

WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD

WORLD HEADQUARTERS
PASADENA, CALIFORNIA 91123

HERBERT W. ARMSTRONG
President and Pastor

GARNER TED ARMSTRONG
Executive Vice-President

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Dear Dad:

Dad, you have said in some of your letters you think I "chafe" under authority. I do not "chafe" under authority at all; and most especially do not "chafe" under your own authority when that authority is exercised in a godly fashion, as God the Father would treat His own Son, Jesus Christ; in goodness, gentleness, meekness, mercy and faith (against which there is no law) -- in kind and sympathetic communication, in cooperation, and in a Christian spirit of love.

Jesus Christ of Nazareth "had compassion on them" for He said they were "as sheep having gone astray." Even though Jesus had to rebuke His own disciples when they got into a completely wrong spirit, He always

rebuked them face to face, for their own benefit; His chiding, rebuking or correction was for the purpose of BUILDING THEM UP, not tearing them down or destroying them.

No, I do not "chafe" under authority. I do "chafe" under the abuse and misuse of authority; over being given orders fourth or fifth hand; over being isolated, corralled, blindfolded, blind-sided, and kept out of vast and far-reaching decisions affecting not only my own life, but tens of thousands of others and vast institutions!.

I am utterly aghast that it is POSSIBLE to "cancel a college" by the receipt of a peremptory note written to Mike Germano from Stanley Rader! I am absolutely aghast that there was no communication, no warning, no studies, no meetings, no action of the Board, and no request of input from myself or any other human being so far as I

know -- but the summary and peremptory announcement that an institution of 31 years' duration representing one of the most fabulously disproportionate outpourings of finance to physical plant in existence in the country could be totally cancelled by the flick of a wrist, the raising of an eyebrow, the quick inscription of a pen.

Without even being in communication with you -- even being DENIED access to you -- I have been stripped of all dimension in the Work whatever, and not even INFORMED directly from yourself WHY this is being done, or allowed an opportunity to discuss the situation with you.

Yet, historically, I know that what you are doing now, taking back all authority in the Church, is what you have wanted for a long time.

You tried to do this with Al Portune in May of 1977. Here was a man who himself, together with others, went out of the Church, and if he had succeeded, would have probably ended up LEADING the whole Church in OPPOSITION to you and to me! Yet, in May of 1977, you tried to have Al Portune come back from his present obscure position of being totally outside the Church and take over as number 2 in the Work, and "save the Church from Ted!"

I guess you didn't know that Al Portune sent me a copy of his letter to you (which I still have) and that I met with Al at a local Pasadena restaurant and had about a two-hour talk.

Perhaps you will recall that on the day you were to see Richard Plache, I sent you an urgent not to speak against me to Richard Plache the way you did to Al Portune. Al was first elated

by the things you told him in Tucson, but totally stricken by the things you said to him in Monte's cafe. He wrote a profound letter to you, sending a copy to me, in which he revealed how he felt and urged you not to be in competition with your own son.

Yet, you told me Al had said he had "not repented of anything he had said or did in the past" -- but Dad, I tried in vain to find any such statement in his letter -- it simply isn't there! You had told him I was a "wild ass of a man," and called me by various and sundry other names, letting him become privy to your deepest angers and resentments toward your own son! This "blew Al's mind," and he told me, with tears, that when he found this deadly rift still existed; that you felt antagonistic, hostile, and resentful toward your son that he simply could never come back into a Work or organization where those feelings were still extant.

You wrote to me about a year-and-a-half ago after I had sincerely and humbly begged you not to speak violently and disapproving of me behind my back to others (as you did repeatedly during dinners overseas in front of other people, the G-11 crew, Stan and Nicki, the Japanese you were carrying about, ministers and other officials within the organization, and even outsiders) and I still have your reply to my letter in my possession. In it you promised me you were going to "pray daily that God will not allow me to do or say such things" against me publicly again.

We both agreed, Dad, that anything of a negative nature we have to say to each other we should say TO each other and not to third parties.

How could you possibly have expected Al Portune to come back out of complete obscurity after his total lack of credibility with the present ministry and take over the Number 2 position in this entire Church?

For many, many years, Dad, I have lived under the cloud of your belief that I am masterminding a "great conspiracy" to strip the Church away from you. This is wholly, completely and totally untrue -- has always been untrue -- will be untrue the next time you think it or assume it -- and will remain forever and ever untrue.

The very FACT you are able to strip me of all authority, isolate me completely, take me off television, and yet see the people of God's Church rally around you is the strongest possible PROOF I could ever offer you that the people of this Church have been pointed to you by me! As I have told you verbally so many times; as I can prove in writing, I have striven for many years to hold up your hands; to support you, preserve, protect and defend your position and office, and have pointed the people to you. Throughout my

trip in Australasia, all of my church visits, every time I preached anywhere, I highlighted you, what you were doing, your health, how you were recovering, your hopes and plans for the future, urging the people to pray for you and never failed to hear your name mentioned in both the opening and closing prayers FIRST as being in the primary concern of God's people.

I have been hounded to my wit's end by reporters, as I told you I would be. Having been the chief spokesman for this Church over the public information media for more than 20 years now; having been on dozens of radio call-in talk shows, television interviews and call-in talk shows; having been interviewed by dozens of reporters from magazines, journals, newspapers, and every other kind of publication imaginable, I am of course not a novice at being subjected to the harshest kind of questions.

Dad, you have drawn the analogy many times of the relationship between God the Father and Jesus Christ the Son. You feel I do not understand this analogy and I have told you until I am almost hoarse, I understand it perfectly. I understand that loyalty is a two-way street. I understand that the Father is GLORIFIED through and by and in the Son! The only way we can know anything ABOUT the Father is through the Son! The Son reveals the will, plan, purpose, design and programs of the Father -- and it was the SON who was continually taking all the abuse; who was the center of attention; who was the controversial figure; who was either loved or hated; who was adored and worshipped by some, despised and hated by others, and who ultimately was crucified for following the Father's deepest desires!

Never was the Father in heaven "jealous" because Jesus Christ was

"getting all the attention" in the Temple, in His public sermons, or throughout His ministry!

I understand that the Son is lesser in power, authority, luster, dignity, magnitude, omniscience, omnipresence and any other attribute of God, and yet they, too, are "One" and our human minds cannot really conceive of any particular "degree" of spiritual difference between the two. We do know that Jesus said, "I and My Father are One," and said He spoke what the Father had directed Him to speak and did everything in the Father's name!

In their Eternal state, the Father and the Son revealed themselves as being in total communication, total confidence, total candor, total harmony. The Father would NEVER have made vast decisions affecting the entire course of the universe without taking the Son into His fullest confidence in advance. The two of them planned the WHOLE UNIVERSE TOGETHER!

I have always felt that loyalty toward you flows through me and need not flow around me. I have never felt I needed to surround myself with enemies; and felt it was not wrong to surround myself with friends, according to your own example. There is not one human being in this Work who could be forced to tell under oath on a witness stand that he has ever been asked to choose sides between you and me by myself! Never once have I sat any human being down in front of me and asked him, "Are you my man or are you my father's man?" Never once have I sat a person down and asked him if he will support me INSTEAD OF you.

But many, many men, among them Bob, Wayne, Ray, Ellis, Richard, Dave Robinson, John Robinson, Brian Knowles, and others have been asked similar questions concerning me by yourself.

Many of them have failed to give the correct answers because they were frightened.

Let me remind you how you shocked Dave Robinson prior to the Feast in 1976 at Mount Pocono. When you unloaded about yourself personally on Dave, even displaying to him a personal journal you were keeping about a matter of personal concern to you, it just about blew his mind. You demanded of him, "Just who is running the Work?" Dave felt trapped. He thought, if I say, "You are, Mr. Armstrong," he may respond, "Then why don't you respect the authority I have given my son, Ted?" He thought, "If I say, 'Ted is,' he will be angry with me and say, 'No, I AM!'"

I can't speak for Dave, but I suppose he didn't know exactly what to say and so said words to the effect, "Well, you tell me, Mr. Armstrong." Then

followed the messages you gave at all the festival sites and of course the many, many meetings with ministers in which you very powerfully and loudly and pointedly reasserted your own authority to the exclusion of any you had given me, and left the entire ministry and the Church wondering what in the world was happening.

Helen Stiles said the brethren in the Lake of the Ozarks were absolutely stunned by the message, and that she herself could only go down to the lakeshore and sit for about two hours and cry.

Ray Wright could tell you the exact statistics; I forget what they are, but we began to experience a dramatic drop in income following the Feast of Tabernacles in 1976 which led directly to the gigantic cash flow crisis and the special offering of 1977. You had made it crystal clear to the whole

Church and the ministry there was a feeling of conflict against me on your part!

I know that those who worked with Dave Robinson in subsequent months said he had been utterly dismayed, dumbfounded, and hurt beyond belief by some of the things you revealed to him. Dave, being one of the early pioneers who took his son John as a babe in arms up to the Feast in Siegler Springs and later in those beginning years in Big Sandy, is such a dyed in the wool loyalist, so conservative and totally biblically oriented that for God's own Apostle to reveal to him certain personal things you unloaded on him literally tore at the very underpinnings of his deepest spiritual commitments.

His son, John, being in Tucson prior to your wedding, was subjected to a similar scenario. John, too, was asked the question as to just where his

loyalties were -- and of course desiring to be loyal to us both, to you first, and then to me; through me to you, holding you in high esteem, high office, and exactly where God has placed you, but wishing to show no disrespect toward me, tried to straddle that impossible fence of giving you some sort of an answer that was satisfactory. He failed, of course; as did Ben and Lois during the recent Passover service visit in your home in Tucson.

Dad, I do not know what the answers are to this many years' long feeling of jealousy, competition, or whatever it is. I have never tried to be in competition against you; have never felt that I was competing against you in any way.

Neither, however, do I feel that I am merely a paid hireling, a "voice" to be summarily ordered about and required to react with complete servility.

I have never dared to lay claim to any high office; have never remotely

claimed that I, too, was an Apostle, though you yourself speculated about it on one occasion. I have never aspired to "titles" which is partially what led to my disastrous downfall with regard to the college presidency; but I have very definitely through the past more than 22 years of my life become something more than just a "voice" in my dimension in the entire Work of God.

I don't know whether at this stage of God's Church it is 80% or 85% or 90% of all of the people in God's Church today who were first brought into a knowledge or awareness of God's truth by my voice after I began broadcasting full time in the late 1950s; but I will tell you this; it is by far the vast majority. Though I have always upheld you as their "father in the Gospel," since they very quickly would come into contact with you through

your major booklets, magazine articles and personals in The PLAIN TRUTH; I nevertheless must look along the back trail and realize that in spite of human frailties, God (to whom belongs the honor and the glory) has been able to use this fleshly hulk called Garner Ted Armstrong to His own purpose; and that there has been fruit born!

Now I have been taken off television without being heard; with no prior notice, no input, no ability to present a case to anyone, without even being asked my opinion or my advice. Yet you yourself have told the whole world in your letters and your public statements in the pulpit that you feel I am "much better on television than I am on radio" and have expressed yourself as having been pleased with what you saw going out on television.

As I explained to you, in the course of each new 26 programs I have always done several on the subject of Jesus

Christ; one or two on the subject of the Kingdom of God; the immortality of the soul, ever burning hell, is heaven the reward of the saved? and other totally spiritual and biblical subjects. In these I have invariably advertised many of your own personally written mainline booklets, and we have had the same "mix" in our approach on television as you yourself have designed and approved in The PLAIN TRUTH magazine.

It is true that I would do some programs on sociological issues, but always with the underlying gospel content. You yourself have explained many dozens of times how you must speak to world leaders and others in their language.

If you would care to review the radio scripts of programs I was doing during the late 50s and early 60s when God's Church was experiencing such explosive growth, you would find dozens upon dozens of radio programs dealing with ecology, pollution, the

space age, crime, the family, health and hygiene, world conditions and world politics, the arms race, the cold war, the fallout scare, and dozens upon dozens of other social concerns which tied directly into the pace of biblical prophecy! That was a significant part of the "winning game" of which you spoke!

You said it was I who "changed a winning game into a losing game." I tell you, Dad, I never did any such thing! Never, NEVER was I allowed into the Business Office from the years of my earliest involvement in the Work of God until I invited myself in about the Spring of 1976. During all those years, the tremendous commitment of financial resources to physical plant was not my decision; I was never involved in those decisions, and in fact, as you so well know may have disagreed with some or many of them. But the die was being cast that

would one day cause agonizing reappraisals of the Work. I can remember so many meetings in which I was present when we would tamper with the PLAIN TRUTH, with radio or television, in order to find the money for other things. All of this is of course documented, and in the more than 20 years of history of the Work that I was studying in the recent two years of my involvement in financial matters more closely, I availed myself of the complete and total documentation of all of the income pictures for the Work going back into the very early 1950s until the present.

We would combine issues of The PLAIN TRUTH; drop out pages of color, drop out one signature, do almost anything it seemed, to the mainline thrust of the Gospel going out in order to meet financial crises within the Work. We would go off television in the summers, cut down on the number of radio stations,

change formats, cancel radio stations and continually manipulate the media in order to satisfy other urgent requirements.

I always felt we should have maintained a much higher ratio of commitment to MEDIA than we were doing -- and Norman Smith will tell you that both he and I said this over a period of many years.

If you would allow Dick Janik of Ed Libov Associates to see you, he could show you the unbelievable report of exactly where we were in radio as of January, 1978 and how quickly he was able to correct a tremendously vast financial drain on the Work by lopping off dozens upon dozens of totally nonproductive radio stations and get us once again on the right track of the big 50,000 watt stations that blanket the whole nation. May I remind you, humbly, that all of this was BEING DONE before I heard one word in this latest series of enormous changes?

It was I, Dad, who together with Ray Wright, Wayne Cole, Bob Kuhn, Dick Janik and others, had come to the firmest conviction that five-minute radio was not even beginning to get the "job done," and therefore decided, knowing what a great additional load it was going to put on me, to go back on daily radio!

It was I who told you I believed we were right back on the track, back on the "winning game" format that built the Work! Please remember, Dad, all this was already accomplished BEFORE any of the recent moves!

I do not believe that the media or even our media mix can be blamed for the present growth patterns in the Church. I do believe that a forthright and honest appraisal of the vast amount of linen washed before the public; the heinous and scurrilous attacks from dozens of publications over the years; the loss of more than 2,000 members and dozens and dozens of ministers;

and the continued hate campaign by these and many other dissident groups have taken a toll much larger than some of us would like to admit.

It is my further serious concern that what is happening right now will give a new lease on life to our enemies, and will (and has already) touch off yet a further wave of speculation concerning myself.

This is growing lengthy, and there are dozens of things I must tell you, if for no other reason than to put down these thoughts on paper so that I have them clearly in my own mind.

At present, I am very concerned about Shirley. She looks gaunt, haggard, with sunken eyes and serious weight loss; she is almost beside herself emotionally, and of course blew up on the telephone to Rona and said some unfortunate things. Apparently, either the telephone was

being tape recorded, or, unfortunately, Rona repeated what Shirley said so that you heard it. I am sure she would be seriously sorry for saying such things, but even as you yourself know, you have blown up and said unkind things about other people when in an emotional state; I am sure you can be big enough to forgive her that wrong under the excruciating emotional burden which she has had to suffer. If my wife, Shirley, becomes a complete mental basket case out of all this, it will be a deep human tragedy. The fact that you are refusing to talk to either of us; will not answer the phone; and yet I am told fifth hand that I am not to speak to the churches any further unless we "meet face to face" is so ridiculous that it leaves me in utter disbelief.

Dad, I have been trying to talk to you on the telephone or arrange a meeting

to come to see you or meet in some place or other for some weeks now! I have tried to get a message to you through Wayne. I have told everyone I have talked to what my intentions are: I have said I am going to try to sort out my thoughts, get my emotions under control, and perhaps after a personal talk with you and regaining some small measure of confidence in my abilities, go back on daily radio again.

I intend to continue my special church visits, and even increase them, because I believe the Church brethren need the encouragement and stabilizing influence that I am capable of giving them in the form of sermons on unity in the church and whatever I can do to keep them loyal and faithful. The Citation is being sold, so of course a major tool that I have been able to utilize in these visits has been taken away. I will now be reduced to flying my little twin engine Cessna, down in the weather and skirting

mountain tops, because I will not subject myself to public taunts, ridicule and scrutiny by going about, standing in long lines in airline terminals, and sitting in smoky aircraft with questionable operational procedures, and the always present possibility of airline crashes, hijacking, and all of the major considerations which led to your decision that we should operate aircraft in the first place.

Incidentally, the Citation costs only about one-tenth what the G-11 does. It costs less than one-third in terms of monthly payments as compared to the Falcon, and costs less than half in terms of operating costs! To me, it is like the man having a giant Cadillac limousine and a bicycle -- and deciding he cannot afford, any longer, to keep the bicycle!

I can only see the decision to sell the Citation as a personal one! And

all this as a result of my own desperate decision to STOP the sale of the G-11; KEEP the G-11 for you, when Stan, Ray, Bob and Dan Spencer had already SOLD it! Believe me, humanly, I have found myself wishing several times I had never stepped in and changed that decision when I found out what you really wanted done! All I had to do was sit by and keep my mouth shut, and your G-11 would have been SOLD! And now the THANKS I get for SAVING IT for you is for you to turn around and give summary orders without taking me into your confidence, allowing me to present a case, or be heard at all, to sell the Citation. Fine, the Citation is sold!

I had come to you positively elated that I was now going to be able to be broadcasting LIVE on the radio simultaneously with several radio stations and went out of my way to explain how I had asked Dick Janik to place the radio program on in Tucson so you could hear it.

I told others close to me, "This will be good for me; since I will be far more aware that you were listening than all the rest of the audience put together," and it would make me continually aware of doing the very best programming of which I am capable, as well as sticking very close to the central theme of the Gospel, and doing broadcasts of which I felt you could be both proud and pleased. Now, I find from others that the word has gone out to cancel the network and I therefore wonder whether you intend to go ahead and complete the job that you have started on me and cancel me out entirely? Frankly, Dad, I believe it would be mercy and a favor if you would do so since I have now been stripped of all executive power and authority; taken off TV, the colleges completely cancelled, orders going out to sell Big Sandy, being beleaguered and besieged in my own office; with a very fine and lovable person, Lois, driven to the point of near hysteria herself, and many other

emotional and mental casualties about me, I am of course tempted to ask you the final and ultimate question, why not just go ahead and do a complete job of it and get rid of me altogether?

I have asked you this in the past, but of course spiritually feel that I cannot bear the weight of the responsibility of a resignation.

I have told you and the whole church that "the only way I will ever go out of God's Church is feet up" and am not about to go back on that commitment after all of these years in the Church.

That's about it for now. As I said, I have many other things I wish to write about, but this is growing much too lengthy, and I will save some of the rest till later.

Love,

Ted