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P. GRADUATES , HOW TO USE

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WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD

REQUIRED

WORLD HEADQUARTERS
PASADENA, CALIFORNIA

* MINISTERIAL STUDY AND
PRAYER

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OFFICE OF
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D.C.M.'S PHONE #

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LOWER VISITS IF
NECESSARY

Dear Fellow Ministers:

Greetings again from Headquarters! Mr. Herbert Armstrong returned last Thursday from his trip to Jerusalem and Bricket Wood. He was pleased with the fine example set by the 50 Ambassador College students working on "the Dig" this summer. Their warmth, friendliness and enthusiasm, as well as their diligence in their work created a very favorable impression on those connected with the excavation who knew little or nothing about Ambassador College previously. The head of the project, Dr. Mazar, and a few others were already familiar with the College, but most of those involved in the project had their first real contact with the College through the students who were there this summer.

Mr. Ted Armstrong and Mr. Dart returned from their round-the-world trip last week. They had a very fine, profitable trip, and they were able to learn a great many things by being on the spot there in India which should help them in making a final decision on where the office should be located, but no decision has been made as yet. Mr. Ted Armstrong is now up at Orr for the wind-up of the Summer Educational Program and will probably return tomorrow.

The most important item of news right at this time is, of course, the current financial crisis in the work. I'm sure all of you have received by now Mr. Armstrong's special co-worker letter which fully explains the situation. I can't add very much in the way of explanation except to mention that all of us are very concerned about this present trend -- and hope all of you will take it seriously, too -- but we are sure, as Mr. Armstrong mentioned, that God will provide the means to see us through this difficult situation.

With Freshman orientation just about a week away, we are now getting ready for the beginning of a new college year. The incoming freshman class here at Pasadena will number about 210 students! This

total includes 96 single men and 96 single women living on campus, and about 18 married men who will be living off campus. In addition, we will be bringing in 15 men for a semester or two of training here at Pasadena. At Big Sandy this year a total of about 123 new freshmen will be accepted -- 66 single men, 49 single women and about 8 married men. I'm not sure of the total number to be accepted in Bricket Wood this year, but 15 -- 8 men and 7 women -- are being accepted from the United States for the English campus.

To help get the College year off to a good start, the Music Department is presenting "The Sound of Music" on two nights next week. It will be a costumed production, under Mr. Prather's direction, by a special group of the few Chorale members who were here this summer, some ex-Chorale members and some Imperial students. It will be a unique production in that it will be held outdoors in the plaza of the Loma D. Armstrong Academic Center between the Fine Arts Building and the Life Science Building. A specially constructed stage has been erected at the rear of Ambassador Hall for this performance. We are looking forward to this special "summer" production.

The new Church in Gilroy, California began on August 2 with a total of 99 in attendance. Mr. Portune was able to be up there for the beginning of this new church which will be pastored by his son, Mr. Al Portune, Jr. The new Church in Orlando, Florida, began on August 9 with an attendance of 158, and the new Church at the Lake of the Ozarks Feast site began that same Sabbath with an attendance of 260. It is expected to level off to around 170 to 180, however.

In the way of baby announcements, I have just one at this time -- that of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Meek. Their son, Bradford Paul, weighing 8 pounds and 15 ounces was born on August 6. Congratulations, Mr. and Mrs. Meek!

Some of you have asked about the condition of Mrs. Robert Collins, who has been incapacitated for some time now. Since we have not mentioned this in a letter recently, I know you would appreciate hearing the latest word on her condition. Here is a recent report from Mr. Richard Rice regarding this:

"There was improvement after Passover in 1967 and some gradual improvement this past year, but there still is a pressure in the stomach or female organ area and is apparently some kind of growth. She is in bed most of the time, unable to attend any services and for all

practical purposes an invalid. The initial examination was very painful and no diagnosis could be made as to what it exactly is.

"Mr. Luker, Mr. Collins and I anointed her again this past Sabbath when we paid her a visit. She still needs our prayers and encouragement from all of God's people."

Also, some have asked about the condition of Mr. Kunz's son, Alex, who has had a severe problem with blackouts and convulsions for the past few years. I understand that Alex is somewhat improved now. He will often go several days without convulsions, whereas he used to have several convulsions, as well as blackouts, in a day. He had to wear a football helmet to protect his head from injuries he might sustain when he blacked out and fell. Now he does not have to wear a helmet. Specialists who were consulted feel that Alex had a certain amount of brain damage as a result of both Mr. and Mrs. Kunz having an Rh blood factor. This has been a real trial for Mr. and Mrs. Kunz for the past three years or so, and I know they would appreciate your continued prayers for Alex!

And I might mention that Mrs. Al Dennis' condition is still serious. At the last report I had, she was not completely bedfast, but is growing weaker and is still very much in need of our prayers!

✓ I just received word that some of you in the United States still have not completed your Ministerial Housing Form for the Feast this year. With the Feast just six weeks away, it is urgent that the Feast Office have these forms as soon as possible! All of you who have not done so should immediately complete the form and mail it to Headquarters. Many of the assistants also have not returned their forms, so I am asking all of you to check with them and remind any who haven't to do so right away!

X A question came up recently regarding how further speech experience and training could be given to those men with potential as speakers who were in the Visiting Program Training Class this past year. In most areas, these top men -- who would be lead men on the local Visiting Program -- ~~can be put on the sermonette list~~ and be ~~allowed to speak in Church every four or five weeks.~~ In those few areas in which the sermonette lists are already filled because of a large number of Local Elders and other top men, one, or at most two, other men in each area could be given an opportunity to speak in one of the local Spokesman Clubs every four or five weeks. They would not be con-

sidered regular members and would not attend all the meetings, but they would attend when they are scheduled to speak. This will enable them to continue to develop as speakers and will give you a chance to see how they are progressing. I should emphasize, however, that this should be done only if your sermonette list is filled and if you have one or two top men who would definitely be on the sermonette list if you had enough speaking opportunities.

We are now going over the V. P. T. C. entrance examinations and Personal Interview Forms in order to determine which men will be in the class this year, and it is obvious that in most areas the really top men who have been in the Church for years and who have been developing as leaders were in the class last year. For the most part those being recommended for the class this year would be considered either "second-line" men, or men who are fairly new in the Church. Consequently, we are turning down a higher percentage of them this year. In some cases the grades on the entrance examinations are just too low for acceptance, but in other cases the men may have "fair" Bible knowledge but are obviously not leaders and could not by any means be considered "potential Elders" at this time.

I wanted to mention this in the way of "advance warning" for some of you who sent in recommendations and examinations but who may not be able to have a class this year because of a lack of really qualified men in your area. This class as a whole, nationwide, and the men who are on the local Visiting Programs after completing the class last year must have the respect of the local brethren. We want to be sure that the standards of the class are not lowered in any way this year. This would detract from its overall effectiveness and would tend to reflect on the local Visiting Programs which were trained in the class this past year.

I want to remind all of you that any man who failed the entrance examination or who was not accepted for the V. P. T. C. for some other reason, either last year or this year, should NOT be serving in any "spiritual" capacity in the local area -- either on the sermonette list or on the local Visiting Program. I thought this was made clear last year, but one case came to my attention recently in which these instructions were apparently overlooked.

This would be a good time to mention, also, some of the things we discussed at the Ministerial Conference in January regarding deacons' responsibilities. I assume this was covered in the various

district conferences held afterward, but so that everyone will be sure to have these instructions, I'll briefly outline the important points which were discussed here in January.

First, all of our deacons should realize just what responsibilities the office of a deacon carries. Unless a deacon has been specifically appointed to serve on the local Visiting Program he is not to be giving advice to the brethren in spiritual matters -- and even those who are on the Visiting Program should not assume the prerogatives of an Elder in correcting and rebuking the brethren as some self-appointed "teachers" have done in the past. Their authority extends only as far as the responsibility they have been assigned to carry out -- whether in directing traffic, ushering, setting up chairs, etc. -- and does not include full authority over everyone in every circumstance who is "unordained."

The system we have used in the past of having "Head" deacons has not worked out very well and many of them have become problems. It is better not to have a "Head" deacon who is over the other deacons as their "boss," but you could perhaps designate one as the "Senior" deacon. The best system is to assign each man a specific responsibility and then rotate these responsibilities at least once a year.

You should visit the deacons in their homes at least twice per year to help them personally, and you should hold a deacons' meeting about every two months to get to know them better and to work with them as a group.

Be sure to handle problems that arise with any of your deacons. If any are competing or misusing their office, don't hesitate to suspend them -- even remove them -- from office. It is far better, of course, to head off these problems before they become that serious. But if a man refuses to change who has been corrected on an attitude, approach or conduct which reflects on his office, he should be either suspended or removed from office! This is important because the brethren look to deacons as examples. So, if a deacon is in a wrong attitude or persists in misusing his office or in competing with Elders or other deacons, this will have the same effect as allowing a more blatant and more obvious sin in one of the lay members to continue unhandled. Let's keep God's Church clean!

IMPORTANT! At this point I want to give you some very happy news! I have been able to talk to Mr. Herbert Armstrong in a very heartfelt manner about something which has been on the minds of many of us at Headquarters -- and perhaps many of you in the field. We discussed it with many of you during the district conferences. It involves the fact that even many of us -- as God's ministers -- have NOT been as close to God or filled with His spirit and power as we ought to be. Frankly, we may never fully know or understand the wide-ranging ramifications this has had throughout the whole work, world-wide. But, as God Himself shows over and over and over again in His word, whenever His people begin to depart from Him in any way, things begin to "go wrong," and outside troubles begin to arise. Yet, when the king or their spiritual leader would bring them BACK to God in heartfelt repentance, prayer and fasting, God would hear and answer. God's people would be blessed and prospered. And God's POWER would manifestly be with His people in many ways.

Many of us have sensed that -- to some degree at least -- this has been part of the cause for the income of God's work being down; for the increasing instances of drunkenness, rebellion, lying, and even stealing tithes among God's people; and for a number of our members and even an increasing number of employees here at Ambassador College to talk about quitting, threatening to quit, or actually to quit the work or the church, and in some cases both.

I say to all of you who are my brothers in Christ's ministry that we MUST -- from now on -- take far more time for earnest, heartfelt study of God's Word, for prayer, for meditation and for fasting and seeking God with ALL OUR HEARTS!

When I talked to the ministers at the Texas district conference, and when Mr. Plache, following my request -- asked the ministers at the Kansas City and Washington conferences about their personal prayer and Bible study, we found that VERY FEW, even of God's ministers, were spending a proper amount of time in prayer and Bible study regularly. Many were only averaging 10 to 20 minutes a day of each! Some, of course, were doing a little better than this but EXTREMELY few were getting in even as much as 45 minutes of prayer and 45 minutes of Bible study, approximately, each day.

The big thing, of course, is NOT to study and pray by the clock! We all, as Christ's ministers, understand this well. Yet, without timing ourselves to the minute or second, I think all realize that as the

leaders in God's Church we need to be spending more than the 1/2-hour minimum of prayer and study per day that we have strongly advocated for our members! Forty-five minutes to an hour per day for each is a lot more like it!

There may be days when we simply cannot and, perhaps, SHOULD NOT get in this exact amount of prayer or study "by the clock." But, unless we are thrown in prison or in extreme sickness or something similar, those days should NOT average more than one or two out of a week at the most!

If you are Christ's minister I doubt very seriously if any of you will want to "reason" or argue with this basic premise. We simply cannot afford to let our minds be so involved with even "administering" our job, our business, or organizational responsibilities that we FAIL to let God talk to us REGULARLY through His Word -- or ourselves talk to God in PRAYER every day! Without this deep and increasing contact with God as the end of this age draws near, we will find MANY things "going wrong." And this will undoubtedly be one of the MAJOR reasons -- although we will always be able to find immediate, technical explanations for our difficulties.

Let us never forget Jesus' words: "He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do NOTHING" (John 15:5).

In talking this problem over with Mr. Herbert Armstrong and its many ramifications, we decided to take immediate action. Henceforth, Mr. Armstrong has directed that all of the Evangelists and Pastors at Headquarters will meet together every Sunday morning from 9 to 11 for a ministerial Bible study and discussion period. Perhaps some of us can hold additional studies and discussions and give help to the other ministers and Elders here at Headquarters as well -- and to all of you. Also, to increase the close-knit warmth, love, and cooperation which is needed so vitally among God's top ministers, all of the Evangelists and Pastors and top faculty members here -- with Preaching Elders and others alternating from time to time -- will meet together for dinner each Wednesday evening in the Faculty Dining Room and then adjourn to Mr. Armstrong's home or other selected places for further fellowship and "togetherness."

If you remember how the early disciples lived with Jesus, ate with Him, worked with Him and often slept with Him out under the

stars at night on bedrolls, perhaps, or in various other places, you will realize the kind of personal and spiritual closeness they had which is somewhat lacking today. Most important, though, was their absolute closeness to God and to Christ in a personal sense and how they thought of EVERYTHING in relationship to what GOD was purposing or the Living Christ was working out through His Church. Our "walk" must be a lot closer, more constant and more heartfelt than it has been, fellows. I for one know that I desperately NEED this! And I am sure that everyone of you does also.

So from now on, let us put forth even more time and EFFORT to achieve this type of closeness with God and our Living Head, Jesus Christ -- and then with each other in spiritual warmth, fellowship and cooperation as God would have us. Each of you District Superintendents and pastors over churches may want to consider having occasional Bible studies and discussion periods with the men under you. Please send us any ideas you may have along these lines as they may be valuable to others.

As Superintendent of Ministers, I would like to say that if, occasionally, you find a real NEED to take off an extra day for fasting, study and prayer -- and that is the REAL PURPOSE of this extra time off -- then please do so and merely let us know about it under "additional comments" on your weekly report. This will NOT be "bragging" or doing your good works in public -- as very few will see it. But it will let us know why you had to have an extra day off that particular week and we will certainly understand if this liberty is exercised in right balance and used for its intended purpose.

Also, I would like to have a few -- this will not apply to many -- of you ministers with HUGE areas such as Mr. Lowell Blackwell up in the Dakotas, to write in and let us know your particular needs if you find that because of tremendous distances you must drive -- and the visits you are asked to get in -- that it does not leave you enough time for intensive prayer, meditation and real Bible study. In thinking this whole problem over -- I do feel that a few of you with such circumstances should only be obliged to get in about 12 to 15 visits a week rather than the standard 18 to 21.

And if there are any other genuine needs of this sort, please let us know about them so that there will be NOTHING to prevent everyone of you from getting in the fervent prayer, meditation and study which is so vital for a minister of Christ. For if all of us would literally drink in

and saturate our minds with more of God's Word, we would be so INSPIRED in our preaching, teaching and in the handling of the brethren's problems that not as many "problem visits" would crop up among our members to take our time anyway! When more of us are able to lay on hands and the people are healed almost immediately, a lot fewer cases of lethargy and rebellion are going to be encountered in local churches and among employees. When more of the direct POWER of God is evidenced in our sermons, our entire work and our lives, word will get out among the weaker brethren, and to neighbors, friends, co-workers and people everywhere that THIS is where Christ is working mightily! And, as long as we do not become smug or self-righteous, we need never fear the God-given result of this kind of publicity -- even though it may eventually bring increased persecution along with the spiritual blessings, healing, growth and power of God pulsating through His Church.

So let us get with it, fellow ministers. We talked to many of you at the district conferences about increased Bible study, about the tremendous help that systematic meditation on a single theme or problem can be, and on the need for more of God's spirit and power. I would like to write a special ministerial letter or "ministerial article" on these subjects to help you in your personal life and perhaps give you additional material for sermons and Bible Studies. But I know most of you have in mind the basics already. The main thing is to use this knowledge -- which few people on earth even begin to understand! And Mr. Armstrong, Mr. Ted Armstrong or I may be giving out additional information, materials, and instruction to you along these lines in the future. We will try -- as time permits.

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✓ But let us do take action! I want to exhort everyone of you to set aside approximately 45 minutes each day for prayer and an additional 45 minutes for personal Bible study and profound meditation on what you are reading and going over. Drink in of God's Word and let Him talk to you. There may be one or two days each month when you are unable to get in this exact amount of prayer or study -- especially the latter. But, generally speaking, these days should be few and far between! I am sure we can all agree with that.

Now respond from the heart. Do this -- and your sermons, your Bible studies with the brethren, your ministry and your entire life will begin to take on more meaning, more purpose, more deep spiritual joy and POWER as an instrument of God than ever before! Please remember us here at Headquarters and pray fervently that we will so

yield ourselves to God and the Living Christ that we may indeed set the kind of example for all of you -- and for God's people everywhere -- that this spiritual rejuvenation may extend all around the earth through the work of the Living Christ.

With deep love,

Your brother in Christ,

Roderick C. Meredith

Roderick C. Meredith

P. S. Must tell you immediately that I have a new, unlisted phone number at home. Would now ask all of you in the field that when you need to call me at home after business hours please use the following number: Area Code 213, 577-5753. You may wish to copy this off and have it with you as the old number is now void!