

The Good News

International Magazine of
THE CHURCH OF GOD

VOL. VI, NUMBER 6

JUNE, 1957

Here's How to KEEP the Feast of Tabernacles

*Many who attend the Feast of Tabernacles are not really
KEEPING the Feast at all! Here's why!*

by Richard D. Armstrong

IS IT an ABSOLUTE command from God that you attend the Feast of Tabernacles in Gladewater each year . . . even if you must "crawl on your hands and knees"? Or, is it all right in God's sight, if you find it too difficult, financially, to stay home this year?

Is not attending the Feast a sin so great that you should mortgage your home, car or borrow from others in order to get to Texas?

A few of you brethren have had exactly this idea and have done these things in past years . . . then come to the ministers faced with the sad problem of the possibility of losing your home or owing others a large debt that you are unable to pay.

Others, seeing the problems of these few, have decided that, if they don't come this year, then they can come next year or wait until they are able or until things work out to make it easy for them.

WHAT IS THE ANSWER? Let's understand just *what* the BIBLE does say about this very important Feast of Tabernacles, *what* it means and *WHY* God instituted the Feast in the first place.

The Feast of Tabernacles

Now in verse 33 of Lev. 23: "The Lord spoke unto Moses saying, 'Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, The

fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the Feast of Tabernacles for seven days unto the Lord.'" This Feast pictures to us the millennium of Christ's rule here on this earth when the whole world will be at peace . . . *enjoying the fruit of their labors, living by the laws of God, LIVING ABUNDANTLY!* (Hosea 2:18-23, Micah 4:1-17).

Notice that the Feast of Tabernacles is to last *seven days*, the first of which is a holy *convocation* or COMMANDED gathering. A convocation from God is a SUMMONS from Him.

If we receive a summons from the sheriff to appear before a judge on a certain date in a certain place and fail to do so we incur a penalty and have broken man's law. God here in Lev. 23 issues us a SUMMONS to appear before *HIM!!* And if we fail, we have broken God's law.

Now let us notice a vital part of the command to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. Remember, a definite SUMMONS from God to present ourselves before Him occurs with this Feast.

First, turn over to Deuteronomy 16:16. God here gives the command, "Three times in a year shall all the males appear before the Lord thy God in the place which He shall choose."

God knew that perhaps women would

be having babies or that other difficulties might arise, so He commanded the head of each household to appear before Him. Continuing with Deut. 16:16, "In the feast of Unleavened Bread, and in the Feast of Weeks (Pentecost), and in the Feast of Tabernacles."

Now, notice the next INTEGRAL part of the SAME COMMAND: "And they shall not appear before the Lord *empty*." And verse 17, "Every man shall give as he is able, *according to the blessing of the Lord thy God* which He hath given thee."

YOU cannot properly keep the command given here which is a command to appear before the Lord your God UNTIL YOU HAVE BEEN BLESSED BY HIM. Then, WHEN He has blessed you, you are not to appear empty-handed.

YEAR-LONG Obedience

Now let us notice just a few verses beginning with verse 13 of Deut. 16: "Thou shalt observe the Feast of Tabernacles seven days: *After that thou hast gathered in thy corn and thy wine.*" Notice this could not be done until after a yearly harvest. "And thou shalt REJOICE in thy feast, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy manservant, and thy maidservant, and the Levite, the stranger, and the fatherless, and the wid-

The Good News

International magazine of
THE CHURCH OF GOD

ministering to its members
scattered abroad

VOL. VI

NUMBER 6

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By the Radio Church of God

ow, that are within thy gates (THOSE IN THE CHURCH). Seven days shalt thou keep a solemn feast unto the Lord thy God in the place which the Lord shall choose."

Notice the REASON for keeping the FEAST—"BECAUSE THE LORD THY GOD SHALL BLESS THEE IN ALL THINE INCREASE, and in all the works of thine hands, THEREFORE thou shalt surely rejoice." This is a Feast of rejoicing, NOT something to put a hard, heavy burden on us!

You cannot keep the Feast of Tabernacles by partially obeying this command—merely by attending at Gladewater, Texas. This command to keep the Feast involves obedience ALL YEAR LONG! Remember that God said through James in the second chapter and the tenth verse, "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, HE IS GUILTY OF ALL."

In Deuteronomy the fourteenth chapter, God told the Israelites to take particular care NOT to offer their sacrifices and offerings in every place that pleased them, but only in the place in ONE of the tribes where He would choose to set His name. God knew, however, that they would not be able to bring them to the Feast every time because of the great distance it was for some to go to the place He chose to set His name—Jerusalem. Many people in tribes other than Judah lived a good distance from Jerusalem. Notice the Scripture, Deuteronomy 14:22:

"Thou shalt truly tithe all the increase of thy seed, that the field bringeth forth year by year and thou shalt eat before the Lord thy God, in the place which He shall choose to place His name there,

the TITHE of thy corn, of thy wine [Hebrew, "Yabyin: fermented product of the grape; intoxicating" . . . see Strong's Exhaustive Concordance], and of thine oil, and the firstlings of thy herds and of thy flocks; THAT THOU MAYEST LEARN TO FEAR THE LORD THY GOD ALWAYS.

"And if the way be too long for thee, so that thou are not able to carry it; or if the place be too far from thee which the Lord thy God shall choose to set His name there, WHEN THE LORD THY GOD HATH BLESSED THEE: THEN [after you've been blessed] shalt thou turn it into money, and bind up the money in thine hand, and shalt GO unto the place which the Lord thy God shall choose."

God Must FIRST Prosper You

You cannot fully obey this command in its given meaning UNTIL God has blessed you and you have SAVED A TITHE (tenth) of all your yearly income. THEN you are to go to Gladewater.

I know that in explaining this to many of you for the first time you are amazed to find that God has already definitely managed 20% of your income before you have a thing to say about it! Let's not KID ourselves! We are called to present our bodies a living sacrifice to God, to come out of this world and to be transformed by the renewing of our minds (Romans 12:1-2). We are no longer our own but have been purchased with a price (I Cor. 6:20). Being a member of the true Church of God involves more than just attending certain meetings . . . we are to worship God "in spirit and in truth" (John 4:23).

Due to a lack of understanding a few have NOT SAVED THIS SECOND TITHE. Others, who have had insufficient second tithe, have mortgaged their homes, or borrowed by other means in order to ATTEND the meetings at Gladewater.

But just ATTENDING is NOT KEEPING THE FEAST!

Because some have NOT saved a second tithe and have found it a great financial hardship to attend the feast (they were only attending, not really KEEPING it), others seeing this have believed that it was NOT necessary to be obedient to God because saving the tithe was "too hard."

LET US UNDERSTAND! GOD COMMANDS US BOTH TO SAVE THE SECOND TITHE AND TO KEEP THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES. Failure to attend the Feast when you have been blessed is a sin (I John 3:4 and James 2:10). If God has NOT blessed you and it would work a severe hardship on you and your family . . . if you can not come PREPARED TO KEEP THE FEAST in its in-

tended manner . . . then DO NOT COME.

What If You've Been Faithful?

Some of you HAVE been faithful in saving your second tithe but have found it insufficient to enable you to go to Gladewater or to keep the Feast in the prescribed manner.

Here is the answer from personal experience.

When my father first became converted and started out on a life of obedience to God he had to be taught many hard lessons which he is now able to pass on to you so that you need not suffer to learn them.

Our family lost all the financial wealth it had in the 1920's. My father had to learn to live on a salary of little more than \$3.00 a week—and that was before the depression—AFTER he had been making the equivalent of \$25,000 a year! He had to learn the true value of finances and to let God manage all his life including his financial affairs. Once he had done this he began to receive some of the promises God has given to us who obey Him. "God is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb. 11:6).

The way to financial success and happiness is to obey God's financial laws, one of which is that you save a second tithe.

Now let us turn to Deuteronomy 14 and begin with verse 26. When you have turned your tithe into money and come to KEEP the feast, "thou shalt bestow that money for whatsoever thy soul lusteth after [rightly translated "desires"] for oxen, or for sheep, or for wine [Hebrew "Yahyin: fermented product of the grape — intoxicating"], or for strong drink [Hebrew, "Shekar: an intoxicant, or intensely alcoholic liquor"], or for whatsoever thy soul desireth: and thou shalt eat there before the Lord thy God, and thou shalt rejoice, thou, and thine household, and the Levite that is within thy gates; thou shalt not forsake him; for he hath no part nor inheritance with thee." You are to REJOICE at the feast—it is not to be a burdensome task to you!

The feast of tabernacles is ONLY for those families who HAVE SAVED A SECOND TITHE, WHO ARE PREPARED TO KEEP THE FEAST. With the exception of widows, orphans and strangers whom the Church tries to help in accordance with the amount of extra second tithe turned in by more prosperous brethren OTHERS SHOULD NOT BE THERE. (The word "strangers" may include those who have just learned of the truth and have not had a full year to save the tithe.) Do NOT invite your friends and relatives just because they are interested or because you think they might need the (Please continue on page 8)

Help the Underdog!

It is natural to sympathize with the underdog—the fellow who is persecuted or “picked-on.” How does this apply in God’s Church? You need to read this article reprinted from the January, 1954, issue.

by Roderick C. Meredith

HAVE you ever had what is known as a “suffering hero” complex? Chances are, you probably have. Most of us have it once in a great while, but quickly solve our problem and get over it.

But with some people, this complex becomes a *fixed mental habit*. When these people are denied what they want—even though they don’t deserve it—they begin to feel sorry for themselves and to place the blame on others. They usually set out immediately to win sympathy for their “cause.” They often lead a great many others into an attitude of bitterness toward those who are supposed to be persecuting them—the “underdogs.”

Psychologists are quite familiar with this complex. Every organization or business of any size has its share of “suffering heroes.” Every political party and religious group has its share. And, in nearly every case, one factor seems to be constant with these “underdogs.” *They place the blame for their troubles and lack of success upon their leaders, whose position and success they secretly envy. But they are unwilling or unable to pay the price to produce the results which would entitle them to similar position and success.*

Christian “Martyrs”

Even after conversion, you have the same human nature to contend with that you always did. Only you then have the help of God’s Spirit in overcoming it. *But* the fact remains that even brethren in God’s church are subject to all the temptations and deceits of *human nature*—one of which is the tendency of some to regard themselves as persecuted “martyrs” or “suffering heroes,” if they are unable to have their *own way* in church matters or problems with their brethren. These people get their “feelings” hurt and feel persecuted if they are not allowed to do as *they please*.

Jesus Christ was *never* inclined to get his feelings hurt when He wasn’t allowed to have His *own way*. Just before He had to give His *life* in an agonizing death on the cross, Jesus prayed, “Father,

if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless *not my will, but thine be done*” (Luke 22:42). Jesus was still flesh and blood, and He dreaded what was coming. But He surrendered His *own* will, that *God’s* will might be done. Jesus wasn’t too concerned about His “feelings” or having His *own way* that night before the crucifixion. If He had been, *we would be without a Savior!*

In spite of Jesus’ example, some who call themselves Christians are continually getting their feelings hurt, either by imagining that they are being persecuted, or by sympathizing with someone else whom they mistakenly believe is an “underdog.”

A good example of this might be a case in which a couple who have come into association with God’s church in the past, are later found to be living in adultery. One of them may have a living husband or wife. Upon realizing this situation, God’s ministers should immediately take it up with the couple—find out if the previous marriage was binding according to God’s laws—and if so, try to give the couple any advice or help possible to aid them in *breaking up* their *adulterous* union. This is only to *help* them keep God’s laws, and to keep God’s church *clean* and *pure* from sin.

But it is only *human nature* for such a couple to start feeling sorry for themselves. They will feel that they are being singled out for “persecution,” and will often accuse God’s ministers of trying to *hurt* them. They will resort to every device of *human reason* to try to show others why their living in ADULTERY is all right. By making others feel that it is a *personal* disagreement, and that they are the “underdog,” they win sympathy.

Why?

Because nearly everyone tends to sympathize with an “underdog,” and because too few people realize that in GOD’S CHURCH such disagreements are not between the people and a human “preacher,” but actually against *God Himself* and the *way* of God! In plain language, anyone who sympathizes with

such people is sympathizing with Satan the Devil!

How it Starts

Naturally, when we speak of “sympathizing” with evil, we mean the attitude of *condoning* and *agreeing with* the wrong *principle* involved. *We should* have compassion on sinners, just as Christ did.

But herein lies the trouble.

Most people confuse the *love* we should have for those who err with an *active sympathy* for their *WRONG* way of life.

God *loves* those of us who are His children. Yet, we read in Hebrews 12:6 that, “whom the Lord *loveth*, he CHASTENETH, and SCOURGETH every son whom he receiveth.” God’s chastening isn’t something that we enjoy. But He does it, nevertheless, for our ultimate *good*.

In like manner, the true ministers of Jesus Christ have the *responsibility* of correcting and rebuking the church (Titus 2:15). As we have fully explained in previous articles, Jesus gave His ministers the *authority*, under God, to make binding decisions in their function of teaching and directing the church (Mat. 16:19; 18:18). In matters involving the governing and directing of the church, Christians are commanded to *obey* those whom Christ has used in *faithfully* preaching the Word to them and in bringing them to the truth (Heb. 13:7, 17). Such *true ministers* are responsible to Christ for ruling His church, and He will guide them through the Holy Spirit.

So, like Jesus, a true minister should—and with God’s help always *will*—use his authority in *love* and for the upbuilding of the church.

But God’s ministers have to make a great many decisions in directing the work of the gospel which may be misconstrued if all the facts are not known, or if *human reason* is used to *pervert* the facts.

That is *WHY* some misunderstandings may develop even in God’s church from

time to time, and *why* some person who thinks he is "wronged" will often seek the sympathy of others who are prone to help an "underdog." These things *can* happen in God's own church because He has decreed that we still have our *human nature*, vanity, and selfish desires to overcome. God wants us to build *character* by overcoming this nature, and solving the problems it causes.

Problems arise because brethren often misunderstand the difficulties that God's servants face in carrying on a world-wide ministry. They often do not realize the *authority* vested in ministers by Christ to preserve *order* and *government* in carrying out this mission, and in directing His church.

A Common Error

Some brethren who lack understanding want to take it upon themselves to enter the ministry, or to *force themselves* into an active place in God's work. The number of such *requests*, and sometimes *DEMANDS*, of this nature that have come to Mr. Armstrong over the years is rather amusing. And yet it really isn't amusing, because these people usually mean business and their "feelings" are hurt if they are not placed in whatever position *they* think they should have. They overlook the fact that *God* chooses whom He will.

Here again, if God's ministers do not satisfy *their human desires*, then they often turn sour, feel "persecuted," and go around to other brethren seeking sympathy as an "underdog" who is being "picked on."

You might be surprised at the number of "self-called" individuals who think they should take over Mr. Armstrong's broadcast, or take over one of God's churches and make it *their own church*, or take over some other position in the church of God.

All such individuals—and all of you brethren—should realize that *God RULES His church!* He always has, and He always will. The Father has appointed Jesus Christ as the living Head of His church (Eph. 5:23; Col. 1:18). The true church is the *body* of Jesus Christ (I Cor. 12:27). It is the organism through which He carries on His work.

No one should try to "appoint" *himself* as a minister, an elder, a teacher, or to any other position in God's church. The apostle Paul tells us, "And *God hath set* some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues" (I Cor. 12:28).

Here we find that it is *GOD* who "sets" those in positions of authority in His church.

How do we know when *God* has

done the appointing? Do we find scriptural examples of how God directs His work?

God's Direction

In Luke 6:12-16, we find the account of how Jesus prayed all night to God for guidance before "he *chose* twelve, whom he also named apostles."

Not one of these men appointed himself. Jesus *chose* each one. Later, He told them, "Ye have not chosen me, *but I have chosen you*" (John 15:16).

After Jesus ascended to heaven and the church began to grow, the apostles found that too much of their time was being taken up with physical service which could be performed by others. So they asked the brethren, "Look ye out among you seven men of *honest report*, full of the *Holy Ghost* and *wisdom*, whom *WE* may appoint over this business" (Acts 6:3).

Notice that these men were *appointed* by the apostles, who had already been specially *called* and *chosen* by Jesus. They did *NOT* appoint themselves.

Later, a man named Saul was feverishly engaged in persecuting and destroying the church when he was struck down and blinded by Christ, and brought to repentance. One of the disciples, Ananias, was told in a vision: "He (Paul) is a *chosen vessel* unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel" (Acts 9:15).

The apostle Paul was specially chosen by God, but this was revealed to one who was *already* in God's church.

Later, God revealed to the prophets and teachers at Antioch that He wanted Paul and Barnabas separated for a special work. Notice that *in every case* God revealed any "calling" to those who were *already* in authority in His church—either the apostles themselves, or the prophets, or the elders and teachers whom they had appointed through *God's direction*.

God's church was governed and supervised *from the top down*. When *calling* or *choosing* someone for an office in the church, God *always* worked through those He had *already set in authority*. That way there would be no division or confusion in His church. That is *God's way*—the *revealed Bible way*. Let us follow it!

Training Necessary

Another fundamental fact which few realize is that God always used men who were *trained* and *prepared* for the work to which He called them.

Moses was reared in the Pharaoh's palace where he would be trained and schooled in the knowledge of the Egyptians—one of the most cultured peoples

of that period of time (Exodus 2).

Daniel was instructed in all the wisdom and learning of the Chaldeans—the greatest nation of that era (Dan. 1:4).

The *apostles* were first called "disciples" or students. They were trained and schooled for more than three years by Jesus Christ Himself.

Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, was prepared for his mission by studying at the feet of Gamaliel—recognized as probably the greatest Jewish teacher of that time.

In our day, *Herbert Armstrong* was prepared for his world-wide ministry by being led to enter the advertising and publishing field—where he received the special kind of training necessary to prepare him for conducting the international gospel crusade by radio and the printing press.

Then God miraculously opened the way for Ambassador College—where Mr. Armstrong could train young men to help him just as Jesus did, and as Paul did with the evangelists Timothy, Titus, Silas, and others.

It is *GOD'S revealed WILL*—not human reason—which has led Mr. Armstrong to see the necessity of *thoroughly training* those who are to be actively used in God's work. This principle holds true in regard to almost *any* office in God's church.

In I Timothy 3:1-13, Paul instructs Timothy in the qualities which a man must have before he can be ordained as a local elder or deacon. Even of the deacons, Paul wrote, "And let these *first be proved*; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found *blameless*" (verse 10). A deacon must be "proved" or "tested" in his ability and willingness to exercise his office in a "blameless" manner before being ordained. The evangelists were instructed to be *sure* that any elder or deacon would submit to *God's government* before ordaining them.

Yes, God's ministers must be *very careful* whom they appoint to aid in the spiritual ministry of Jesus Christ. They must be *called* of God, *thoroughly trained* and *prepared*, and able to prove their reliability and *complete willingness* to obey *God's government* in His church.

As has been thoroughly explained in previous articles in *The GOOD NEWS*, Christ has promised to be with, and specially *guide*, his called servants in matters of church government and discipline (Mat. 18:15-20). That is the *way* that *Christ* rules the true church.

The example of how a supposedly converted couple found living in *adultery* should be helped is only *one* exam-

(Please continue on page 6)

Where Are YOU Headed?

*Your ultimate destiny may depend upon certain key factors
in your daily life more than you realize.*

by Roderick C. Meredith

WHAT will YOU be doing exactly *one hundred years* from now? Will you then be a *king* or a *priest* in God's kingdom? Will you hold a position of authority over *ten cities*, or *five cities*, or will you perhaps just be a "doorkeeper"? Or will YOU even be there?

Just where are YOU really headed? Do you realize that you are right *now* in the process of determining your *eternal destiny*?

As I write this, my wife and baby daughter and I have just returned from a stay of over six months in Britain—helping to build up our church in London, England. Many new brethren over there have recently been added to our church—*God's church*. They have *repented* and been *baptized*. They have surrendered the human *vanity* and *self will* to God.

My wife and I had grown to love these people very much. When we left, many of them were in the "first flush" of zeal, interest, and love for God's truth.

Most truly converted people—including *most of you*—have started out with this initial zeal and love. But all too often this zeal slackens, and many brethren go through periods of time when they *bog down* spiritually. Sometimes this proves *fatal*!

What is the *reason* for this? What is the *prophesied future* for them—for YOU—for *all* who have surrendered to God's truth?

Many Trials Ahead

The apostle Peter warned Christians of his day, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the *fiery trial* which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings" (I Pet. 4:12-13). God's people are to be tried and tested by *persecution*, by *tribulation*, and by *Satan* himself.

Peter went on to show that these trials are part of *our judgment*. "For the time is come that *judgment* must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall be the end of them that obey not the gospel of God?" (Verse 17). We who have received of God's Spirit are in the Church of God—the *house of God*. We are *now* being judged!

Is the trial easy? Peter says, "And if the righteous *scarcely* be saved, where

shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" (Verse 18). The natural tendency after being converted is to *bog down* and *lose* your original *zeal*. Do you think you can afford to "rest on your oars" for a while? Peter says that even the righteous will *scarcely* be saved! God tries us to keep us *alive* and *growing* spiritually.

The church at Thessalonica was told by Paul (II Thes. 1:4-5) that the persecutions and tribulations they endured were a token of *God's judgment*.

In Hebrews 12:6-10, we find that God *chastens* every son He loves so that we might profit thereby and eventually be partakers of God's own holiness. At conversion, we have only *started* on the road to becoming a *born* son of God. Let us *not* be "puffed up" with the precious knowledge that God is revealing to our church—His church—in these last days. We are only unborn "babes" of God, not yet even born of the Spirit as members of God's family.

Thus, we *need chastening* and *tribulation* to keep us humble and zealously *GROWING* as we should. We poor humans are inclined to overlook and justify our sins and faults. Too often, we think that we have "arrived" while our lives still contain *sin*. We forget that our goal is *perfection*—to be *like God*!

In I Corinthians 11:20-30, Paul is rebuking the Corinthians for taking the Passover in a careless and licentious manner. Because of this, many of them were weak and sickly—and many had died! The apostle continued, "For *if we would judge ourselves*, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world" (Verses 31-32). Because we do not "judge" ourselves as we should and *purge sin out of our lives*, God *chastens* us to wake us up and keep us *growing* spiritually.

How you respond to God's *instruction*—to God's *chastening*—will determine *your future*. Many of you reading this may become spiritually *lukewarm* and finally *dead* unless you heed this warning! It is up to *you*!

What Will Happen

The condition God's people fall into is revealed in Matthew 25. Jesus here refers to Christians as "virgins"—those who have kept themselves pure from

the spiritual fornication of fellowship with false churches. They had *all* repented of the wrong ways of this world and had *come out* of this world to serve God. They *all* went forth to meet the bridegroom—expecting to receive salvation.

But some of them had lost the "oil" of God's Spirit. They thought that just knowing the truth, coming out of the world, and fellowshiping with God's church was *enough*. They had not been *GROWING* spiritually as had the other virgins. Perhaps they thought that they would just naturally get into God's kingdom because they were in the fellowship and love of the brethren who *were* spiritually alive.

Just knowing the truth and having fellowship with God's church is *NOT ENOUGH!*

You are either receiving more of God's Spirit each day through fervent prayer, diligent Bible study, and submitting your will *completely* to God that He may direct your every thought and action, or you are stagnating and spiritually *DYING!* *There is no middle ground*. The door to the kingdom was shut in the face of those who *thought* they were "saved," but had not yielded themselves to *grow* into more truth and to *practice* the truth more perfectly each day of their lives.

God's people will be in these two classes when Christ returns. Which class will *you* be in?

Do Your Part

The fearful temptation to "do nothing" is described in Mat. 25:14-30. Jesus portrayed the two faithful servants who had put their talents and resources to *work* in His service, and the servant who had not.

Notice that the two servants who had received the most talents were more eager to use them. *It is even so in God's Church*.

Many of YOU feel that because you have no great talents or resources, you can *let down* and not do your part with the same *zeal* as others. You are *mistaken!* This parable shows that you ought to be using your talents just as much as other true Christians. This parable is a warning to *beware* of such a wrong attitude!

Each one has his part to do in God's

work. Perhaps your part is simply to *pray* for God's work and His ministers, to *study* that you may answer the questions of others, to *pay* God's tithe and cheerfully *give* offerings to His work, and to set a *shining example* of love and service to those about you. But are you doing these things with all your strength?

God's word shows that many of you will become *lukewarm* and will *fail* to carry out *your part* in God's work. How can you prevent this?

Right Habits Are Vitally Important

Your destiny will be determined in a great measure by how well you practice certain virtues in your daily life. The zealous performance or careless omission of these duties is largely a matter of **HABIT**.

This is a *key* that can *build* or *wreck* your life!

You should get in the *habit* of kneeling down two or three times a day and *earnestly praying* to God—getting to know Him as your Father. This should be the most important *habit* of your life. Don't let circumstances break this habit!

Studying your Bible for a few hours each week is next in importance. Unusual circumstances may necessarily interfere with daily Bible study at times, but you *can* arrange to study the Bible for at least four or five hours each week. And this means the Bible *itself*—not literature about the Bible. Diligently and prayerfully studying God's word is a habit that will give you the *faith* and *understanding* you long for. Make it *your habit*!

An important habit which most of you *have not realized* is that of *fasting*. When you are faced with a special problem, when you are in a temptation or if you feel you are growing lukewarm, one of the surest remedies is to *fast* and *pray*. This subject will be discussed at length in future articles. But zealous Christians *should fast* at least one or two days during each month. This *habit* is *vital*!

Many brethren know it is God's *command* that we faithfully render tithes and offerings for His work, but they have not acquired the *habit* of doing this as they should. God loves a *cheerful giver* (II Cor. 9:7). If you are not in the *habit*, it may be hard for you to give cheerfully to the *most important work on earth*. Study the twelfth chapter of Luke. Here Christ is clearly and forcefully showing that your life is *not* made rich by the things you possess. Rather, your true wealth is what is laid up in heaven because your *pocketbook* as well as your heart has been converted to God's service.

Was Christ mercenary? *Decidedly not!* But He knew that if you weren't trying

hard to put more of your material wealth into God's work, your *interest* and *zeal* would soon *die out*. "For where your *treasure* is, there will your *heart* be also" (Luke 12:34). I stress this point because I well know that most of you have not been trying to make more money for the *purpose* of helping God's work. Some of our older brethren who fully understand the significance of this work and the times we are in work *extra hours* in order that they may give *more* toward carrying out the true gospel.

How important is God's work to you? This *habit* shows God that *you really mean it!*

A Constant Practice

The very *basis* of real Christianity is that you pattern your life after Jesus Christ. He is our *perfect* example. We need to *study* God's word continually to know how to follow Christ's example.

A vital *habit* that can aid you marvelously in achieving this is the following: Whenever you are about to do anything significant, stop and ask yourself, "How would Jesus handle this situation?" Then ask *God* to guide you in *acting* as Christ would. This can alter the course of your life!

You *must* have studied God's word and Jesus' example for this to help as it should. But even trying this *as you learn* will bring you closer to God *every single day*.

This habit may be exercised before you walk into a room, before a party, before work, at the start of each new day. Just ask God, "How would Jesus act now?" Then, with God's help—*ACT that way!*

If you sow this habit, you should reap *eternal life*.

The Result

According to prophecy, God's people will soon enter the period of the church of Laodicea. Many will not overcome the *trials* which God will set before us. They will not profit from His *chastening*. They will have fallen into *wrong habits*. Their condition will be **LUKEWARM** (Rev. 3:14-16). Christ will cast them out of His church unless they **REPENT**. They will not have been *watching* and *praying* that they might be worthy to *escape* the coming *tribulation* on God's people (Luke 21:36). Therefore they will be among those saints who will be permitted to **SUFFER** in order to learn (Rev. 6:9-11).

God's people will be divided into *two classes*: those who are zealously *growing*, and those who gradually become lukewarm. The first class will be protected during the tribulation and because they *have overcome* (Rev. 2:26), they will be given rule over the nations as kings and priests under Christ. The other class

will be allowed to *suffer* in this coming tribulation in hope that they might learn to *put God first*.

Your practice of the *habits* herein described will largely determine which class *you* will be in. You will need God's help to *form* and *keep* these habits. He is more than willing to guide you through His Spirit (Luke 11:13). And remember that the *regularity* of a *right habit* and *right attitude* makes it so much easier!

Your destiny is in your *own* hands. Remember that it is largely a *matter of habit*.

Help the Underdog!

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ple of the serious decisions and responsibilities which God's ministers must shoulder. There will be problems of people wanting a *job* in the work, of people seeking after *offices* in the church to which God has *not* called them, of *false prophets* or *disgruntled elders* trying to lead off the flock after *themselves*.

All these problems will *not* be solved to the complete satisfaction of everyone. This is *because very few people keep close enough to God to know His will* in directing the church. And when personal desires and ambitions enter into the picture, it is easy even for a converted person to let *self-will* get in the way of *God's will*.

These factors will give opportunity for those who *continue* in *self-will* to cry out that they are being treated unfairly, that they are "martyrs" or "underdogs." You need to realize this, and ask God to help you get *all sides* of the case before feeling very sorry for the "underdog."

Jesus Guides His Church!

Although Jesus specially promised to guide His ministers in exercising their authority to "bind" or "loose" in applying *God's law* to a particular case, He did *not* promise that they would never make a mistake in appointing some to offices in the church. Paul told the Ephesian elders whom he ordained: "Of *your own selves* shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them" (Acts 20:30).

So even though they diligently seek God's direction, God's ministers today may make a few human errors in the appointments of elders, deacons, or others to offices in the church. *But that is for CHRIST to judge!* God's ministers

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Love Not the World!

What should be your attitude toward the world? What about unconverted relatives, neighbors and friends? Here is the answer which may surprise you!

by Garner Ted Armstrong

MANY TIMES, you have heard God's ministers expound the scriptures PROVING this is the true Church of God! You have read articles in the *Good News* and *Plain Truth* magazines showing little-known facts about the *history* of this Church—God's Church.

Somehow, God has brought YOU to the wonderful knowledge that He is dealing directly through His called and chosen ministers, and that He is actively leading and guiding His Church, which is performing His WORK on this earth! But what should be your *attitude* after receiving this precious knowledge?

As Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong explained that attitude in his closing sermon during the last day of unleavened bread, it became evident the *true* attitude of the Christian toward the world should be *differant* from that of many of us!

Come Out of the World

We have published many articles dealing with the sins of the world, and with the absolute *requirement* God lays on every newly-begotten child of His to *come out* of this Babylon of confusion (Rev. 18:4) and not to be a "friend" of the world! (James 4:4).

Many scriptures show we are to regard ourselves as *strangers* and *foreigners* here on this earth (I Pet. 2:11) NOT taking part in this *world* and its ways, but CHANGING our ways to conform to God's ways! (Rom. 12:2).

God expressly commands, "Love NOT the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him" (I John 2:15). Of course, it is obvious God is not talking about the round, terrestrial *ball* under our feet, but the *system*, the SOCIETY in which we live! The Greek word is either "aeon" or "cosmos" which *both* actually refer to the "age" or the *society* or *system* of things about us!

Usually always, the newly converted "babe" in Christ comes out of the world with a will! I did, and I distinctly remember the many *criticisms* and cynical expressions of *disgust* and *ridicule* I used when talking of the others in the world who did not know the truth!

I know many of YOU have done, and *are doing* the same things!

I have come to see that is *not* the correct attitude!

YES! We're absolutely COMMANDED to *come out* of this world! God tells us we will even be spoken evil of by our former friends (I Pet. 4:1-5) and that in some cases homes will be broken by the conversion of some within that home (Matt. 10:34).

But!

Even though God expressly forbids us to fellowship with the world and worldly people in *their ways*, God does *not* intend that we begin to have a "superior" feeling—or a feeling of antagonism and critical cynicism toward the people in the world!

For God So LOVED The World

Yes, God so loved this "cosmos" or this SOCIETY, meaning the living, breathing *human beings* here on this earth, that he GAVE His only begotten Son, that this sin-sick world could be reconciled to God! (John 3:16).

Notice, God LOVES the world!

How does this fit with I John 2:15? In this way! While God enjoins Christians NOT to love the world, He means, as is proved by all the New Testament scriptures on the subject, the WAYS of the world, the ACTS of the world, the DEEDS of the world, which are contrary to God's law, and end in death! But God NOWHERE says we are to hate or despise the PEOPLE in this world! Christ instructs us even to LOVE OUR ENEMIES! (Matt. 5:44).

Therefore, you should LOVE your unconverted relatives, your friends and neighbors—but YOU ARE NOT TO FELLOWSHIP WITH THEM IN THEIR OWN WORLDLY WAYS! Certainly it is acceptable in God's sight to have a certain amount of fellowship with your own

family, even though unconverted, and to be a *light* to them, but not to "argue" with them or to condemn them for *their* carnal ways! It is all right to visit with carnal people, and try to HELP them gain understanding by *your example*. But it is NOT right to constantly criticize and find "fault" with those who are as yet blinded to God's truth!

God's Responsibility

Remember, it is GOD who has deliberately BLINDED this world, so it CAN NOT see the truth that has so graciously been given you! Christ said it was not *given* to the masses of people to understand! (Matt. 13:10-15). We know it is Satan who is the instrument used in blinding the world at this time (II Cor. 4:4) but God has told us He is directly responsible for "concluding" ("shutting up") them all in unbelief" that He might ultimately have mercy on them all (Rom. 11:32). Remember, God is "not willing that ANY should perish, but that ALL should come to repentance" (II Pet. 3:9).

God wants all carnal-minded, painted, cigarette-smoking, cursing, drinking, irresponsible, perverted, sin-filled humans to come humbly before Him and CONFESS their sins, throwing themselves on His abundant mercy, and asking, "God, be MERCIFUL to me, a sinner!" Let's all LONG for the day this will be possible—realizing these people who are now *blinded* and duped by the wiles of Satan will soon have their eyes OPENED to see the same glorious truth YOU have been privileged to understand!

"If a man say, 'I love God,' and hateth his brother, he is a liar, for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from Him, that he who loveth God love his brother also!" (I John 4:20-21).

Do you see? We are to LOVE other human beings, but we are not to love or take part in *their ways*. Can we find a right balance? Can we realize we have this knowledge through God's grace, and not our own good works? If we cannot have love for our brother, we cannot love our Creator!

NOTICE!

The Sacred Calendar for 1957 has been mailed to every member. If you have not already received your copy write us immediately, as your copy may have been lost.

Help the Underdog!

(Continued from page 6)

are responsible directly to HIM.

If God's ministers seem a little slow in appointing someone to an office in the church, or if they appear to have made a mistake in such an appointment—or in any other decision they may have to make, the truly *Christian* thing for you to do is not to criticize and condemn, nor to bitterly think that we are persecuting a so-called "underdog," but to get down on your knees before God and ask *Him* to show us *His* will, to rebuke and chasten us if necessary, and to guide us in directing His church as He has promised to do.

And while you are at it, you had better ask God also to show you if YOU are the one who is wrong! The Bible reveals that when individuals disagreed with God's called servants, they were nearly always the ones who were wrong.

So mistakes will be made. But God's Word shows that those who criticize or accuse God's servants of being unfair will probably be the ones in the wrong.

In the past, Jesus has always directed His church and His true servants so that they were far more fair and just in directing the church than others would have been. Jesus is "the same yesterday, and TODAY, and for ever" (Heb. 13:8). Think it over.

Help the Underdog

Knowing that the true church of God is a spiritual organism which *Christ* rules and directs through His ministers, you should be very careful not to let Satan the Devil put a spirit of antagonism in you against them. Once God has shown you where *He* is working in carrying the true gospel to the world, and *whom* He is using in this ministry, you should obey them in matters of church government and direction (Heb. 13:8). In matters of *faith*, you should follow them as they follow *Christ* (I Cor. 11:1). This way leads to unity, peace, and love as God intends. It avoids *strife* and *confusion* which is of the Devil.

If occasions arise where other brethren become disgruntled over a supposed injustice, you had better remind yourself that *Christ* has promised to guide His church into all truth—and ask *Him* to do it. If someone in the church feels that he is an "underdog," that he has been wronged or discriminated against by God's servants, and if he comes around to you for sympathy—you should help him.

Yes, you should help the "underdog"! Here is how. If you are careful to find the real cause of his grievance, you will probably find that the individual is in some manner going contrary to the government of God. He may be trying to disobey some point of God's law. He may be holding a feeling of bitterness toward one of God's ministers because he was unwilling to be corrected on some point; or he may feel "persecuted" because he has not been allowed to appoint himself to some office or function in God's work for which he is not qualified or prepared.

Whatever may be the reason, you will not help him by actively sympathizing with his supposed "cause." This will only make him feel more secure in his error, and seem to substantiate his feeling of bitterness.

If possible, you should try to point out his own mistake, help him get his mind off his own selfish desires, and warn him in a loving way that such an attitude among God's people is one which Satan the Devil is working day and night to bring about (I Peter 5:8).

If you are members of a local congregation, you should discuss it with the minister and let him know the real situation so that he may help work out a solution before anything serious arises. If you are one of the many scattered brethren and such a problem should arise, write to us at God's "headquarters church" in Pasadena, and we will try to work out a solution, and will pray with you about it.

Whatever you do, don't become this kind of "underdog" yourself, or let one make you embittered to the extent that you reject God's truth and thereby forfeit your right to eternal life. The "underdog" and his sympathizers may well be in danger of the lake of fire. It seems that if people allow themselves to become embittered and reject a minister, they also reject *Christ's* message! It just doesn't pay to fight God's true servants. When the men of Israel became angry because of Samuel's sons and wanted to reject Samuel, God said, "They have not rejected thee, but they have rejected ME, that I should not reign over them" (I Sam. 8:7).

The "underdog" problem will always be solved if the complete truth of the particular case is made plain to everyone, if brethren are willing to obey God's will in directing the church through His called and chosen ministers, and if all of us pray earnestly that God will protect His church and keep it free from all strife and division. Christ's body, the true church, is not to be divided (I Cor. 1:13). Only by working together with love and zeal can we carry out the world-wide mission that Christ has given to all of us in His church.

How to keep the Feast

(Continued from page 2)

sermons preached there. If you have friends or relatives in this condition tell them about "The WORLD TOMORROW" program and The PLAIN TRUTH, but DO NOT invite or bring them to the Feast at Gladewater.

In these past few Feasts, since more people have been hearing about God's tabernacle at Gladewater, too many curiosity seekers have come and too many brethren have borrowed from others. Some have been coming just to see what Mr. Armstrong looks like or because they wanted to take a trip. When the time comes to go the consciences of some have bothered them because they have not been faithful in saving a second tithe, so they've borrowed from others in the church and come anyway—totally unprepared to keep the Feast.

To Whom Do We Owe "Charity"?

We do owe help to THOSE WITHIN OUR GATES (those in God's True Church). But to which of these? To the strangers (those newly converted who have honestly begun to save the second tithe), and the fatherless and widows (those whose parents or husbands are NOT in the church . . . whose source of sustenance is an unconverted mate who will not allow them the money to keep the feast). This is done SO THAT GOD MAY BLESS YOU in your work during ALL the rest of the year!

Once you have experienced the real thrill, the deep spiritual significance God meant you to have from the Feast, you would never desire to have it any other way. The ways of God must be LIVED to realize what a blessing they are.

Now a bit as to how to save the second tithe. Many have asked me if it is all right to open a separate bank account for this purpose. CERTAINLY! This is about the BEST way to do it . . . each week or two weeks or month whenever you receive your income, take that second tenth out before you spend anything else (the first tenth is to go to God's work for spreading the Gospel), then send the first tithe to Pasadena and deposit the second in a SEPARATE SAVINGS ACCOUNT. YOU ARE NOT TO BORROW FROM IT AS SOME HAVE BEEN DOING. So put it in a separate account and then when the time comes to go to KEEP the feast withdraw it, leaving only one dollar to keep the account current—then come to Gladewater and KEEP THE FEAST!