

MINISTERIAL LETTER

WHO INVITED TO
SERVICES

RADIO CHURCH OF GOD

WORLD HEADQUARTERS
PASADENA, CALIFORNIA 91109

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Broadcasting
The WORLD TOMORROW

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OFFICE OF
RODERICK C. MEREDITH, Minister

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Dear Fellow Ministers:

Greetings from Big Sandy! My family and I are back here again this spring, and it is certainly good to be here in this beautiful place and at this fine college here in Texas. The students are warm and zealous as usual and the college is coming along fine in every way. My wife and I are really enjoying the trip, although two of our children have contracted the mumps and are having to be kept in the house all the time for the next several days or so.

Mr. Ted Armstrong has asked me to come over here again in order to bring special news, assemblies, forums and inspiration from Headquarters. I certainly appreciate the opportunity, and it certainly does seem to help the students when one of us "older" evangelists comes directly from Pasadena and brings them news and information about God's Work and inspires them to want to have a part in it.

According to the latest report, Mrs. Herbert Armstrong's condition remains basically the same. Mr. Armstrong is certainly extremely concerned about her, however, as it has now gone on a good deal past fifty days and her overall condition must be weakening except for the supernatural help we know God has already been giving her. Mrs. Harold Jackson and Mrs. Glen White also are about the same--according to latest report--and are still waiting for God's supernatural intervention. The main thing, fellow ministers, is that we all take this spiritual rejuvenation that we have been talking about as a deep and permanent thing. We must really LEARN the lessons God wants us to and get closer to Him than we as a ministry or as a church have ever been! Then God WILL heal--and He will bless and EMPOWER the Work in the way we have all realized must be done to complete this commission.

Through this trial of Mrs. Armstrong and these other ladies, God is purging His Work and Church of a lot of spiritual filth that had collected in all of us--and in many particular respects as well. Interestingly, it was after many of us began praying and fasting for Mrs. Armstrong that this situation of Mr. Glover's came to a head and he had to be expelled from God's Work. Now, it is my sad duty to inform you that Mrs. Neveline Swaney--Mr. Armstrong's personal secretary--has also had to be put out of God's Work and Church! Mrs. Swaney has been acting strangely for the last couple of years or so--and many of us are not completely shocked by this turn of events, although it is certainly a sad thing to see someone so useful cut themselves off from God and His service. But Mrs. Swaney began to miss church

quite often--even during the very periods when she was "able" to go to the beauty shop and other places. She seemed to be developing delusions of grandeur and would quite often "lecture" the various ministers and executives when we would be waiting for Mr. Armstrong for a conference outside his office in the reception area. She seemed to have an overbearing and vain concern with her own self-importance. At any rate, Mrs. Swaney has now come to some weird personal doctrines and theories regarding God's Work and His Word--including ideas that this is the Laodicean Church rather than the Philadelphia Church. She has been spreading a number of these theories among some of the church brethren here locally--particularly other single women. Before we found out about it, she has "infected" a few of these to the point that they may be beyond help. Therefore, we have also had to excommunicate Mrs. Mabel Gordon and Mrs. Ethel Henry from God's Church as well.

✓ Therefore, fellows, I want all of you to announce this publicly to the churches and let them know that Mrs. Swaney is MARKED as one who has been causing division in God's Work and is not to be received, listened to or fellow-shipped with in any way. You might explain this in connection with this spiritual "purging" that God is carrying out in His Body--and the fact that we know that now, more than ever, Satan surely is going about "as a roaring lion" more than ever before against the true Work of the living God!

✓ Turning now to happier news, you have all heard, no doubt, about the possibility of additional overseas stations being opened up in the little kingdom of Andorra, in the Maldives Islands and other places around the world in addition to Radio Jerusalem. In addition, at the same time God gave us this past month, during March, a forty-five per cent increase over March of last year! Since March is normally a fairly good month for income and is a thirty-one day month--this represents a real boon to God's Work for which we are most thankful! Certainly it will not begin to catch up for all of the low months of the last couple of years. But it is a beginning--and shows what God is now beginning to do as a result of His Church turning to Him with additional prayer, fasting, humility and real service. Let's keep it up!

A week ago Monday, the forum time of Pasadena was used for the ground-breaking for the new academic complex of buildings jutting out toward South Orange Grove from Ambassador Hall. You have all heard about the plans for these buildings and one will be called the Fine Arts Building and another the Life-Science Building. These will provide the additional classroom space which is most needed at the headquarters campus and will certainly add to the prestige of the college as far as visiting radio station managers and educators are concerned. For we need to remember that they look most of all at a college's library and the number of classrooms and related facilities. So this is great news, and these classrooms may be in use during second semester of next year.

Also, perhaps you have heard about the new arrangement for our Ambassador College fleet cars. This has come about since Mr. Schreiber has come up from San Diego to take charge of the Transportation Department--and presented a very fine

proposal to Mr. Portune and me which has since been approved by Mr. Ted Armstrong. This new proposal will soon begin saving God's Work in the neighborhood of a quarter-million dollars a year! It involves buying rather than leasing our cars directly from the Chrysler Corporation and bypassing the middlemen.

It involves nearly all of our men getting more standard-type cars and equipment on their cars. From now on, the local elders and second men will be driving the Plymouth Fury III 4-door hardtops. They will be well equipped and all we will need to ask you is your choice of color. The price will be the same as in the past--with five dollars a month more charged for station wagons. The preaching elders and pastors will be driving Chrysler Newport 4-door hardtops, fully equipped and, again, all we need to ask you is the choice of color. Nine passenger station wagons equipped the same will be five dollars more per month. The evangelists and a few other top executives in the work will pay even more per month and will have the complete choice of car and style--adding an additional amount for any unusual extras they may wish. But this will be restricted to these evangelists and a very few top executives only so that it will keep us "standard" with Chrysler and allow us to execute the tremendous saving that this new fleet-car program involves.

I know that many of you have enjoyed driving the "souped up" Chrysler 300's. But they have been "jazzing up" these 300's a great deal the last few years so that they have become virtually a sports car. We now find that with the many extras many of our ministers have added to them that the Chrysler 300's have often cost God's Work even more than the New Yorkers which some of the evangelists and executives were driving! So we know that all of you will be most happy to use and enjoy these fine Chrysler Newports. And, another blessing, you will now be receiving a new car every year on this new program! This is something that has been found even more economical because Chrysler Corporation will give us a greater break if we do and because of the tremendous number of miles our men drive anyway will enable us to save a great deal of money even though each of our ministers is provided with a brand new car every year!

Now for some INSTRUCTIONS:

When reading these letters, be sure, fellow ministers, to tell your unordained second men and assistants the important parts that apply to them! We find that many of these unordained men have not been getting this information although much of it would help their work and encourage them as well. So talk over the letters with them and show my letters to them any time if you feel that the letter is of such a general nature that it would be just as well. We have felt, thus far, that it is best to limit these letters to the ordained men only because of the nature of correction and instruction in some of them, and because it is better that the man in charge get this information first anyway.

A problem has arisen in many of your areas regarding inviting prospects to church. You may have received some memos from me about this. Let me explain.

To clarify the situation, let me get at the very basis of God's Church and what it is and should be. Mr. Herbert Armstrong has always taught us that God's Church is the "called out ones" who come out and away from the world to worship God in Spirit and in Truth. Of course, you have to have God's Spirit to do this. Therefore, God's Church is composed only of baptized and converted people.

It's just as simple as that. However, because of special permission given some of the earlier ministers in years past to invite co-workers and correspondence course students to church before they were baptized or ready for baptism, many of our men have seen this in past years, have assumed this is a permanent thing and have gotten into wrong habits in varying degrees. Mr. Ted Armstrong and I, directed by Mr. Armstrong--came out very strongly about this matter in ministerial meetings last Feast of Tabernacles. Yet, without this basic explanation of what God's Church is, many of you have still been inviting unconverted people to church! I had the opportunity to talk it over with Mr. Armstrong recently in a Visiting Program meeting in Pasadena and we worked out definite guidelines to help you know how to act in this regard. Here they are: First, the church should be composed of baptized people, their underage children and--if necessary because of circumstances--their "friendly" mates if these mates want to come or come without being invited. In this case we must, of course, make them welcome. Secondly, we must make welcome ANYONE who comes into the church to visit whether they have been baptized or not! We should not invite such people nor should our converted members. But IF a mistake is made or if someone does just hear about it and drift in from the street so to speak, we must make them feel welcome! In this regard, we have got to be very careful about appearing to have too many deacons around the doors questioning and giving severe looks to these visitors. Some radio "talk" program speakers were commenting recently about the WORLD TOMORROW and some people called in and said they tried to visit "Armstrong's church" and were "grilled" by strong-arm men. They implied that we had some sort of "secret society."

This, fellows, does give a WRONG impression to radio station managers and the public. So this we must avoid. Such people, therefore, should normally be treated in a very friendly manner. But if they are obviously unconverted and new word should be gotten to the minister in charge as soon as possible and he or a very competent, well-trained and tactful elder should be the one to talk with these people and not offend them. Probably, if they are carnal they will not want to stay very many Sabbaths anyway and if they do you can explain to them the nature of God's Church so they will know that it is a private assembly for converted people although certainly not a secret society by any means.

Now, another category of those who might be invited to church would include those who are ready to be baptized that very Sabbath OR those whom you are quite sure should be ready for baptism within about three to six weeks (not months)! In fact, you might even invite such people "provisionally"--letting them know that God's Church is a private assembly for converted people only and that if they really are not ready to be baptized--as you should already be sure they will be--within a few weeks that it would perhaps be better for them to prove these things through the broadcast, all the free literature and personal visit you or your assistants can give them.

Another variation of this category would be young people of college age who might--in rare cases--be allowed to attend a few months instead of weeks if they are very interested and it is a matter of them waiting on baptism before coming to Ambassador College.

But lets be VERY CAREFUL about making too many exceptions! Let's cut back DRASTICALLY on the number of such people in God's Church! Frankly, fellows, we have found that in some churches as many as one-fourth to one-third of the entire adult population of the church was made up of UNCONVERTED people!

I think all of you can realize why this must CEASE! This has never been God's will at any time, and it is certainly something that we must PURGE from our midst as soon as it can be done in a wise, discreet, and tactful manner. Now I hope that the above explanation makes really PLAIN the basic principle of what God's Church is and should be and that you will not have any questions about who to invite to church. Your visiting slips, then, can let us realize that these people are not just in a "good attitude" or "interested." But they can make plain the fact that these people are ready for baptism very soon or, more often, have already been baptized.

Another matter about which many of you younger ministers, especially, need instruction is in making plain the problems you send in in your reports or memos. Quite often, in fact way too often, you leave out the pertinent details upon which we would base our answer.

The following is a literal, word-for-word example of this which came in on a memo a few months back: "being aware of headquarters' recommendation that we not baptize college prospectives, I would like to know how far we should go in not baptizing a person perhaps a year or two away from college and then having no guarantee of acceptance. Would it be okay to baptize this young man under these circumstances?"

Fellow ministers, I had to write this field minister and ask him the age of this young man in question. Do you see why? If the "young man" was twenty-five or thirty years of age, having no guarantee of college acceptance later, he certainly should be baptized IMMEDIATELY if he were ready! But, if he were only sixteen or seventeen that would change EVERYTHING.

This is just one of dozens of examples I could cite, but hope that the principle comes across to you and that you will think about these pertinent details and be sure to put them in your memos to save us asking you these questions the second time around.

Another matter is a question some of you have written regarding your local members or spokesman clubs sponsoring young people for the Summer Educational Program.

After checking with Mr. Lochner and others, here is the policy on this: Send in the application stating who you want to sponsor and if he meets the qualifications he will be approved. This is certainly all right if some of the local members or spokesmen

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clubs want to sponsor someone from the local area OR someone chosen by headquarters to attend the Summer Educational Program whether they know of the individual or not. It will certainly be appreciated if some wish to do this. Some asked about using the local love offering for this purpose. This should very rarely be done--as this money should help those families temporarily out of jobs, etc.

In closing, let me say that I just talked with Mr. Herbert Armstrong in Pasadena and received permission from him to ordain one of our fine Ambassador College graduates, Mr. Bill Cowan, to the office of local elder here in the final meeting of the Texas district conference tomorrow morning! I know this will be a very inspiring part of the final meeting, and Mr. Cowan will certainly be a fine addition to God's ministry. Also, I am very happy to announce that Mr. Raymond Cole--after receiving permission from Mr. Armstrong--ordained Mr. George L. Lee as a local elder in Toronto on the Sabbath of March 25. So God continues to add to the number of elders and servants in His Work! Congratulations, men, keep up the good work!

Also, Mr. Armstrong did tell me that he was MIGHTILY CONCERNED about Mrs. Armstrong's condition even late this afternoon! This is now the fifty-fourth day she has gone without solid food. She is very weak. He said he now realizes this cannot go on too much longer! He feels there are still things that we must root out of our lives and of God's Church. In addition, he said that we must all become far more zealous and aggressive in really CRYING OUT to Almighty God for His intervention in this matter and all the healings in this church and for the POWER of His Spirit more than we have ever had before!

I'm sure all of you fellows realize by now, deeply, that this is not just a personal matter by any manner or means but when Mrs. Armstrong, Mrs. Harold Jackson, Mrs. Glen White and others even in the top echelons of God's ministry are struck down simultaneously, this represents a GIANT need in God's Work and should give us impetus to cry out to our Creator, to serve Him and to WALK WITH HIM in prayer, study and fasting more than we have ever done before. Let us join Mr. Armstrong in more earnest and vigilant prayer than perhaps any of us have ever participated in before! Let us yield wholly so that God may EMPOWER this church and this work more than ever before in its history. And let us so humble ourselves that we will always realize deeply that--even as God pours out greater spiritual gifts, which He will--it is to HIS glory and honor and majesty!

As I said above, let's make this a deep and permanent thing in our lives and let us make sure that it affects the entire body of Jesus Christ here on this earth!

Your servant in Christ,


Roderick C. Meredith