

## The Chief Apostles - Part 2

### Lesson Objectives

1. The children learn about the development of the New Apostolic Church in the time of Chief Apostles Ernst Streckheisen, Hans Urwyler, Richard Fehr, Wilhelm Leber.
2. The children will learn the most important contributions to the development of the New Apostolic Church that were made by Chief Apostles Streckheisen, Urwyler, Fehr and Leber.

**Memory Verse:** "Peter said to Him, 'We have left everything to follow You!'"  
--Mark 10:28 (NIRV)

**Message:** We follow Him unconditionally.

**Bible Text:** This lesson is historical in nature and therefore the only Bible reference used is the memory verse itself.

### "Hook"/Intro Activity:

"Listen Carefully" Game:

See: [www.kidssundayschool.com](http://www.kidssundayschool.com) (Grade School - Games - "Listen Carefully")

You will need at least 6 of the following items for this activity, along with an index card with the word "GOD" written on it: bell, whistle, radio, baby rattle, drum or other small instrument, wind chimes, noisemaker or party favors, telephone, CD player, alarm clock, timer. The children will try to identify what all of the items have in common. (The answer is - we can hear all of them, including God.) Please see the above website for detailed instructions. At the end of the discussion, look up together in your Bibles Psalm 29:4. Then continue with the lesson.

**Lesson/Discussion:** (From "God's Ways - Volume 3)



**Ernst Streckheisen** (Served as Chief Apostle from 1975-1978)

- Born October 19, 1905 in St. Gall, Switzerland.
- Sealed on August 6, 1910 with his mother and brother. His father had died when he was four years old, leaving the family very poor and lacking for things such as shoes and food.
- Studied business and commerce.
- Was called to be Chief Apostle when Chief Apostle Schmidt retired from office for health reasons.
- Died unexpectedly in Cape Town, South Africa on November 8, 1978.

Important Things to Know:

- The Chief Apostle's official "seat" was moved from Dortmund, Germany to Zurich, Switzerland and it was decided that the official "seat" of the acting Chief Apostle would from now on remain permanently in Zurich.
- God's work spread especially in Africa and Asia during his three years as Chief Apostle.
- Ordained 28 Apostles, including 10 for Asia and 6 for Africa.



Hans Urwyler (Served as Chief Apostle from 1978-1988)

- Born February 20, 1925 in Berne, Switzerland.
- Grew up New Apostolic with his two younger brothers.
- Trained to be a mechanic and attended a technical college, later starting his own business in the automotive field.
- Was called to be Chief Apostle on November 18, 1978 after Chief Apostle Streckeisen passed away suddenly ten days earlier.
- Suffered a stroke while in Africa in July of 1987, and therefore ordained District Apostle Richard Fehr as the Assistant Chief Apostle, later ordaining him as Chief Apostle in May of 1988.
- Died November 17, 1994.

Important Things to Know:

- Looked into areas on the "New Apostolic map" that had not been explored, and as a result, many new congregations in these newer areas were established.
- The appointment of District Apostle Helpers was created, which had not existed before in the New Apostolic Church, in order to relieve the District Apostles of their work. They also celebrate Holy Communion for the departed every Sunday, as do the District Apostles.
- Pre-Sunday School was introduced, allowing preschoolers to be instructed about Jesus' doctrine in an age-appropriate manner.
- In 1986, he revoked the regulation that previously could expel Brothers and Sisters from partaking in Holy Communion in special cases or on the basis of their way of life. He emphasized that this was the individual's personal responsibility, and he left this to the discretion of the

Brothers and Sisters to examine themselves and decide whether or not to partake of Holy Communion.



**Richard Fehr** (Served as Chief Apostle from 1988-2005)

- Born on July 15, 1939 in Flaach, Switzerland.
- Sealed as a baby in September of 1939. His mother died following a serious illness when he was twelve years old.
- Attended school and became a typesetter.
- Married on September 8, 1960 and had one son.
- Was ordained Chief Apostle by Chief Apostle Urwyler while at his bedside in the hospital.

**Important Things to Know:**

- Since May 1990, made it possible for many countries of the world to receive audio-visual transmissions of services by the Chief Apostle via satellite (previously these services were audio only).
- Since 1990 there are international Apostles meetings every three years, along with 2-3 District Apostle meetings per year in which topical issues are discussed and decided on, along with commissioning various project and work groups. During such meetings the following items came into being:
  - o Increase appointments of project and work groups which, on the Chief Apostle's instructions, work on specific given subjects.
  - o Since the beginning of 1998, standardizing the divine services worldwide with only one service on Sundays and Holy Communion is celebrated in each service.
  - o The introduction of a new church emblem.
  - o Representation of the church on the Internet.
- By the end of 2000, Chief Apostle Fehr served God's children in more than 100 countries, and conducted services in about 70 countries that had previously never been visited by a Chief Apostle.
- He had a special concern for keeping the hope of Christ's return alive amongst the brothers and sisters.
- Retired at the Pentecost service in 2005, in which he announced and ordained his successor, Chief Apostle Wilhelm Leber.



**Wilhelm Leber** (Served as Chief Apostle beginning in 2005 and still does so)

Additionally, an excerpt from [www.nak.org](http://www.nak.org)

*While the New Apostolic Church had maintained a rather quiet, withdrawn presence in a type of societal niche for a long time, the Swiss Chief Apostles Ernst Streckeisen, Hans Urwyler, and Richard Fehr opened up the Church significantly, with the aim of taking on an active role in public life as an integral component of society.*

*The vigorous growth of the Church around the world and the integration of numerous different cultures and traditions into a uniform doctrine of faith are significant challenges in the third millennium. The focus of the New Apostolic doctrine of faith remains the expectation of the imminent return of the Son of God, Jesus Christ.*

### **Activity Ideas:**

- **Complete the "Picture Timeline":**

Make a "Picture Timeline" of the important contributions of each of the last four Chief Apostles: Streckeisen, Urwyler, Fehr, and Leber. Use pictures from clip art, magazines, drawings, etc. You will also need to bring heavy card stock, and copies of the pictures of the chief Apostles (see Lesson #1), along with scissors, glue sticks, and provide many sources for them to find various pictures to use. They may also use simple and brief statements to explain their pictures. Allow the children to be creative. When they are finished, their class timeline should illustrate the most important contributions of each of the Chief Apostles. Display your creation in your class area or on a bulletin board.

### **Application to Real Life:**

"Power Source" Activity:

See: [www.kidssundayschool.com](http://www.kidssundayschool.com) (Grade School - Activities - Power Source)

You will need to print out an activity sheet for each child. See the website above for the activity sheet. The point of this activity is to help the children understand the different types of power - natural, man-made and spiritual. God has provided our Chief Apostles to help guide us and show us how to be prepared for the day when the Lord will come again. We are so blessed to be able to look to these men of God. They also want each one of us to be successful at following the Lord Jesus...unconditionally (message statement). Discuss what the word

"unconditionally" means (use a dictionary if needed to look up the definition). Remind the children of the blessings and guidance they can receive from the word that comes from our Chief Apostle, as we all strive to follow the Lord, and be ready for His return.

### **Sample Journal Questions:**

- Do you think it is difficult to unconditionally follow the Lord Jesus and His teachings? Why or why not? Write about it.
- Why do you think the Chief Apostle ministry is important? Write about it.

### **Homework Ideas:**

- Read at home the lesson titled: "**Other Ministries of the NAC**".
- Learn the memory verse:  
"Teach them to obey everything I have commanded you."  
--Matthew 28:20 (NIRV)
- Work on memorizing Article of Faith #\_\_\_\_\_.
- What Districts does your Apostle care for? How many congregations does this include? (Hint - look on [www.nac-usa.org](http://www.nac-usa.org) for some clues, ask your ministers too.) See if you can find out. Bring your answers to class.