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THE GREAT MAJESTIC G O D

being enthroned in eyes of Church
once again by Jesus Christ

by Herbert W. Armstrong

LET'S FACE IT -- we in God's Church were beginning to get our eyes off of our GREAT MAJESTIC G O D ! The HEAD of our Church, the living Jesus Christ -- is opening our eyes to our danger! Once again Christ is enthroning THE GREAT GOD in our eyes -- and in our hearts!

Yes, more than generally realized, Satan was manipulating things to make God's Church and His Work more and more secular -- more like any other purely worldly and human activity!

The realization of this was brought forcibly to my mind by my thinking over a criticism from one whose understanding needs updating. He said I was surrounded by "yes-men."

That set off a chain of thought. This expression "yes-men" is a bit of modern terminology, generally meaning passive, extra-docile, weak-minded men who "go along" purely to serve their own personal interests, or through fear.

In that category, our administrative personnel, and our ministry, most assuredly are NOT "yes-men."

But there is another meaning that could be applied to that expression. And in that sense, I want to be a "yes-man" myself -- and I hope that all of us -- whether lay members, ministers, or administrative people -- are this kind of "yes-people."

I can illustrate what I mean by my own personal experience at the time of my conversion. And I would hope that the experience God put me through then might serve to set an example for all of you to follow.

I had been CHALLENGED! At the time my whole mind and heart was set on "doing my own thing." And that "thing" was being a success in the advertising profession.

Of course, I felt I was doing the right thing. At age 18 I had put myself through a self-analysis, to determine what talents and abilities (IF any) I had, and what weaknesses, faults, or dislikes that might hinder success. Also I went through a survey of the various jobs, professions, occupations, or businesses, to determine into which category I belonged. This analysis led me to decide that the field of advertising was the area in which I properly fitted.

So, the advertising, merchandising, and journalism field became "my own thing" -- and, of course, I sincerely believed it was the right thing!

When my wife began keeping God's Sabbath, I regarded it as the pinnacle of religious fanaticism. And especially because it seemed hostile to "my own thing." "What would my business associates think?" was the first challenging thought to enter my mind.

I tried argument and reasoning with my "misled" (as I thought) wife. All the arguments that still viciously attack God's Sabbath by those in traditional Christianity came instantly to mind. They had no effect.

"But," I finally protested, "I know the Bible says 'Thou shalt observe Sunday.'"

"Can you show me where it says that?" she asked.

"Well, no -- I wouldn't know where to find it, because I don't know anything about the Bible. My mind has been on my business! But I know it's in the Bible, because all these churches can't be wrong, and they get their religion out of the Bible."

"Well, you find it and show it to me in the Bible," said my wife, "and I'll go back to observing Sunday."

That seemed to leave me no alternative, because to us marriage was till death parted us -- and I didn't want either to lose my wife or live with "fanaticism."

So, in order to have my own way -- to continue "doing my own thing" without embarrassment, I entered with a will into the most intensive "in depth" study and research of my life. I "blew the dust off my Bible," so to speak, and delved into it with confident alacrity.

At the same time I had been challenged by a sister-in-law on the validity of the evolutionary theory.

I delved into Darwin, Haeckel, Huxley, Spencer, Voght, and modern evolutionists. For a short while my head was swimming in bewildered consternation. Did God exist, after all? I realized I had ASSUMED the existence of God, because I had always been taught it -- but I HAD NEVER PROVED IT! Now my mind demanded PROOF!

And my relentless study brought that PROOF POSITIVE! Immediately following there came to me irrefutable PROOF of the infallible inspiration and authority of the Bible (in its original writings) as the precise WORD OF GOD TO MAN!

But, although this, so far, was pleasing and acceptable to me, I was having real difficulty in wrestling with this Sabbath question. My researches into that question were not going to my liking.

This almost day-and-night intensive study began in the fall of 1926. By the spring of 1927 I not only had to "eat crow" on the

Sabbath question -- I had discovered, with PROOF, the permanency of God's annual Sabbaths and feasts, as well.

In all this I had not found or proved what I wanted. Also I saw proved clearly that "all these churches" were emphatically WRONG! Most important, I was brought to see, against my will, that I HAD BEEN WRONG -- not only on the Sabbath truth, but in what I actually was! I had just been wrong all over!

I was brought to the REPENTANCE that is complete SURRENDER to the will of God! I was brought to the unconditional surrender of being willing to say, with Christ, "Not MY will, but THINE be done!" I was brought, not only to complete repentance, but to living FAITH -- to BELIEVE GOD -- that is, to believe what He says!

To God I said, "YES, SIR!" In utter sincerity, I literally GAVE MYSELF to Jesus Christ. He had bought and paid for me with His life's blood. He OWNED me. I BELONGED TO HIM!

I became a "YES-MAN" to Christ!

Through human weaknesses, I have not succeeded perfectly in leaving my life in His hands -- but that has always remained my INTENTION -- my motivating attitude!

When I GAVE my life over to Jesus Christ I honestly by that time had come to feel I was not giving Him anything of value. But, I did feel, if He could USE this worthless life of mine -- it was now His to use!

The living Christ inspired the apostle John to say that even we Christians will not live perfect lives -- BUT, he added, "if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness!" I still keep asking for that cleansing. But I did become Christ's "yes-man." I gave up "doing my own thing!"

And I hope all our administrative people and all our ministers and their wives, as well as the entire body of God's Church, also are that kind of "yes-men."

There is a vast difference between being an insipid, "yes-man" weakling through cringing FEAR -- and being resolute and strong-minded, imbued with the Holy Spirit of God.

On the other hand there is also a vast difference between that and being stubbornly "mule-minded," each pulling his own way, and doing his own thing!

What God intends us to be -- what we MUST be to succeed in His Work -- is resolute people, imbued with the HOLY SPIRIT of God, recognizing that Jesus Christ is our LEADER, and we plunge forth, all of the same mind (that of Christ) -- in PERFECT HARMONY AND UNITY -- all speaking the same thing.

Listen then, to God's command:

"Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (I Cor. 1:10).

God did not inspire the apostle Paul to mean that wrong kind of "yes-men" -- insipid, weak, fear-minded men concerned with self-interest. What He did mean is that we should all be led by the same Spirit -- God's Holy Spirit. He meant, as Paul wrote to the Phillipians, that we should through the Holy Spirit be "likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind." He said, "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory" /vanity to exalt self, or further one's personal interests/; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man to his own things...let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 2:1-5).

You are not, then, allowed by God each to preach his own interpretations, but rather as Christ leads the TEAM!

In other words, God inspired Paul to admonish us: Be strong-minded, be Spirit-minded, and Spirit-led. Let God's Spirit make us all of ONE MIND -- as a TEAM -- let your part in God's Work be your part in a TEAM EFFORT -- all together in one accord!

But There Must Be Team Leadership

God wants us to be always mindful that to be a team, there must be TEAM LEADERSHIP!

But HOW?

We must always keep in mind that JESUS CHRIST is the living HEAD of the Church. But HOW does Christ head the Work? He does not Himself personally, by personal contact with each department and each member, carry on the Work. He does NOT lead God's Work through the self-will of each minister or individual, each pulling his own direction to do his own thing.

Jesus Christ leads God's Work through human leaders whom HE (not the members by vote) CHOOSES, and works through.

In the days of ancient Israel in the wilderness, God worked through Moses. When Aaron and Miriam challenged Moses' leadership, -- when they wanted equal "say-so" -- God sternly rebuked them! He punished Miriam with temporary leprosy. And when Korah led a group challenging Moses' leadership, God caused them to be swallowed up by the earth!

Yet many seem to think God has CHANGED -- or lost His interest or power! Some knowing these facts full well, have not feared to challenge the leadership of CHRIST'S choosing today! Perhaps these have become unmindful that they are being judged by God, NOW!

"Yes" one may argue, "but that was Old Testament stuff! We are under the NEW Testament! God has CHANGED!"

WHAT? God has changed? He says, "I change NOT." The God of Moses was the one who was later born as Jesus Christ! And He is the same, yesterday, today, and forever!

God tells us in the New Testament (I Corinthians 1:10), those Old Testament examples were for our admonition, in the END-time!

But let's look at how Christ led the New Testament Church.

He chose Peter as leading apostle, and Paul as leader in the Work to the Gentiles. Paul writes: "...when they (at Jerusalem) saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter..." (Gal. 2:7).

Yet Peter took precedence over Paul, as shown at the Jerusalem conference (Acts 15). Paul had been at Antioch. Severe contentions arose in the church there. In this case, Paul did not then and there settle it in Antioch, but went to Jerusalem with Barnabas and certain others -- BECAUSE PETER WAS THERE.

"And the apostles and elders came together for to consider this matter. And when there had been much disputing, PETER ROSE UP..." and gave the DECISION (Verse 6-7). Then James, because he was Pastor of the Headquarter's Church, as a matter of protocol, made PETER'S DECISION official (verses 13-29).

In this case Peter had pre-eminence over Paul, and all apostles.

In I Corinthians 5 is the account of a fornicator in the church. Paul reproved the whole church, and showed his authority saying, "For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present..." (verse 3).

To the Corinthian church Paul said, "What will ye? Shall I come unto you with a rod, or in love, and in the spirit of meekness? (I Cor. 4:21).

The one who accused of "yes-men," also needs updating on a number of other observations he made. He says, "Obviously you will not find democracy in Exodus.... The government God set up then was the best form of government that could be set up for that day and age, not a master blueprint for eternity..."

He thinks members' viewpoints ought to make the decisions for today -- and we should have democracy in the church -- every person doing what seems right in his own eyes. That is precisely what ancient Israel did. In the days of the judges, "every man did that which was right in his own eyes." And this was constantly leading Israel into the captivity of surrounding kingdoms.

What is the actual DIFFERENCE between GOD'S GOVERNMENT, which is GOVERNMENT FROM THE TOP DOWN, and democracy? Under what we call democracy, if I drive to an intersection with a STOP sign, I am not free to go on through if it is right in my own eyes. We are not free to do whatever seems right in every individual's eyes. We still have

LAWS, and codes, and rules. And we have police and other law enforcement agencies.

The DIFFERENCE is that in what we erroneously call democracy, the PEOPLE decide by vote on who shall be their leaders -- whether mayor, or governor or president. But THERE IS STILL RULE.

The difference, then, is that in GOD'S GOVERNMENT, GOD decides, through Christ, WHOM He shall choose and install in office over His people in His Church. God's apostle cannot do as he pleases in his own personal interest, but as CHRIST leads him.

And if he doesn't? If he needs correction or removal? If so that is CHRIST'S responsibility -- and HE WILL SEE TO IT. It is not the responsibility of those UNDER the apostle to correct him.

"But maybe Christ is NOT LOOKING -- or maybe Christ neglects to correct him? Should not the people under him then take it into their hands?" To do so would be to DEFY CHRIST -- to TRY TO TAKE CHRIST'S JOB AWAY FROM HIM!

Brethren, whether others know it or not, I know well that Christ is not asleep at the switch -- He will not neglect His job -- and I FEAR to disbelieve that.

The BIG POINT we must never lose sight of is that CHRIST IS THE LIVING HEAD OF GOD'S CHURCH -- and we'd better all TREMBLE at His Word!

And that HITS THE NAIL SQUARELY ON THE HEAD. The trouble, these past ten years, is that too many have lost sight of the fact that CHRIST is our INSPIRED LEADER. There has been too much tendency to look on the Church and the Work as OUR OWN SECULAR WORK -- like any worldly club or business.

You have not read, in the GOOD NEWS lately, that Mr. HWA has set the church back on the track -- but that THE LIVING CHRIST has moved to do it! And, to use another modern expression, "YOU'D BETTER BELIEVE IT!"

Now WHERE does our TEACHING come from? What doctrines and teachings shall we accept? Those "voted" on by "the doctrinal committee?" Fellow ministers and brethren, Christ through me has abolished the doctrinal committee! God's Church is being set back BY THE LIVING CHRIST on the track of ORIGINAL TRUTH as CHRIST instilled it into God's Church through His chosen apostle!

Too little of the efforts of the "doctrinal committee" was to find and accept genuine New truth -- but to DISprove, to alter or change truth which Christ already had established in God's Church!

From time to time I propose to give you examples of that, as I proceed from time to time, to RE-establish the ORIGINAL POSITIVE TRUTH given us through CHRIST, correcting the errors -- though they be few -- in the "STP."

The real Head of this Church has continued to reveal NEW truth -- genuine bona fide NEW truth -- through His apostle, but there seems to

have been a tendency for some to ignore or try to disprove what CHRIST has inspired.

Look, now, to the matter of HOW the original Church of God received its truths and its doctrines. There were NO "DOCTRINAL COMMITTEES" of special intellectual scholars who got together and decided on, and then gave to, the Church what it was to believe.

The living CHRIST, the HEAD of the Church, gave His Church HIS truth THROUGH HIS APOSTLES! Through Peter, through Paul, through James, INSPIRED through those He chose.

But WHY do we find so much more of the written New Testament written by Paul than by Peter? Simply because Christ had sent Peter and the original twelve, after Peter's visit to Babylon, to "the LOST sheep of the House of ISRAEL"! Their identity was LOST and God intended to leave it that way. Peter and the original twelve went to western Europe and Britain. They dropped out of sight, so to speak. None of New Testament Scripture was written of their work there.

Now a definition of that word "INPUT." It does not mean an authoritative doctrine, or even a vote on such. But "input" is welcome, to be CONSIDERED by Christ's apostle prayerfully, as led by Christ. But the DECISION must come from CHRIST, through His apostle. And the living Christ has maintained the mind and mental processes of His apostle in all the vitality, clarity, UNDERSTANDING, given him 20 years ago, and 51 years ago. Even though Moses' entire leadership of Israelites from Egypt, through the wilderness up to the promised land -- a period of forty years, beginning after Moses was 80 years of age, yet at age 120, his natural force and mind had not abated!

Jesus Christ is ABLE -- and He WILL -- keep the spiritual and mental powers of His chosen apostle sharp and keen and clear, UNTIL THE GREAT COMMISSION IS FINISHED!

Brethren, let's PLUNGE ON INTO IT, fully mindful that Christ has again, in the eyes of the Church, ENTHRONED THE GREAT MAJESTIC GOD at the Supreme Headship of Christ, and of His Church and Work! This is NOT THE WORK OF MEN! This Church is the living TEMPLE to which Christ soon will come! HE BUILT IT! And except the Eternal build the house, they labor in vain that build it! (Ps. 127:1).

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EXPANSION IN WATS AREA One of the Work's most popular booklets, The Modern Romans, is scheduled to be highlighted on television spot commercials soon, and so the WATS area is gearing up for the expected response. These commercials will be shown in approximately 60 top markets across the United States during a nine-week period. More phone lines are being added in the WATS area to handle the increase in calls which we are anticipating.

Mail Update: Donation mail for July seems to be running at an average level. Non-donation mail has been down, but there are prospects that it will increase in the very near future. Increased Subscriber Development mailings, more renewals, the "Co-Worker Newsletter," and

a new semiannual letter from Mr. Armstrong should all work to bring the mail picture up significantly.

A point of interest: Over the past several weeks, responses from the Newsstand Program have actually been the largest portion of our non-donation mail! Our congratulations to that department for the job they are doing.

--Richard Rice, Mail Processing Center

NEWSSTAND UPDATE The newsstand program is continuing to produce excellent results in promoting the Plain Truth. In May we had our biggest number of responses to date with nearly 23,000 new subscribers being added to the PT list. This was 38% of all adds that month and for the first time, the largest single source of new subscribers. The June figure was considerably smaller at 12,000 new subscribers, but the percentage of total adds only dropped to 34%. This probably reflects a seasonal change.

--Newsstands