

"The PLAIN TRUTH"
a magazine of understanding
Pasadena, California 91123

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Dear PLAIN TRUTH Subscriber:

This letter comes from the Founder and Editor in Chief. I want personally to tell you some very unusual facts about this unique mass-circulation magazine -- and I feel the finest and most valuable. There are some amazing facts concerning this magazine, blazing a new trail utterly unlike any other publication.

WHY so different? WHY such high quality of editorship, such excellence in color, typography, such worldwide coverage of important happenings, AND NO SUBSCRIPTION PRICE and no advertising revenue? One might suppose some very wealthy corporation with unlimited funds started and maintains it as a philanthropic enterprise.

Yet on the contrary I myself started it without funding of any sort, and utterly without capital. In fact there was no money. The PLAIN TRUTH was started on a borrowed mimeograph, with stencils cut on a borrowed typewriter. There was not then -- in February 1934 -- any public appeal for contributions or financial aid, and there has been none to this day.

When I was a boy 18 years old I read a book by Orison Swett Marden captioned He Can Who Thinks He Can. I had the gumption to believe that. The PLAIN TRUTH, like the proverbial grain of mustard seed, started the very smallest and has grown to one of the earth's largest. It started on faith with diligence and hard work and vision. After unusual success in the commercial world, the Great Depression had swept everything economically away. But I had found the TRUTH. I had come to understand why in this 20th century the world is making such awesome progress and, yet paradoxically, at the same time experiencing such appalling and accelerating evils. I wanted to make the truth PLAIN. That's why this magazine is called The PLAIN TRUTH.

But let me explain why this magazine is unique in refusing to charge a subscription price. My earlier experience in the world of business (incidentally it was in national magazines and newspapers) -- kept me in constant personal contact with the most successful chief executives of America's largest industrial corporations and major banks of Chicago and New York. I learned from them the laws of success that led them to the top. I learned to view human problems from a practical and rational approach. But later I learned the cause of the paradox of world troubles and unsolvable evils from the world's best-selling and least understood book -- the Bible. It gave me much new UNDERSTANDING, which I wished to share with the many. I admit it took FAITH and perseverance, but this most unusual magazine has after more than 50 years become one of the largest-circulated magazines on earth, and, many believe, the most valuable and the finest of major magazines.

But how is such a fine and expensively produced magazine financed? And WHY NO SUBSCRIPTION PRICE? There is a biblical admonition, "Buy the truth, but sell it not." The PLAIN TRUTH is just that -- the TRUTH made plain, clear and understandable. The PLAIN TRUTH gives you the true meaning behind today's world news and in that regard it is a NEWS magazine. It brings you the truth about life and the real purpose of life. It opens to your understanding the truth about world happenings, their causes, and where they are leading. It gives understanding of family life, which is the very foundation of a stable and happy society. So I felt from the inception of this publication that there could be no subscription price.

How, then, could it be financed? It was started on faith and has continued on faith. That very fact meant that it started very small -- 350 copies the first issue February 1934 -- and its growth necessarily was slow. But its expansion continued. Frankly it had to start and continue by the voluntary contributions and support of its readers -- but we have held fast to the policy that we could not ask or solicit readers or the public for financial support. As I said, this necessarily meant a slow and gradual growth. It is now over half a century from that most humble beginning. Uncounted thousands and now even millions have received The PLAIN TRUTH -- many for years -- but have never received any solicitation or request for contributions in any way.

Yes, that is surely UNIQUE -- you never heard of anything like it before.

No wealthy commercial corporation finances or even contributes to the financing of The PLAIN TRUTH. And from the heart we sincerely do not want even the millions of subscribers who have never contributed a cent to feel any obligation to do so unless they honestly feel they want to do so. After more than 50 years we do now have some thousands of regular contributors whom we call co-workers, so that we can afford to send such a fine magazine to the millions. These voluntary co-workers are most happy to make it possible for the millions (now nearly eight million) to receive this priceless publication without subscription price. This explanation is not a solicitation, but we feel you are entitled to know the truth about our policy.

The editorial writing staff consists of competent, well- trained, experienced writers, informed in their respective fields. They travel to the far corners of the earth to keep abreast of world happenings. We spare no expense to produce for you the finest publication on earth. I myself was a writer for a national magazine in my early life. I have written a booklet, based on contacts with many of the most successful executives of major corporations and banks, on The Seven Laws of Success. Every one can be a success in life. None need ever be a failure. All who have succeeded have followed these basic laws that work as surely as the law of gravity. Thousands have found this booklet not only helpful and TRUE, but very interesting as well. I'd like to send you a free copy with my compliments.

Also, since we approach the Christmas season you may have, also free, my booklet on The Plain Truth About Christmas. It is a shocker and an eye-opener. Few seem to know how Christmas started. It was observed by pagan religions many hundred years before the Christ child was born. The facts are astonishing, and you can verify them in encyclopedias and ancient history textbooks. I was amused at an English lady who wrote in a magazine, "I Hate Christmas!" She hastened to explain, "Lest I have the entire clergy of the country damning me to perdition because of the above title, let me say that this is not an attack on ... Christmas, but rather a plea against it's overwhelming commercialism and a stand against the hypocrisy which surrounds it."

She then proceeded to voice the same weary complaints that you hear so many housewives, businessmen and store clerks give vent to during this time of year.

She marveled that a world so filled with killing and war could pause for a few hours to mouth "peace on earth," and then go back to the business of killing within moments.

She said, "I hate Christmas for all the sham and pretense and hypocritical cant that purrs along with office parties, business soirees, and end-of-the-year gatherings where praise is insincere and promises as unsubstantial as pie crusts come January 2."

This writer felt most Christmas spirit came from a bottle -- and dreaded the commercialism of lot-bought Christmas cards and jostling crowds with pushing shoulders and hungry hands.

She hated Christmas for its soaring accounts, wearing shopping trips and economic hangover. She said, "Today, in the name of Christmas, we have terrifying grocery bills, tremendous butcher's bills, ridiculous toy bills, frightening florist's bills ... (and are) in the red for six months."

Also a man once said, "I wonder what people would think of a birthday party where the man's best friends all came with birthday gifts, and then exchanged those gifts among themselves, with nothing for the friend whose birthdate they were celebrating." Well, maybe that's this world.

Every year I offer our subscribers some special booklet, gratis with my compliments, and this year I offer you these two special booklets.

THANK YOU for being a PLAIN TRUTH subscriber, and with very best wishes.

With much love, in Jesus' name.

Herbert W. Armstrong