

Herbert W. Armstrong
Post Office Box 431
Tucson, Arizona 85701

Tucson, Arizona
December 19, 1980

Dear Brethren and Co-Workers with Christ:

Year One of the reborn era of God's Work starts in a few days -- with the beginning of the year 1981. This great Work is now ready to TAKE OFF at an accelerated pace -- with NEW LIFE!

That NEW LIFE is being imparted to this Church by the living Jesus Christ who heads it!

Look at this era of the Church of God, and its growth up to now! Let me condense it in a few words.

The true Church of God had not been carrying Christ's Gospel to the world since around A.D. 70 (see Galatians 1:6-7). It still held to the NAME "Church of God," but had become spiritually dead - - in the Sardis era (Revelation 3:1). God had called me, brought me to conversion and to BELIEVE HIM (that is, what He SAYS in His Word, the Bible) in the spring of 1927. I came among the Church people in Oregon, fellowshiped with them -- but never joined with them.

Jesus Christ started me preaching in a 36-seat one-room country schoolhouse near Eugene, Oregon, in July, 1933. A new era - - the "Philadelphia" era (Revelation 3:7) -- of God's Church was born after six weeks' six-nights-a-week meetings! The Church was organized in October, 1933. Nineteen members!

God had called me, prepared me and now used me to raise up this Philadelphia era of His Church. He then used me to direct and be the human dynamo driving its growth. The first Sunday in 1934 we started on the air -- never to go off! February 1, 1934, the first issue of The PLAIN TRUTH was mailed out to some 350 new subscribers. The Church and its Work grew -- and GREW -- and GREW!

I held public services, inviting the people of local communities. The radio broadcast grew. The PLAIN TRUTH grew, and special booklets began to be printed more and more. I answered letters with questions from listeners and PLAIN TRUTH readers.

The Work was growing 30 percent each year over the year before -- doubling in size of operations and people reached with Christ's Gospel every 2-2/3 years -- multiplying eight times over eight years.

In 1947 Ambassador College was started. In 1948 or 1949 the Bible Correspondence Course was started. By 1952 we began to graduate new ministers to pastor local churches.

In 1942 daily half-hour broadcasts began. In 1955 I began on television, with the rating agencies showing larger viewing audiences in cities where we were telecasting than the NBC "Tonight Show" now hosted by Johnny Carson -- then by Steve Allen.

In the fifties we had college-educated ministers answering letters personally for me -- letters with Bible questions from listeners.

Soon we were on a very large number of the nation's most powerful radio stations SEVEN DAYS A WEEK. The radio program was going out over more wattage of radio power than any program on earth. We became first, worldwide, in our field. Church membership became worldwide with hundreds of local churches pastored by hundreds of Ambassador-trained ordained ministers. The Church's Work grew at the unmatched incredible rate of 30 percent per year on the average for 35 YEARS!

Then, 1968, Christ began opening doors for me to proclaim Christ's Gospel in many nations on all continents, by personal invitations to private meetings with kings, emperors, presidents, prime ministers of many nations (Revelation 10:11). This kept me away from Pasadena more and more of the time -- up to 300 out of the 365 days in a year! I delegated the day-to-

day administration to executive vice-presidents of evangelist rank in Christ's ministry. They were commissioned to carry out executive administration ONLY of policies and procedures Christ had instituted through me, and which had been building the Work on a 30 percent per year increase for 35 years.

But they assumed, without my knowledge, policy-setting changes and doctrinal changes given out to ministers, in an effort to "TAKE OVER" -- destroy everything the living Christ had built through the years through me, and build something for themselves. They were watering down doctrines, changing procedures and policies and threatening other top-ranking ministers with losing their jobs if they revealed to me what was going on in my absence.

The broadcasting program went down, beginning 1968, until most stations had been canceled and replaced with short five-minute announcements. From being the biggest user of radio power on earth, we went down to lowest, even in the religious field. Other programs promptly grabbed our time. I had spent years traveling to all parts of the United States, to SELL our program in person to station managers coast to coast. It all went down the drain.

A little over three years ago -- in August, 1977 -- I suffered complete heart failure. My heart stopped completely. It was discovered, and a nurse and my sister-in-law worked furiously over me with mouth-to-mouth resuscitation for more than a minute and a half, and brought back breath and heartbeat. It left me too ill to do much in the Work for several months.

But now for the past 2-1/2 years, I have once again taken over full day-to-day administration and complete direction of the Church Jesus Christ built through me.

We have had a 2-1/2 year drive to put the Church and God's whole Work BACK ON THE TRACK!

Changing policies Christ inspired, changing doctrines God's Word teaches, changing procedures that built His Work 30 percent a year for 35 years, was DISPLEASING TO THE LIVING JESUS CHRIST AND to GOD THE FATHER! For 13 lean years, the Work of the Christ stood still. IT DID NOT GROW during those years. But it held about even.

Those who were perverting Christ's Gospel and God's teachings in His Word are gone from us now -- no longer members of God's Family. When our performance pleases God the Father and Christ His Son, they BLESS THE WORK AND IT GROWS!

Brethren, we have been getting back on God's track! And now His Church is beginning to SHOW REAL GROWTH ONCE AGAIN!

Just today I have had a meeting with our Festival directors. Last fall, in this 1980 Feast of Tabernacles, we had about a 10 percent increase in member attendance. Baptism of new members is coming in at a rate, they tell me, there will be at least a 19 percent increase in attendance this next Feast -- 1981! Reports are for increases all over the United States. A report from England is for a 31 percent increase there. More than a 30 percent increase now in New Zealand! ALREADY GOD IS ADDING TO HIS CHURCH AND CAUSING THE WORK TO GROW AS DURING THE 35 YEARS PRIOR TO 1968!

Brethren, LET'S STRIVE TO PLEASE GOD!

We are ready, now to start with the year 1981. A NEW BURST OF EFFORT -- A RENEWED BIRTH OF GOD'S WORK! God gave me a RENEWED BIRTH OF THIS PHYSICAL LIFE three years ago last August. Since then I have been writing more than ever before, day by day and year by year!

During 1979 I started overseas trips in Christ's Work again, though now I must remain at my office here in Tucson most of the time to administer the day-to-day executive administration of the Church, Ambassador College and the Foundation. A year ago I made a visit to China, and again to Japan. I was the first leader from Christianity to be invited as a guest of the People's Republic of China, and to speak before their leaders. I recently returned from the Middle East.

Now I am starting another trip to Tokyo and the Philippines beginning January 2. I have plans to stop over and preach Sabbath, the third, at the church in Honolulu, then on to Japan. A meeting is planned in Tokyo before PLAIN TRUTH subscribers on the next Sabbath. Also a very large banquet is to be held in my honor, with about 300 high-ranking Japanese of the government and university -- including ambassadors from many countries. Also a small dinner with perhaps 15 or so of my "Japanese sons," as they call themselves -- all members of the Japanese Diet (their law-making congress).

Then on to Manila, the Philippines, where I will meet again with President Marcos and his wife (the First Lady). I am to

Speak at a large new auditorium there, where we expect a crowd of several thousand. It is planned for the First Lady of the nation to appear on the platform with me. I will speak at our Manila church on each Sabbath.

Then, if I am bearing up on this trip as I fully expect, we shall go on to Australia. I will speak at the Sydney church one Sabbath and at Melbourne the next Sabbath, and other churches in between, beside checking up with our office staff at Burleigh Heads.

From Melbourne we will stop over in New Zealand for a one-night Bible study, beside visiting our office there. Then one stop back where we have brethren in Fiji. Then back home.

Brethren, WE ARE OFF TO A DYNAMIC START in the REBORN WORK of the Church! Last week I recorded a TV program and a radio half hour. This week, day before yesterday, I recorded two TV programs and two radio programs. I hope to do at least four more of each before we leave on January 2. I will continue my writing en route - - on the plane and in hotel rooms. Also complete direction and administration of the whole Work. If I can set, and keep up, this pace -- in my 89th year -- what can YOU do for the Work of the living GOD? How much can you PRAY? How earnestly can you PRAY for the Work -- and for me? How much can you sacrifice in offerings -- beside paying God's TITHES?

Brethren, we're going to NEED more money for this now fast-growing Work this year.

When the radio and TV programs were going out it was costing many millions of dollars a year for the purchase of time. I want to get that important phase of the Work back UP again.

I have set myself to produce more than one TV program and one radio program (half-hour) per week right along from now. I have built on to my home in Tucson a television recording studio and office, and now have the facilities to do new, fresh programs week by week.

The new full-page newspaper ads in The Wall Street Journal are producing a tremendous effect. They are not expected to build up PLAIN TRUTH subscribers or bring in Church members. BUT THEY ARE BUILDING TREMENDOUS PRESTIGE AMONG THE VERY TOP PEOPLE IN BUSINESS, INDUSTRY AND GOVERNMENT IN THE UNITED STATES! They ARE being read - - and with some amazement! They are having a tremendous effect! They will OPEN DOORS for us at TV and radio stations -- and elsewhere! No one has seen anything like them before. I began intensive training in writing advertising when 18 years old. It is paying off now!

Mr. Rader called me today from London. He will be placing these same ads in the London Times or Daily Telegraph, reaching millions in Britain!

We plan to start new radio and/or TV programs plus newspaper and magazine messages in Australia right away. Also in leading Canadian newspapers. We now plan to start two-page or larger ads in TV Guide and Reader's Digest again very soon.

I wanted to see us get OURSELVES back on the track, pleasing GOD, before we started this enlarged campaign. Also I wanted to be sure I could keep up the pace myself -- to keep writing the advertising space messages and do the broadcasts.

But my personal health and strength has been IMPROVING regularly. God is giving me strength and POWER (Isaiah 40:28-31)!

Now I am ready to start this expanded campaign. IT WILL COST MORE MONEY! That is YOUR PART! I have nothing to live for in this present doomed world but God's Work. HAVE YOU?

I pray for YOU every day! Thousands of you have written me that you stand back of me 100 percent. NOW IS THE TIME TO REALLY DO THAT!

With deep love, in Jesus' name,

Herbert W. Armstrong