

1. LEADERSHIP TRAINING CLASS - NEW APPROACH
2. ADVICE FROM G.T.A. - MAKE MEMBER VISITS GENERAL - DON'T FORCE BIBLE STUDY
3. DEATH MRS. COWAN WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD

WORLD HEADQUARTERS  
PASADENA, CALIFORNIA

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PRESIDENT and PASTOR

OFFICE OF  
RODERICK C. MEREDITH, Minister

February 10, 1970

Dear Fellow Ministers:

Greetings again from Headquarters! Mr. Herbert Armstrong returned this afternoon from Big Sandy. He, Mr. Ted Armstrong and Mr. Apartian had flown over there this past Friday with two men from Belgium -- Colonel Maurice Quinet, who is a personal assistant to King Leopold, and Mr. Roelandt, a close personal friend of the king. These men were very impressed with what they saw here at the Pasadena campus, and it seems almost certain that King Leopold will want to visit the College personally within the next few months after hearing the reports of Colonel Quinet and Mr. Roelandt.

Mr. Ted Armstrong is still in Big Sandy. He wanted to stay there a few days in order to take a Forum and possibly some of the classes before returning at the end of this week.

Mr. Portune also returned yesterday from a brief trip. He and Mr. Gillen had flown to Hawaii at the end of last week to check out a possible new Feast site there. Mr. and Mrs. Dart had accompanied him to Hawaii, but they continued from there on a tour which will take them to the offices in the Philippines, Australia and New Zealand.

I was out of town this past weekend also. I left Thursday for Salt Lake City on a regular Field visit and returned Saturday night. I don't make as many Field visits now that Mr. Luker is here and is able to help with these, but I enjoy getting out to local churches from time to time and just wish I could get out more often. It so happened that a Ladies' Night was scheduled for Spokesman Club Thursday night, and I was able to attend and evaluate the meeting. I spoke in Salt Lake City Sabbath morning and then flew up to Boise with Mr. Coulter and spoke there in the afternoon. Mr. Coulter is the only U.S. minister who has such a long circuit that he must fly between his churches each



Sabbath. I certainly enjoyed the opportunity to speak to those two churches and to meet many of the brethren there in Salt Lake City and Boise.

A manpower change in the Foreign Work that I should announce is that Mr. Richard Frankel, who had been slated to remain here at Headquarters as an assistant to Mr. Dart, has been assigned to the Jerusalem and Nicosia, Cyprus, offices. I understand that this may be a temporary assignment, but for the next few months, at least, he will be in charge of these two offices. Because of the constant danger of Arab terrorist activity in Jerusalem and other parts of Israel, I know all of you will want to especially remember Mr. and Mrs. Frankel in your prayers. Mr. and Mrs. Dick are now at Bricket Wood.

As all of you have seen from the recent Weekly Comments, the income so far this year has been disappointingly low. The month of January ended with only a 21.6% increase in mail income, and only a 17% increase in total income. Since our income so far in the month of February has not been high enough to make up for the low percentage of increase in January, our total income for the year now stands at only 18.5%.

Please encourage the brethren not to let down but to continue to pray earnestly that God will add more new Co-Workers and that He will lay it on the hearts of those who are already Co-Workers to give generously. They will be blessed in doing so, and more people will be reached by this Work as a result. We know that our brethren can give only so much in the way of tithes and offerings, and most are giving all they possibly can. But most of us can give more in the way of fervent, heartfelt prayers for the Work. We, too, will be blessed by giving more in this way -- not that our motive for praying is to be blessed, of course, but as Mr. Armstrong has said so often, those who have their hearts in this Work are the ones who are growing spiritually!

I have a couple of birth announcements to give you. Mr. and Mrs. Michael Bousfield announced the birth of their son, Andrew Michael, on January 11. He weighed 7 pounds and 3 ounces.

Mr. Larry Neff had the unusual experience of delivering his own daughter when the midwife did not arrive on time. There were no complications and both mother and daughter are doing fine. Deborah Lee was born on January 30 and weighed 9 pounds.

Congratulations to both couples!



I'm sure all of you have received the instruction memo regarding the five new redesigned cards for the Office and Visiting System. A supply of the cards was sent by parcel post to each local pastor, so if you haven't received them by now, you should receive them shortly. These new cards will certainly be a big help to us here in giving us the information we need in order to keep our member and prospective member records accurate and up to date, and as you work with them and become accustomed to using them, I'm sure your office work will be completed more quickly and easily than ever before.

1. All of you who have a Leadership Training Class this year (formerly called the Visiting Program Training Class) recently received a memo explaining the name change, but I want to further explain and clarify the reason for this change. When we first began the Class in the fall of 1968, our concept in visiting was that we needed to visit all the members on a regular basis. As all of you know, we have recently come to see that although this might be helpful, it is not practical -- and with the regular Sabbath services, Bible Studies, Feasts and Church activities that are provided for the brethren, it is not really necessary. Therefore, we now make general member visits only on request -- when they are needed and wanted -- except for get-acquainted visits when you are new in an area, and visits to widows, the elderly, the sick and people in tour-type areas who can't attend Church regularly. With this new visiting approach, it appears that we will be able to basically fill our manpower needs with Ambassador College graduates and there is not the need for local men to visit that there was formerly.

Even though the Training Class was begun to fill a need that actually does not now exist in the same way, from the beginning the main emphasis in the Class was to train the men to become leaders -- to help them begin to change their own personal lives in the basic areas of organizing their time, prayer, study, meditation, fasting, family relations, child rearing, etc. The keynote of the Class was -- and will continue to be -- Matthew 7:5, the importance of straightening out our own lives so that we can qualify to help others. The men have also received basic training in understanding and explaining difficult scriptures and in public speaking -- both of which any leader in God's Church can certainly profit from.

In the past, the goal of having a "position" on a local Visiting Program has caused some to be more concerned about acquiring "head knowledge" than really putting the knowledge to use in their personal lives and changing personally. The change in the name of the Class, from the Visiting Program Training Class to the Leadership Training



Class, will emphasize leadership training as the main purpose of the Class rather than training the men to visit, and the lectures on visiting will also be changed. The basic format of the Class will remain the same. We want to emphasize more than ever, however, that the training the men are receiving (giving sermonettes, learning to explain difficult scriptures, etc.) is not for the purpose of training them to become elders or even to be on an official "Visiting Program" but for the purpose of helping them grow spiritually and be real LEADERS -- men who set an example for others to follow.

With the new visiting approach, rather than having men on an official "Visiting Program" "visiting" members in their homes, it would actually be far more helpful and effective if the leading men would make it a point to have new members and others over to their own homes more often for social-type visits. The leading men could, in this way, get to know them on a strictly social, man-to-man basis without the barrier that is often automatically there when the "Visiting Program" comes to call. This would give new people a chance to see the examples of the leading men in the way their homes are kept up and neatly decorated, the way their wives are in submission and are a help to them, the way their children are respectfully obedient, etc.

For the purposes which have been served in the past by local men visiting members -- which is far different from the purpose of a visit by a College-trained minister to a P.M. or to a member needing special counsel who has requested a visit -- this type of visit would be better.

This would also serve as a prod on the leading men to begin to apply what they are learning in the Class rather than just arming themselves with knowledge to use in advising others.

The men serving in this way as strong, stable, dependable "pillars" in the local Church area who are setting the example for the rest of the congregation will naturally be valuable assets to you and the entire Church. Without the "title" or "position" of being on the official "Visiting Program," they will realize they have to earn the respect and confidence of the congregation and won't feel they deserve it automatically because of their "position."

We want to encourage these men to be the friendliest, most helpful, most hospitable members of the congregation. While it is normal and right for these men to want to entertain their friends, we want to encourage them to have others -- newer members and those who don't usually get invited out very often -- over to their home from time to time, also. They would not be having others over for the



purpose of "evaluating" them or finding out their problems, but for the purpose of getting to know them better as fellow brethren and helping them by showing a genuine interest in them. They would, of course, report to their local minister any major problems that might come to their attention -- as would any faithful member -- but they would not be "looking for" or "watching for" something to report. They would not fill out visit slips on these visits of other brethren to their home.

During these occasions when they have others over -- and at other times -- it is natural that the conversation would often turn to such subjects as God's Work, the times we live in, Bible topics, etc. and the new members will no doubt ask them questions which they have learned to wisely answer in the Leadership Training Class. The training the men have received so far this year and the training the men received in the Class last year has not in any sense been in vain, or wasted. Rather than taking away the opportunity for these unordained men to serve, as some might think, this new approach will actually help them be more effective in helping others. They will be able to help as respected and trusted friends who have won the confidence of the other brethren rather than as members of an official "Visiting Program" who are "over them" or "checking up on them."

The best way to explain this change to the men who were in the class last year is to have them attend the next meeting of the Leadership Training Class. You can then fully explain the change to them as well as those now in the Class.

The Apostle James wrote that "pure religion" is to visit the widows and fatherless. It would be good if more of our brethren would give of their time in showing real concern for the widows, the elderly and the sick by visiting them occasionally. These men should certainly be encouraged to continue to do this as individuals -- with their wives or with another man, however they would like to do it -- but how often and when will be up to them. Just as we will not be checking up on them to find out how often they are entertaining others in their homes, they will not fill out visit cards or "report" to you when they do visit the widows and the sick -- except in situations that need to be brought to your attention.

This change does not mean that you may not ever take one of these unordained local men visiting with you. You may certainly do this if the need ever arises or if it is convenient and expedient to do so. Local Elders not in our employ will not be significantly affected by this change since they will continue to help with anointings and will make



general member visits which are requested. They should continue to fill out visit cards on the visits they make, but with this new visiting approach, some probably will not be making as many visits as in the past. We understand this, but we would still like them to send in a Visit Summary Card each week to report the visits they make.

No longer having local men "visit" other members in a kind of official capacity as members of a "Visiting Program," will help us completely eliminate the feeling some brethren have had that the Church must tell them what to do in every area of their personal lives. One of the important topics covered in the Conference this year was the need for all of us to recognize the right of each person in God's Church to live his own personal, private life as long as he is living within God's law. We recently realized that our old system here at College of "dorm reports" and "monitor's reports" on each student which resulted in students "evaluating" other students 24 hours a day was not good for either the students being evaluated or the student doing the evaluating. We have, as a result, totally changed this approach in the dorms here at the College, but we realize that some of you have tended to carry this over to the Field in dealing with the brethren in the local congregations.

2 This approach especially shows up in visiting at times. A visit can be friendly, encouraging and inspiring or it can be -- as Mr. Ted Armstrong brought out at the Conference -- a lecture, a harangue or outright meddling. We all need to take a genuine interest in other people as human beings -- to be friendly, personable and humble in our approach -- to be their friend and servant, not their ruler. This doesn't mean that we "wink at" or overlook their sins, but when we do have to correct, we'll do it in love, out of genuine concern for them. As long as they are living within God's law, how they conduct their personal lives is up to them. We need to remember that our primary responsibility as God's ministers is to give them advice and help in the spiritual realm. Of course, if they voluntarily seek our advice and counsel on other matters that we are qualified to advise on, we should make ourselves available for this and give them good, sound advice. But if it is a business matter or in an area that we are not qualified to help them with, be very careful about giving any advice, even if they seek it.

God does liken His people to sheep, and many of them do lack wisdom, but don't tell them what to do in their own personal lives. Encourage them to go to God for wisdom (James 1:5), and teach them how to make wise decisions. When they come to you for advice, give them the principles and let them make the decisions. But avoid giving the impression that they must "check" with you on every decision they



make. They don't have to check with you before moving to a different area, for example, or before changing jobs. It might be good, in many cases, if they did, but whether they do is up to them.

This topic was discussed at the Conference in more detail than I can give in this letter, of course, but for the benefit of those who were not here, I wanted to give an overall summary of what was discussed on this subject in the various meetings. Although these principles are not new, some of you have not been following them as carefully as you should be.

Let's all examine our approach in some of these areas and be sure that we as ministers are "ministering to" -- serving -- God's people and not trying to dominate them and make them conform to our personalities and our personal way of doing things.

3 This letter is a little late getting out, but I do want to mention the recent death of Mrs. Curtis Cowan, the wife of our Local Elder in Memphis, Tennessee. Most of you know that she had been suffering from cancer for the last two or three months and many of us had been praying for her for some time.

It was certainly a sorrowful thing to hear of her death. Why God permitted her to die at this time we may not understand until Christ's return. But she was certainly a dedicated, kindly and extremely warm Christian woman and a fine help to her husband in God's Work. Also, for those who are not familiar with the family, she was the mother of Mr. Bill Cowan -- our pastor in Little Rock and Fort Smith -- and of Mrs. Roy Holladay, whose husband pastors San Antonio and Corpus Christi. So she produced very many good "fruits" through her Christian life. She was faithful in trusting God to the very end and the last thing she said to her husband was: "I'm not going to give up." Certainly, therefore, we can all expect to meet and become even better acquainted with Mrs. Cowan in a very few years at Christ's return.

We should certainly remember Mr. Curtis Cowan especially at this time in our prayers. Also, do not forget the lonely days and nights experienced by Mr. Al Dennis and Mr. Charles Scott who recently lost their wives as well.

No doubt God is trying and testing us in many of these ways and we must use these tragedies as an impetus to draw closer to our God in fervent prayer, study, meditation and fasting. This will no doubt serve well in the really GIANT Work-wide trials and persecution

ahead, and help us become more humbly and totally yielded to Christ that He may -- in His time -- "pour out" the gifts of healings and other spiritual gifts upon His Church.

There is nothing more important for the ordained ministers of the Living Christ to be concerned with at this time.

Your brother in Christ,



Roderick C. Meredith

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