

# WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD

WORLD HEADQUARTERS  
PASADENA, CALIFORNIA

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PRESIDENT and PASTOR

OFFICE OF  
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Dear Fellow Ministers:

Greetings from Pasadena! The enclosed information is the result of scores of hours of hard work put in by those of us here at Headquarters. We feel sure this information will help you -- and all of us -- do a better job in a critical area of the ministry that will come increasingly under the scrutiny of the world -- its newspapers, its officials, its courts of law.

We are now improving and updating our handling of divorce problems. To this end, Mr. Leroy Neff, a senior Pastor-rank minister in God's Church, is being appointed as the Divorce Co-Ordinator. He will receive the divorce write-ups from all ministers and superintendents throughout the U. S. He will be working as part of C. A. D. in close cooperation with me and other leaders in the department. It will be his responsibility to "handle" all questions on D & R problems, all of the filing and follow-through on the master files, old cases up for "review," etc. So give him your complete cooperation.

Be sure to study carefully and apply the special instruction packet to follow. Notice the CHANGES we are making in the procedure and follow them. We want to make more thorough analyses and more sound decisions in the first place, yet have far fewer "reviews" of D & R cases going on all over the country where members are almost encouraged to question decisions previously made by the ministry of Christ.

With this in mind, here are some additional thoughts and instructions for you in connection with the following packet of information:

From now on, do NOT volunteer or imply or even suggest -- unless there is a well thought out and VERY good reason -- that old Joe, your favorite deacon, should get his case reviewed or tell him perhaps "we can find a way" to get him free to marry -- or ANY SUCH THING! Many of us have innocently and unwittingly done this in an effort to "help" or "encourage" some of these people. But we have started a veritable "movement" -- at least in some areas. Now people feel free to start questioning, challenging, "looking into" and even DECIDING themselves what they now think the "new decision" ought to be. By being in the Church longer, studying the divorce issue, and learning how to

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"play the angles," these people can subtly color, shade, emphasize or de-emphasize, or simply leave out certain "little" details so as to get almost ANY decision they want to get!

This problem is at the point of causing a growing disrespect for the entire ministry in some people's minds. And this kind of attitude could easily spread to other matters if we don't stop it.

So we must be more discreet about how we discuss D & R problems with the brethren -- and even among ourselves. We must be much more cautious about even thinking that a previous decision by God's Church was wrong and ought to be continually "brought up" again. And we need to feel ourselves -- and impart to the brethren -- more of a deep awareness of the holy ministry to which we have been called and the Godly FEAR any Christian ought to feel even at the thought of "taking unto himself" the honor and/or prerogatives of Christ's own ministry (Heb. 5:4).

We may need to remind some brethren that God literally "swallowed up" in the earth hundreds of people in Korah's rebellion because they refused to learn "that no stranger, which is not of the seed of Aaron come near to offer incense to the Lord" (Num. 16:40). And how God struck King Uzziah with leprosy when he -- even though king -- tried to usurp the rights of the priesthood (II Chron. 26:16-21).

However, just in case, please don't overdo this concept of Korah, etc., in your dealings with new people or even weak church members. The example of Korah is for our understanding -- not to violently correct people with if they have an "opinion" about their D & R case.

In addition to the basic instruction packet on procedures to be followed in handling all divorce cases, we are sending you a write-up on "Principles and Guidelines" to follow in deciding difficult or borderline cases. This material was gone over thoroughly by Mr. Armstrong and the Headquarters Evangelists.

So save, study, and periodically REVIEW all of this vital material so that you follow these instructions carefully and conscientiously in this critical area of the ministry. Either Mr. Neff or I will be sending you further information soon about the details of following through with him on any problem cases -- or warning him and Headquarters immediately if you sense that any unusual hostility or legal problems may be involved in any particular case. Again, give Mr. Neff your full cooperation and help.

In Jesus' name,



Roderick C. Meredith