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Dear Brethren of God's Church:

GREETINGS, in Jesus' name! It's time to begin planning for the Feast of Tabernacles already -- and this will be the GREATEST Feast ever, since Apostolic days!

And in this special letter, you'll REJOICE to hear the really GOOD NEWS about how God is solving our tremendous growth problem! Feast attendance has been growing RAPIDLY! Almost as soon as God opens a new location to us, it is outgrown. We have had to look ahead, and begin planning EARLY, how to handle such staggering growth -- and how to keep making the Festival MORE AND MORE ENJOYABLE for all of God's people!

Since I wrote you last month, several of us have spent two days at Big Sandy, Texas, in conferences with our ministers there, and with architects, and the representative from the Behlen Manufacturing Company, of Columbus, Nebraska. The Behlen Company is the firm who built our big tabernacle. It is the lowest-cost type of construction we know -- and yet it is substantial and durable.

We met there to consider DOUBLING the size of our present great tabernacle, to seat about 17,000 -- or, with balcony, perhaps 23,000.

Mr. Reuter of the Behlen Company said: "Mr. Armstrong, we now have improved our engineering and structural system, so that our present system makes the type building we constructed for you here almost obsolete. We can now build you a complete NEW building, more than twice the size of your present tabernacle, for less money than we can double the size of the present building."

Let me now tell you OUR PROBLEM, the solutions we had considered, and the solution we have finally decided on.

Attendance at the FEAST OF TABERNACLES has, for 20 years, increased MORE THAN 30% a year. Ten years ago we thought the increase in attendance would soon level off. It didn't. We know now it WON'T!

God first revealed the TRUTH about His Holydays and Festivals to Mrs. Armstrong and me 'way back in 1927. Until 1934 -- seven years -- do you know how big the attendance was? It was exactly TWO. NoT two hundred, or two thousand -- just TWO people -- Mrs. Armstrong and me.

During those years I usually attended on the Sabbath with a little group of twelve to fifteen brethren at Oregon City, Oregon. Even before I was ordained in 1931, I was called on to lead in the service, and bring the message -- or sermon. I preached this new truth to those brethren. But, like the people described in Ezekiel 33:30-33, they sat there AS God's people, and my words were like music -- they ENJOYED the messages -- BUT THEY WOULD NOT DO WHAT I REVEALED GOD COMMANDED. They simply listened, then did nothing about it!

Later, I preached this truth to the brethren down in the valley, in the neighborhood of Jefferson. They were the people we now find identified as the remnant of the Sardis Church (Rev. 3:1-6). They, too, sat before me AS God's people, they heard my words, read right out of the Bible -- BUT THEY WOULD NOT DO THEM. They merely laughed at me!

Then, after God raised up the Mother Church of the "Philadelphia" era at Eugene, our new brethren there did begin to keep

God's Holydays with us. However, until 1943, we did not clearly see that we were to keep the Feast of Tabernacles AS AN EIGHT-DAY FESTIVAL. During those years, until 1943, we merely kept the seven annual Sabbaths, in addition to the Passover.

In the autumn of 1943, we tried to keep an eight-day Festival, at our little church house in Eugene. A number of new converts from Everett and Seattle, Washington, came down. But most of the Eugene brethren, by force of habit, went about their regular work except on the Sabbath and the annual Sabbaths, though several would attend night services at the church week nights.

In the fall of 1944, we did the same. But by fall, 1945, we came to see that we should get out by ourselves, AWAY from the rest of the world, getting a foretaste of the Millennium -- which the Feast of Tabernacles pictures to us. That fall we went out to Belknap Hot Springs. However, not more than 25 or 35 of us remained there for the entire eight days. The rest of the brethren came out on the Sabbaths, when we had, perhaps about 65 present.

It was a struggle and a trying ordeal to induce the Eugene members to leave their work and attend for the entire eight days. The fall of 1948 we were in the second year of the college, and the students (only seven of them then), went with us to Belknap Springs. By 1950, full-time attendance was around 100, and in 1951 we were uncomfortably overcrowded at Belknap Springs, with about 150.

In 1952, the Festival was held at Seigler Springs in California. We outgrew that springs resort that first year, with 450 in attendance -- many from Texas and states east of the mountains.

In 1953, the Festival was held in the first tabernacle -- now the dining hall -- at Big Sandy, Texas. The building was unfinished, but we had a roof over our heads. Attendance went up to 750. The 1954 Festival brought an attendance of around 1050. In 1955 it went up to 1500, then in 1956 to 2100, and we were outgrowing that original tabernacle.

The 1957 Festival saw 500 or more having to stand or sit OUT- SIDE, with an attendance of 2750. We were desperate. WHERE WOULD WE GO, NOW?

Then Mr. Buck Hammer brought to our attention the new type of building construction being produced by the Behlen Manufacturing Company. Some of us flew back to Columbus, Nebraska, to look into it. They erected for us the first unit of the present big tabernacle, ready for the 1958 Festival. It was then only two-thirds as long as now. That fall there was a 45% increase. Four thousand of God's people came. We knew that there would be more in attendance at the 1959 Festival than even that big tabernacle would hold.

So we had the Behlen people increase the size of the tabernacle by 50% -- making the big auditorium 373 by 121 feet. That Festival saw an attendance of 5,500.

I am not taking time, as I rush this letter to be typed and mailed, to check for exact figures, but as I remember it, the 1960 attendance was about 7,200. Once again we were becoming desperate! The tabernacle was outgrown. HOW could we accommodate the expected nine thousand plus at the 1961 Festival.

Then God opened Squaw Valley, California, to us. The 1961 Festival saw approximately 6,500 at Big Sandy, and 3,500 at Squaw Valley -- close to 10,000 total. Then 1962 brought 8,000 trying to jam into the big tabernacle, and another 5,000 at Squaw Valley -- total around 13,000!

Once again we faced a desperate situation. We had outgrown BOTH locations. Then God opened up Jekyll Island on the Atlantic Coast. That was this recent Festival, 1963. Four thousand five hundred attended at Jekyll Island, around 5,500 at Squaw Valley, and almost 7,000 at Big Sandy. Total, just short of 17,000.

THAT BRINGS US UP TO RIGHT NOW!

Once again, we have had to face the problem of GROWING PAINS! WHERE can we go, NOW?

Some sixty days ago we thought of a way to build the BIG BOWL we have talked about for the last three years or so, at Big Sandy. The idea was to span a roof over a natural BOWL depressed in the ground, just north of the old former Highway 80. It could be done. In fact the Behlen people now have plans drawn for a VAST, GIGANTIC structure, covering 44 acres -- yes, that's correct -- FORTY-FOUR ACRES -- under one roof, without a pillar or post! It would contain a horse race track, a

football field, a baseball field, and, over to one side, a stadium seating 78,000 beside. It would be 1,600 feet long and 1,200 feet wide. IT COULD BE DONE! Of course nothing like it ever has been done -- YET.

We even had found a way we could finance the building of our great bowl, to seat 150,000 under one roof. But after much counsel together, and prayer for guidance, we concluded it was not practical.

It is one thing to TALK about "all of us being TOGETHER, in ONE PLACE." That sounds nice -- but, brethren, we came to realize that we simply WOULD NOT BE "ALL together." A city of 150,000 population is not a big town -- it is a real CITY. How many people do you see, and know, and actually visit and fellowship with, in a city of 150,000? You'd have a terrible time searching out some one you know -- almost like hunting a needle in a haystack! And how about HOUSING, and FEEDING? How about enough WATER? How about SEWAGE DISPOSAL? No, brethren, God has shown us it would be altogether TOO MANY in one place -- altogether impractical!

So, what God led us to decide as a PERMANENT SOLUTION of our great problem of growing attendance is this:

We are going to try to jam ourselves in like sardines, this one Festival, this coming fall (1964), in the same three places as last fall. We will be overcrowded, but we feel we can do it.

Then, by the fall of 1965 -- NEXT year -- we will have ready a big new tabernacle at Big Sandy, approximately TWICE the size of the present one -- one that will seat 15,000. We will then turn the present big tabernacle into an enlarged DINING HALL, just as we turned our first tabernacle into a dining hall when we outgrew it.

The present dining hall building is already under process of an entire rejuvenation, and will be turned into the new auditorium, dining hall, and lounge for the new COLLEGE. After this present year, it will not be used for the Feast of Tabernacles, but will be one of our main COLLEGE BUILDINGS. The present tabernacle will serve the college as a gymnasium and Physical Education Building -- used also by the Imperial Schools.

The giant NEW tabernacle will take care of the increased attendance for 1965 and, we hope, 1966. If we increase by only 30% each year, we would expect 22,000 this year -- 1964, and about 28,600 next year -- 1965, and 37,200 in 1966. This is an increase of about 15,200 over the expected attendance this fall.

Brethren, when you figure a 30% increase every year, the figure becomes almost frightening, as we approach the 1970s! And, actually, we have averaged a great deal MORE than 30% per year increase. From 1953, through 1958 when we first met in the NEW tabernacle, at Big Sandy, the increase averaged 40% per year. Since we have been in the new big tabernacle, however, the increase was, for 1959, 37.5%; for 1960, 33%; for 1961, 39%; for 1962, 30%; and for 1963, 30%.

So WHERE DO WE GO, after 1966? We have decided on the following policy: We will search out and purchase favorable sites, as God guides us, at certain locations CLOSE TO one of our Churches, where a local Church could meet there every Sabbath. Preferably this should be a location where three or four other Churches are close enough for all to meet together for the Feast of Unleavened Bread (and Passover). On each of these sites, as increased Feast of Tabernacles attendance makes necessary, we will erect a Behlen tabernacle to seat 10,000 (that's 2,000 more than our present Big Sandy tabernacle will seat); and also a dining hall of the same type construction -- or, possibly, just the kitchen for a dining hall, with a large dining TENT to be pitched adjoining this kitchen if that proves more practical.

Under this system each tabernacle would be the home of a local Church, and would be used throughout the year. Preferably these locations should be in the South, where possible -- in a warmer climate.

Under this policy, BIG SANDY would always be the number one location, as we feel it should be. If, on the other hand, God sees fit to open to us more places like Squaw Valley or Jekyll Island, where facilities are already provided, we will lease those instead of building these 10,000-seat tabernacles of our own. But, if there are no more such places already existing -- and we know of none at this time -- then we will build these tabernacles.

At this writing, we expect, based on past experience, attendance figures for the future as follows -- approximately:

1964 attendance - 22,000

1968 attendance - 62,900

1965

"

- 28,600

1969

"

- 81,800

1966

"

- 37,200

1970

"

- 106,300

1967

"

- 48,400

1971

"

- 138,200

If our present three locations will hold 22,000 this year, and, with the new 15,000-seat tabernacle, 37,200 in 1966 -- and if we cannot find any more places we can lease, like Squaw Valley, and must build these 10,000-seat tabernacles at selected locations, then there would have to be TEN such locations and 10,000-seat tabernacles built by 1971 to provide for the United States and Canadian members.

Meanwhile, our British and European brethren have outgrown Hayling Island where they have met the past two years, and we have selected a new larger site in Wales for this autumn. They had just a few under 1,000 last autumn. They are now growing at about 40% a year. Australia the same way. Everywhere we face serious PROBLEMS!

Now, brethren HOW ARE WE GOING TO FINANCE THE BUILDING OF THIS GIANT NEW 15,000-SEAT TABERNACLE AT BIG SANDY -- AND THE OTHERS TO FOLLOW? The new double-size tabernacle will cost about the same as we paid for our present one -- about a half million dollars.

God has shown us the way! We can spend second tithe ONLY FOR THESE ANNUAL FESTIVALS! We CANNOT spend it for any other purpose!

But until now, TREMENDOUS sums, from the second tithe of all of us, have been spent with the world -- irretrievable to God's Church. Motel, hotel owners -- restaurant owners, have been enriched while we continue to wonder HOW CAN WE PROVIDE A PLACE FOR GOD'S PEOPLE TO ENJOY THE FEAST?

But God has shown us how! He has opened the way to provide really CHEAP housing in the form of tents and camping equipment. He has shown us how to save additional thousands by many more of us cooking our own food, or eating our

meals in the dining facilities at the various Feast locations!

By making these savings, and by simply cutting down a little on our Feast expenditures, we CAN save multiple THOUSANDS of dollars -- RESCUING this money from the world, and putting it to work building permanent buildings for the Festivals!

Just as each of us is enabled to buy our own FAMILY-sized "booth" or "tabernacle" from the second tithe, God is showing us how to purchase HUGE tabernacles for the WHOLE family of His people -- and do it from SECOND TITHE! This means we can build BIG tabernacles, for thousands of us, but with ABSOLUTELY NO FINANCIAL DRAIN ON THE WORLD-WIDE WORK OF PREACHING THE GOSPEL!

Think of it, brethren! By more and more of us purchasing tents and camping equipment, cooking our own meals in our tents, and finding other ways to SAVE a little of our second tithe, we can all put TEN PER CENT of our SECOND TITHE (which CANNOT BE SPENT FOR ANY OTHER PURPOSE BUT THE ANNUAL FEASTS) into building BIG "booths" for ALL of us! This money MAY be spent for this purpose. It CANNOT be spent for broadcasting, college expenses, printing, or any operating expense! Our second tithe MUST BE SPENT ON THESE FESTIVALS!

Remember, however, this money will NOT be coming ONLY from those who purchase TENTS! ONLY A CERTAIN PERCENTAGE will be able to live in tents.

But by watching our expenses a little more closely, by being CAREFUL, and yet not going to the extreme of cutting out real necessities, we CAN rescue many thousands of dollars from the world -- and save it for the PERMANENT enjoyment of ALL of God's people! This TEN PER CENT of second tithe will not be coming ONLY from those who buy tents, and are thus able to save on housing costs, but from ALL of us, brethren, whose hearts are WILLING, and who REJOICE that God has opened a way to PERMANENTLY solve this GIGANTIC problem or growth!

Mr. Portune, our Business Manager, has carefully figured. The second tithe of all our members last autumn, amounted to two and a half million dollars. It should be over three million by this coming Festival. Ten per cent OF that 10% should put into this special TABERNACLE FUND more than \$300,000 by February NEXT year, and should pay for the \$500,000 tabernacle by the following September.

As the membership grows, requiring more tabernacles, the tenth of the second tithe money will grow in exact proportion. It will total, CUMULATIVELY, about seven and a half million dollars in the next seven years. Thus it seems GOD has provided the way to solve the problem of providing a PLACE in future years for the Feast of Tabernacles!

Therefore, as CHRIST'S Minister, directly under Him in authority over His Church, I do now call on EVERY MEMBER to send in, immediately, marked FESTIVAL FUND, a tenth of your second tithe since the last Festival -- and I would appreciate it very much, if you will estimate the total amount of your second tithe for the whole year, up to this next Feast of Tabernacles, and send in NOW this tenth of this whole year's second tithe. Or, in any event, send in a tenth of your second tithe on the first of each month, or on your pay day.

This, remember, is entirely APART FROM, and IN ADDITION TO, your SPECIAL free-will offerings for the college BUILDING FUND -- and over and above your FIRST tithes, and regular offerings.

I have made this a long letter. THESE ARE VERY IMPORTANT MATTERS and I want you to understand them THOROUGHLY. I'm sure you understand that this calling for a levy of a tenth of your SECOND tithe is NOT asking you to make any sacrifice whatsoever. God COMMANDS every member to save a SECOND TITHE -- that is, a second TEN PER CENT of his entire actual net income. It is NOT figured on "take-home pay" after Federal income tax has been withheld by an employer -- but is figured on the SAME total net income on which the government income tax is figured.

All of you should have been saving this, anyway. If you haven't, you should start IMMEDIATELY. Of course this second tithe forces God's people to spend less through the year on amusements and entertainments. We have our really BIG time of enjoyment at these wonderful Festivals. Of course, this assessing of a tenth of your second tithe may cause some of you to be a little less lavish in spending money on yourself at the Feast. But I am informed that some of you are spending too lavishly at the Feasts.

God DOES tell us to spend liberally to ENJOY His Festivals -- but NOTHING should EVER be done to EXCESS, brethren. And some few of you have been guilty of doing that. But I know we shall all receive great JOY in being able, in this way, to

provide the PLACES for the Feasts as we grow larger and larger every year.

By this time, MOST of God's people should have, already saved, about FIFTY PER CENT of their total second tithe. If you have been obeying God, in setting aside this fund for YOURSELF, to make YOUR Festival MORE ENJOYABLE -- then it will be a simple matter for you to send in your TEN PER CENT of this fund NOW -- without delay!

You should take a few moments to calculate, on the basis of what you have earned until NOW, and on the basis of your past Feast expenses, the sum total you will have available for this fall Feast. Then take TEN PER CENT of that amount, and send it to Headquarters IMMEDIATELY -- labeling it FESTIVAL FUND! Remember, brethren -- we CANNOT spend this money on ANYTHING ELSE EXCEPT GOD'S FESTIVALS! But PRIOR to this time, a great deal of money has had to come right out of regular OPERATING expense -- right from the money it takes to send the Gospel around the world, in order to prepare for a place to observe the Festivals! God's WORK has had to foot the bills so we could enjoy these FINE locations for the Feasts. What a wonderful BLESSING to His work it is -- to open a way so we can LIFT this extra burden, and without really seriously hurting our own enjoyment of the Feast!

God is blessing us beyond our fondest dreams. Let us REJOICE!

With much LOVE, in Jesus' name,

Herbert W. Armstrong