Had you proven you were on the only road to the kingdom of God?
- Had you sufficiently “counted the cost”—having no doubt that you were traveling the right path?
- Were you willing to suffer persecution from family, friends or associates because you were convicted that you were obeying God and doing His will?
- Did you believe that Mr. Armstrong was Christ’s apostle, the end-time Elijah and your “father in the gospel”?
- Did you understand and believe the form of Church government as Mr. Armstrong taught it?



- Did you believe that God could allow so central a doctrine to be taught incorrectly?
- Were you committed to finishing the Work of God—and as it was being done then?
- Did you believe that slipping into a Laodicean spirit leads to the Great Tribulation?
- Did you believe that, if you held fast, you would be protected from the horrendous calamities lying ahead—which are now MUCH CLOSER than before—and that your crown was at stake?
- Did you literally believe that you had been taught the PLAIN TRUTH?

The odds are great that most of your answers fell one way or the other. If you found that they are primarily “no’s,” then your decision has been made and you must acknowledge it. If your list consists of “yes’s,” then you are among the growing many hundreds who have come to the same conclusion!

## Other Splinter Explanation Packet Literature

### THE TRUE CHURCH – One Organization, or Many?

Jesus Christ built His Church nearly 2,000 years ago—and promised it would never be destroyed (Matt. 16:18)! Is this Church and Christ’s Body still a *single* unified organization? Or, after the death of Herbert W. Armstrong in 1986, and the prophesied “falling away” (II Thes. 2:3), did it split into *multiple* organizations, groups and scattered individuals? Christ is not divided, but can circumstances divide His Church and Body? Do—or can—the actions of men make this possible? The Catholics, the Protestants, the WCG apostates and the splinter leaders all have clear teachings on this subject. What did Mr. Armstrong teach—and does it align with the Bible? This book presents facts, history and the proof of Scripture. It brings PLAIN ANSWERS!

### “ANOINT YOUR EYES” – Christ’s Warning to His People

Christ warns Laodiceans to “anoint your eyes”—WHY? What did He mean? WHO did He mean—and how can you know? This all-important instruction, to *all* Christians living in the last days, *must* be understood. This extensive book—the most crucial written to the WCG splinters—thoroughly covers things never before explained, and in extraordinary detail. For those hoping to escape the Great Tribulation, it reveals *exactly* what Christ meant and how to apply this most critical warning!

### THE GOVERNMENT OF GOD – Understanding Offices and Duties

The Church of God—the biblical Body of Christ—is not divided, and is the only place where the GOVERNMENT OF GOD is present, the only organization Christ leads. He has placed *offices* and assigned special *duties* within His Church. All of the splinters have rejected God’s government! This has led to mass confusion about these God-ordained offices and duties. What *exactly* is a deacon?—a local elder?—a preaching elder?—a pastor?—an evangelist?—a prophet?—an apostle? What about “teachers”? Who are the “messengers” to the seven Churches in Revelation 2 and 3? What do they do? Where will the Two Witnesses come from? How does the “watchman” of Ezekiel 33:7 function in *this age*? How do all these work and serve, and in UNITY? Who holds AUTHORITY to ordain today? Are splinter ordinations valid? Which office(s) can “bind and loose”? Can anyone add truth or traditions to the Church? Who is authorized to make Church-wide administrative judgments? Who supervises all congregations? This vital book answers all of these questions—and many more!

### THE WORK OF GOD – Its Final Chapter!

Herbert W. Armstrong ANNOUNCED the kingdom of God to the world and proclaimed the special warning to the modern nations of Israel for 52 years! Did he teach that his death would end this commission, believing both duties to be his own “private work”? How did he instruct his successor? Does “the kingdom shall be preached in all the world” (Matt. 24:14) before the “end come” still apply? What of “go...and TEACH all nations...ALL THINGS whatsoever I have commanded you” (Matt. 28:19-20)? What about “prophecy again” in Revelation 10:11? What is the gospel? Is Christ part of it? Did Mr. Armstrong teach—or does the Bible—that God’s people should give to relief organizations and disaster victims? What did Jesus say? Also, what about “local” or “personal evangelism”? Why has The Restored Church of God rewritten *all* the literature of the Worldwide Church of God? What was our STRATEGIC PLAN? What are our two OPERATIONAL PLANS? What does prophecy say about the final Work of God?

### I WILL SEND ELIJAH TO RESTORE ALL THINGS

God foretold, “I will send you *Elijah*...before the...day of the LORD” (Mal. 4:5). Jesus said this man would “restore *all* things” (Matt. 17:11). What did He mean? Who is this

person? Has he already come? Is he yet to appear? Was he Herbert W. Armstrong? Will he be one of the Two Witnesses—or someone else? How is he recognized? Can he be identified? If there is *proof*, what is it? How significant is this issue? What implications derive from it and is there danger in ignoring or minimizing its proper understanding? It is time to end the confusion and deception clouding this great prophecy. Here is the *truth* about the end-time Elijah!

#### **SHOULD ACCUSERS BE ANSWERED? – Do You Believe Obvious Lies?**

Christ described our time as the age of hatred, betrayal, offense and lawlessness (Matt. 24:10-12). Many today use and promote innuendo, rumors, outright lies and other forms of deception to confuse and divide God's people, and defeat their confidence in Christ's ability to govern His Church. When presented with such information, what do—what will—you do? Christ said, "If they have persecuted ME, they *will* persecute YOU!" This means attacks, sometimes vicious, are a fact of life for God's people. The true Church and especially its leaders stand squarely in Satan's crosshairs. It will receive the brunt of persecution *prior* to the Tribulation, when Satan will turn on the "remnant" Church of Laodicea (Rev. 12:17). Certain questions arise: Should accusers be answered? What spirit motivates them? Did Jesus answer His accusers? Mr. Armstrong was attacked throughout his ministry. Did he answer accusers? Should I? What did Mr. Armstrong teach about this? What does God's Word say? This book reveals the answers—and is the policy statement of The Restored Church of God about persecution and accusation, and our response to them.

#### **IS "THAT PROPHET" ALIVE TODAY? – The Rise of False Prophets**

Moses foretold the coming of a Great Prophet—often referred to as "That Prophet." Who is this person? Was he John the Baptist? Is he Gerald Flurry? Is he someone yet to come? Is he Christ? What does the Bible teach? Did Mr. Armstrong teach the Church about this subject? If so, what did he say? In Matthew 24, Christ twice warns of false prophets among God's people at the end of the age. There are more of these men than most realize. Should you be concerned? Can you recognize them? Can you resist their seduction? Are there prophets alive today? What about the Two Witnesses, who are called "prophets"? What did Mr. Armstrong teach about false prophets? The answers to all these questions could save your life!

#### **SURVIVING "PERILOUS TIMES"**

Civilization has entered the "last days"—II Timothy 3:1. The context through chapter 4, verse 4, reveals that "perilous times" have come upon both the world *and* the Church. There are now many kinds of deception and "sleight of men" (Eph. 4:14) being foisted on unsuspecting and gullible brethren. This volume addresses some of the worst of those deceptions, and assists in helping you survive them all!

#### **THERE CAME A FALLING AWAY**

Herbert W. Armstrong led the Worldwide Church of God for 52 years, teaching hundreds of true doctrines. He proved them from the Bible and told us to do the same. His successors changed them *all*. Do you think *some* changes were right? Do you realize ALL were wrong? Have you recognized them? Here they are!

(12/09/11)  
WR

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