

Apostasy

By Herbert W Armstrong

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Greetings once again, everybody. Well, last Sabbath I had a big audience; and I would say it was bigger than our audience today comparatively for the place where it was held, because it was held in Nassau (one of the islands just a little ways east of Florida). We are not on the air there. I think we have not been on the air there, and yet these people: We have, I think, a few hundred Plain Truth subscribers there; and they've heard us from radio stations coming in from other islands or perhaps from Miami; and I think most of them were members. There were 150 there, and really that was quite a large attendance considering.

Now I'm expecting to return to Nassau for a campaign -- a three-night campaign, let me see, two weeks from tomorrow. I'll be there for another week of interviews, perhaps some dinners of important people, perhaps another radio interview. They don't have television there, so it won't be on television. There just isn't any.

I'm leaving tomorrow morning for Paris. I leave ... Well, I'll arrive there early the next morning because, when we leave here, it's already (remember) nine hours later there. So when we leave here early in the morning, it's almost evening there when we leave. I'll be there overnight, and then on to Israel where we have the long, long awaited and anticipated testimonial dinner coming up that same night of the day that I arrive. I'll be there a couple of other days, and then on to Cairo.

My son, Garner Ted, has just been in Cairo. Perhaps you heard a broadcast from there this week. But I'm having another testimonial dinner there, and this will be the fourth one. Each time we have a different group in attendance among the more prominent people in higher offices in government, and more important people in industry and commerce, and education, and the leading people of that country -- Egypt.

Then, from there, back to London; and I hope, two weeks from today, to be in Bricket Wood. I see my son, Garner Ted, was there either last Sabbath or the Sabbath before I guess. I think Dr. Hoeh is there now, and all reports that I have from there are that things seem to be reasonably solid under all of the circumstances.

SHALL BE SAVED (PLAY FROM 3:49)

I'm glad that, in the sermonette this morning, the 13th verse was mentioned in Matthew 24, as well as the 14th. Now the 14th refers to what we are doing. That's about us, and I wonder if God didn't put the 13th verse in there ahead of it just so that it would attract our attention.

It reminds me of something that happened when I was speaking out at the little school house eight miles west of Eugene, Oregon -- in the series, or the campaign, that raised up the parent Church of this Era of the Church of God. We had a heckler there. He came quite often. In fact, there were more than one; but there was one in particular who was a repeater, and he came a number of times. One of the questions he heckled me with, he said, "May I ask you a question?" His name was Belshaw; and I said, "Yes, Mr. Belshaw, you may." He said, "Have you been saved, Mr. Armstrong?" I said, "Mr. Belshaw, do you not know what Christ said as recorded in Matthew 24 verse 13? "*He that endureth unto the end, the same shall be saved.*" And he looked rather foolish, because he was expecting to quote that to me if I said I was already saved. Of course, I knew that, and that's something that we should remember.

That same man came frequently. He didn't attend every night at all. I was holding these services, at that time, six nights a week; and I think it lasted about six weeks, or perhaps as many as eight weeks. Anyway, finally, after the meetings were over and the Church had been formed ... We were, at that time, meeting out at another school (a country, one-room school house) four miles farther out. He came and attended one time, and he kept still until the service was dismissed. People were starting to leave when he piped up his voice and said, "Mr. Armstrong, may I ask you a question?" Those who were at the door, ready to go out, all came back. This was getting interesting, and it had happened a number of times.

He said, "Mr. Armstrong, have I not heard you say that the apostle Paul did not shun to declare unto the Gentiles the entire gospel?" "Yes, I perhaps have said that. The Bible says it." "Have you not said the apostle Paul held back nothing that was profitable for them?" "Yes, I probably have." "All right now, Mr. Armstrong, can you show me where the apostle Paul taught them -- the Gentiles -- that they must keep the Sabbath?" Oh, he thought he had me now!

I said, "Yes, sir, Mr. Belshaw. I can. But before I give you that answer, when I give it and show you that the apostle Paul told the Gentiles to keep the Sabbath, will you finally surrender and keep it yourself?" He hesitated a minute or two. He was very troubled. He said, "No, I won't." and he walked out. So I told the rest I would give them the answer anyway, since he walked out.

He told the Gentiles "*Be ye followers of me as I follow Christ.*" Christ kept the Sabbath, as His custom was. The apostle Paul kept the Sabbath as his manner was. He told the Gentiles to follow his example. That was teaching them to keep it. Well, he didn't wait for that answer.

NEW TESTAMENT PROPHECIES (PLAY FROM 8:04)

Anyway, I want to say something this morning about this thing of enduring to the end, because there are a number of scriptures on that very subject; and salvation will not come unless you do remember that scripture and obey it. So this afternoon I want to get back to prophecy once again. Now not just prophecy of world events this time (usually, that's what prophecy means to us) but this time events that have to do with God's Church.

As in the prophecies of world events (and the Bible has many of those), there is virtually nothing that was prophesied to occur between the First Century (the time of the apostles and Christ) until now -- except what we find in the 2nd chapter of Revelation, to the Churches that are mentioned there. Let me see, four of them.

Now, Revelation 2 and the 3rd chapter of Revelation are dealing with the seven Churches. Let's get one thing straight, and this is something I've been saying for the last 42 years; and many do not realize I've been saying it. They are speaking of seven successive Churches or seven successive **eras** of the one Church. But, at the same time, they are speaking of the seven **dominant conditions** that would be found in the Church of every era. So the things that you find in the Church at Ephesus really do apply to us now, the same as they did to them then. The difference is that what is mentioned in the Philadelphia Era dominates at this time, and what is mentioned in the message to the Church of Ephesus dominated back in the beginning of the Church.

Then, besides that, in Matthew 24 for example (and, of course, Mark 13 and Luke 21 are just, you might say, a different reporter's account of the same prophecy of Jesus). It speaks there of, well, of the apostasy -- of false ministers deceiving the people. In other words, of the fact that they would come with another gospel; and that the gospel that Jesus Christ brought -- His message -- would not be preached. It would be sabotaged. And then of famine and pestilence, of wars; and there have been continuing wars all through. Now most of those things they were having then, and we have had them continuously -- apparently with a great sudden upswing now at the time of the end, which is occurring.

Then, the next thing to happen (the one thing that Jesus said would be the sign that we are at the end and prior to His Second Coming) would be what we read in verse 14 -- that "*this gospel OF THE KINGDOM shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end [of this age] come [after that has happened].*"

That is referred to, in the Bible, as "*the day of the Lord*" in over 30 different prophecies. In other words, we have been in (you might call it) "*the day of man.*" Or perhaps you could just as accurately call it "*the day of Satan*" because it is the day of man cut off from God primarily, but swayed by Satan (who is the

god of this world). Some people, I think, tell you what "God" wants done; and the only thing is that they have the wrong god. They mean Satan.

Then after this ... and, you see, the getting of this message out to the world has already taken 42 years. So it isn't something that just happens in one day. It's a continuous thing for quite a while. It takes a long time to get this job done. The next thing that is foretold there is the Great Tribulation. Then comes what really is "the day of the Lord," and that is the time when God supernaturally intervenes in this world's affairs.

In other words, God (so to speak) just adopted a hands-off policy; and told humanity "Go ahead. Form your own governments. Decide for yourself what is right and what is wrong." When Adam and Eve ... when mother Eve took and Adam took it with her, of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, they **took to themselves** the knowledge (or the production of the knowledge) of what is right and what is wrong, what is good and what is evil.

Now the law of God determines that, and God had just been teaching them about that. I know that He did, even though it isn't recorded, for the simple reason that for the violation of that law He pronounced the death sentence upon them. And He could not have done that if He had not explained to them THE LAW whose penalty He was telling them would happen to them on violation. I know that God taught Adam and Eve a great many things that are not recorded at all, because in the first 11 chapters of the Bible it just skips over and gives us the barest outline, hitting only the high spots.

We don't get down to specific details, or history, or anything of that kind until we come to the 12th chapter of Genesis and it begins about Abraham. Then, when we get down to the life of Abraham, and Isaac and Jacob and Joseph, and then later the children of Israel descended from them (and from Abraham), then we get into more detail in the history of the Old Testament scriptures.

GOD'S CHURCH NOW (PLAY FROM 14:55)

But the thing that is prophesied for now is precisely what God has raised this Church up to do, and that is the reason He called you! Also now, let's come to a prophecy in the 12th chapter of the book of Revelation; and beginning now with verse 7. Speaking here it has carried the time of the old apostasy, the beginning of the Church, a flight of the Church (so to speak) underground, which it did through the Middle Ages -- 1260 years. Then we come to verse 7, and this gets down to our time:

Revelation 12:7 And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels.

Now that's speaking of the angels which sinned, as you will read of in II Peter. Let's see, that's the 2nd or 3rd chapter of II Peter.

Revelation 12:7-9 ... and the dragon fought and his angels, (8) and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. (9) And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan.

You don't have to worry about who the dragon is; and don't try to make up something in your imagination that the dragon is a symbol for something else, because it tells us very plainly here:

*Revelation 12:9 ... the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and [also called] Satan, which **deceiveth the whole world**.*

Now when the Bible says the whole world, it means the whole world! That is, the world as a whole.

Revelation 12:9-10 He was cast out into the earth, and his angels [who are now demons] were cast out with him. (10) And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God ...

That only comes with the Second Coming of Christ. So this is just preceding that. Now Jesus said in Matt 24, and they asked Him for a sign about His coming and so that they would know that we are getting near to that time -- it was a time when this gospel of the Kingdom would be preached, because it hadn't been for 18 ½ centuries.

Revelation 12:10-12 ... for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, [Don't accuse any of God's brethren. That is something Satan is doing. You'll be doing Satan's job for him, if you do that.]which accused them before our God day and night. (11) And they over came him by the blood of the Lamb [which is Christ], and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. [They were willing to risk their lives for the truth, which was more precious to them than even this mortal life.] (12) Therefore rejoice ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! For the devil is come down unto you, having GREAT WRATH [He is very angry right now.] because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.

Now how does he know that? He knows that because he knows what this Church is doing. He knows what I am doing, and what Garner Ted is doing, and what this Church is backing us in doing -- getting the gospel of the Kingdom, which he has kept from the world; but now getting that announced all over the world, and that it is coming. Its time is very near.

Revelation 12:13-14 And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child. [In other words, that was Israel. But the Israel of now in the New Testament time is the Church of God; a spiritual Israel, so to speak.] (14) And to the woman [Now meaning the Church.]were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time [Now this time that will be a mere 3 ½ years, not a day for a year as it

was through the Middle Ages when the Church of that time did flee for 1260 years.] *from the face of the serpent.*

So this Church (and you'll read of this in the 3rd chapter of Revelation, where it speaks of this era of the Church specifically) -- IF we endure to the end, IF we are faithful, IF we are back of this job that God wants done -- we are going to be taken; and it says here "fly." Now, in the Middle Ages, speaking of the Church going to a place of safety, they fled. That implies they went afoot. Now whether it means anything or not, it does say "fly" this time. And there is the promise that, if we are faithful in getting this message to the world as a witness for all nations, that we will not have to go through this terrible Great Tribulation.

GOD'S INSTRUCTION REJECTED (PLAY FROM 20:49)

Now I want you to remember always that after Adam had rejected the Kingdom of God ... When he was first created, God told him about His own government -- God's government. He told him about the Kingdom of God. He explained to him he could be **born of God**, that the Kingdom of God is a Family; that God is a Family. God IS that Family, not just one person. The Father in heaven, whom Jesus prayed to and told us to pray to, is the Father of that Family. He called Christ His beloved Son. Christ called Him His Father. We are to pray to Him and call Him our Father, but we pray in the name and by the authority of Jesus Christ.

When Adam rejected the Kingdom of God, which he had a chance to rule because right there was also the Tree of Life. That tree was the symbol of the Spirit of God. If he had obeyed God (and he didn't have to repent at that time, because he hadn't done anything wrong yet: This was while God was still speaking to him, and before Satan encountered him.) he could have received the Spirit of the Living God, which would have impregnated him with immortal Life, and as a son of the Living God. But he didn't.

Now, if we are going to rule in the place of Satan, we have to meet him. We have to reject his way of life. We are meeting him; and he is getting to us, and he is getting to us every day.

God made man with a physical brain. But in order that we could have a mind like God (although inferior, of course, at this time), He put within each of us a spirit -- that spirit essence, not a spirit person or being at all. But that spirit in man does impart to the physical brain the power of intellect that no animal has. Animals have brains PRECISELY like the human brain. Three of them have larger brains -- the elephant and the ... Well, I don't know whether the shark does. But the elephant, and the dolphin, and the whale -- and their brains, in quality, are right on the par with man. If man's brain is 100%, theirs are up in probably the late 90s. But the superiority of the human brain is thousands of times, not just 1 or 2% out of a hundred. The only way you can possibly account for it, even

scientifically, is to accept the truth that there is in the human brain **a non-physical component** that is not present in the animal brain.

Now let's just remember that Adam had to meet Satan, because this earth had been originally populated by angels. God had put here a super archangel, a cherub whose name was Lucifer. He was the absolute maximum of a type of being that God could create. It's impossible to create anyone higher. However, just by creation -- and giving him a mind, giving him the power to think, to reason; equipping him with very great knowledge, and letting him use that knowledge in thinking, and reasoning, and in drawing his own conclusions, in making his own decisions, in making his own choices. He couldn't have had personality, he couldn't have been a real being, without that; and so God did equip him with all of that.

LAW OF LOVE (PLAY FROM 25:40)

Now God also created two other super archangels, and apparently they have never misused their thinking processes; but this Lucifer did, and he took all of his angels with him. He convinced them also to rebel against the government of God.

Now the government of God is based on the law of God. All government is based on law. You don't know of any government (from the smallest village up to the largest nation) that is not based on A LAW, a basic law. God's law is just L-O-V-E, the word "love." God Himself is said to be LOVE, and love is an outgoing concern for the good of others.

This Lucifer didn't like that way of life because it also meant humility, and it meant the giving way (instead of the getting and the taking way). It meant submission to God, who is over all as our Creator. He is also our Ruler. But He rules with His government, and His government is based on this law of love. God has love for us, but we are to have love for Him and for neighbor.

That law, as applied to human beings, is love first to God and secondly (the second great law) "*Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.*" The first four of the Ten Commandments tell us how to love God in general principle, and the last six in general principle tell us how to love our neighbor.

Then Christ came and magnified the law He said, for example, you have heard that "*Ye shall not commit adultery;*" but He said, if a man even looks on a woman to lust after her, he has committed adultery already in his heart. In other words, by the spirit; applying the **principle** and the **spirit** of the law, it goes much further than just the mere letter.

So God's law and government had been removed from the earth because Lucifer and his angels all went into rebellion; and (instead of God's law of love and cooperation, of serving, of helping, of sharing) they adopted the way of vanity, exalting the self above God (and not God above the self), the way of lust and

greed, the way of opposition, of competition and strife, the way of jealousy and envy, the way of resentment and bitterness, and essentially wanting to get even and to hurt the other fellow. That is the way that was adopted by Satan and his angels (that are now demons), because the former Lucifer had his name changed. He was no longer a bringer of light and truth as he had been, and that is the meaning of the word Lucifer. Now he is Satan, which means adversary, or enemy, or competitor; and that's what he is now.

GOD'S GREAT PURPOSE (PLAY FROM 29:28)

God had put the angels here for a very great purpose; but they had to do something to this earth first, and qualify. Then they would have been used in developing other planets all over the vast endless universe. But they didn't even develop this country. They wrecked it and ruined it. They perverted everything they could get to.

Angels are spirit beings. The earth is made of matter. And God put those spirit beings on a round earth of matter. They shouted with joy when God first created it. It was so beautiful! It was so perfect! It was such a wonderful opportunity! But they wanted to do what God was going to let them do. They wanted that all right. But they didn't want to do it God's way. They didn't want to do it in a way of love, and obedience to God, a lawful way of peace. As long as God's government ruled over them, with Lucifer on the throne of this earth, there was peace on earth. Wonderful peace! There was joy and happiness, shouting for joy (as you read in Job).

But they turned and tried to get it the other way. Instead, they perverted this earth. (And you'll find that described in the 2nd chapter of Genesis. The 1st chapter of Genesis and the 2nd verse I mean.) The earth was in a state of confusion; and it was waste and empty, and covered with darkness, with a watery fluid surface.

Now, in the 104th Psalm, you will read how God sends forth His Spirit; and then He renews the face of the earth; (104th Psalm, verse 30.) And in the second chapter of Genesis -- I've read that so many times I'm not going back over it because I don't want to be here until midnight. And so in the 2nd verse of the 1st chapter of Genesis it shows the state of the earth. Darkness was over the deep, or the watery ocean surface. Then:

Genesis 1:3 God said ...

Now, the One who spoke was the One who later became Christ. You read in John 1 and verse 1, in the New Testament:

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

John 1:3 [And] All things were made by him: and without him was not any thing made that was made.

That is the One who became Christ. Originally, so far as God has revealed, there were only the Two in the Family of God. Later the One who was the Word became a human being; and God became His Father, because They have no human father. So He was a Son of God; but He also was a Son of man, born of the virgin Mary.

And so God saw what had happened to the earth. God knew that there was only one being, or type of being, on the earth that would never violate His law. In other words, would never sin. Sin is the transgression of that WAY. That law is **a way of life**. It's the way of love. It's the way of sharing, of serving, of helping. It's the way of humility. It's not like manmade laws. Manmade laws are not a way of life of character development. God's law is.

EFFECTS OF THE ANGELS' SIN (PLAY FROM 33:37)

Anyway, they had perverted themselves in their minds. They had now disqualified themselves. God wanted the entire universe developed. As a result of what they did, the planets all over the universe {1}became like our moon. It's waste and empty. It's just a hulk of nothing. There could be no life there.

Life cannot exist there except for a very temporary time, like some of our astronauts did; but they had to take with them oxygen from the earth. If they had taken off the suit that they were wearing, they would either been burned to a crisp or they would have frozen instantly, whichever. I understand that at night it is so cold on the moon that it would freeze you instantly. In the daytime, it's so hot it would burn you to a crisp. They had to wear spacesuits that kept all those temperatures off, and they had their own oxygen inside to breathe. They had to take what it takes to sustain human life; they had to take it from this earth.

You might wonder, why did they want to go up there for? You know, I've received many letters of congratulation for making the first step on the moon, because the man who did had my name; but he was a different Armstrong. His name is Neil, and mine isn't.

Now that Satan had been disqualified to carry on the government of God, which he had rejected -- and the government of God had been taken from the earth -- anyone who was going to succeed him had to meet him, and **reject** his way, and **accept** God's way and God's government.

Adam had that chance. He was the first Adam. He didn't do it. The second Adam, who was Christ, did! Now I want to just go way ahead of myself for a moment, and go back here to the 2nd chapter of {2}Revelation (and I'm jumping way ahead now.) and beginning with verse 26 and verse 27, where Jesus Himself said:

*Revelation 2:26-27 And he that overcometh [What do we have to overcome? Satan, and your own self, and what he puts inside of you.] and keepeth my works **unto the end** [there it is, enduring unto the end again.] to him will I give power over the nations: (27) And he shall rule them with a rod of iron.*

QUALIFYING TO RULE (PLAY FROM 36:53)

Christ had to QUALIFY to become the King in the place of king Lucifer. If we are going to sit with Him on His throne, **we too have to qualify!** Do you ever wonder why it is God is only calling a very few now? I've told you that again, and again, and again; and I know, if I ask you, you'll say "Sure, I know it." And yet you take it for granted God is trying to convert everybody on earth now don't you? Without thinking you do. You know better. I'm trying to get all of you to really realize it so much that you never assume anything else.

But so much of Protestantism has rubbed off on us that we think a good deal like Protestants do. "This is the time God is desperately trying to get everybody saved, and the devil is trying to get them lost." Now you know, if you think a minute, that can't be true! Otherwise, Satan is more powerful than God. He's winning that battle. But there isn't any such contest going on at all! This is not a time God is trying to save the world. The parable, just read to you in the sermonette, shows you that the overwhelming majority never receives the Word; and, if they do, it chokes them immediately and they never go on.

It's a very few, and it's only those that God calls. If you have been called and converted, that's a miracle! And Jesus Christ said none could come to Him except the Father has drawn them. Other scriptures will show you that, if He has, you have been **predestinated** since before the foundation of the world. God knew that you would be born, and had you selected and picked out; but He CALLED US **TO GET A JOB DONE!** More about that a little later, and I've already said it so many times that I hope maybe I'll get everybody to understand it and believe it some of these days.

Anyway, let's see. Revelation 3:21 here:

Revelation 3:21 To him that overcometh [And, again, it's overcoming Satan and his way; and accepting the way of God, and the law of God, and the government of God.] will I grant to sit with me on my throne.

Jesus had to **qualify!** He had to reject the way of Satan. He had to prove He would KEEP the way of God, and if He was going to rule with that law and reestablish the government of God on this earth. That is what will bring PEACE to this earth! And we'll never have peace until human nature is changed. You weren't born with human nature. God didn't create {3} Adam with human nature.

He created an archangel, Lucifer; but He didn't put any bad nature in him. He just gave him a mind. He gave him a lot of facts, a lot of knowledge; and he misused what God gave him. He had a wonderful opportunity. He was told

where he could go if he did the right thing, and he was told what would happen if he went the wrong way; but he didn't believe God.

And when God talked to Adam and Eve, they did NOT BELIEVE **what God said!** You not only have to believe on Christ, and believe that Jesus was the promised Messiah. That isn't enough. You have to **believe WHAT HE SAID!** He's the Word of God. It's His Word that is important. You know, there are millions that believe that Jesus was the Messiah today. And the Bible says even the devils, the demons, believe; but they tremble. They believe, but they don't obey. They believe that He, that Christ, is the Messiah; but they don't obey Him. They don't accept His Word.

You know, we need to get these things straight because it's very, very important; and your eternity is hanging on it. We are called for a job, and to get a job done. Now, Christ did qualify.

CHOOSING SATAN'S WAY (PLAY FROM 41:21)

But when Adam and Eve rejected God and God's law, and went Satan's way and chose THAT WAY -- they cut themselves off from God. So God said, "All right. You cut yourself off from Me, I'm going to just simply let you go the way you have chosen, and it's the way Satan was leading. You will see, in human life, that going this way -- of vanity and lust and greed, of jealousy and envy, of competition and strife, of resentment and bitterness and hatred and murder and violence -- that you are only going to bring **suffering** on humanity. You'll never have peace, because of the way you live."

I talk to the heads of governments all over this world. I don't use Bible language. I talk to them about their troubles and why. Why do they have the troubles they do? Because that's the way human beings are living. They are on the "get" way and not the "give" way. I put it in that kind of language, and they get it the message. They understand it, and they agree. I guess they think everybody else is on the "get" way and they are on the "give" way. Of course, that's not quite true. Everybody's thinking, no, it's the other guy who's going the wrong way. I guess that's human nature too. Maybe that came from Satan.

Anyhow, Satan is "*the prince of the power of the air;*" and he's broadcasting through that spirit that is in every one of us. He broadcasts not in words, not in sounds, but only in attitudes, impulses; feelings. You just suddenly feel a certain way, and you have a certain attitude and you begin to resent what someone did to you.

Many have sat right where you're sitting, or maybe over in the gymnasium or other places. They've heard this; even ministers. Yet they let bitterness and resentment come in and hook them on it; and they'll never get unhooked, because they don't want to. They won't repent. God would let them. God would easily grant them repentance, but they don't want it. You'll read that in Hebrews.

Once you have tasted of the truth of God, and of the Holy Spirit of God, and you have had these wonderful things -- and it's **A MIRACLE** if you've had the Holy Spirit; and once that miracle has happened, and that **great GIFT** has been given to you, and you TURN away from it, and you TURN to another belief, it's impossible to ever get you to repent and change your mind because you won't. And God's not going to make you, if you refuse. That's happened to even some ministers in this Church. I'm coming to that.

GOD'S 7,000-YEAR PLAN (PLAY FROM 44:34)

Anyway, God adopted a hands-off policy for 6,000 years. God has a purpose He's performing on this earth. The reason He put human beings here was because, when angels went wrong, he could not create any other angels greater; and He CANNOT create instantaneously by fiat this thing of **character!** That is something that has to be developed. God had it. The angels under Lucifer did not, and they went the wrong way.

The only way that God could provide enough beings to do what He wants done in the whole universe was **to reproduce Himself.** It had to be done out of matter, which can be subject to CHANGE because spirit will not change. We have to develop that character while we are composed of matter. Once we do, we die to be **resurrected spirit beings;** and it's all through the spirit that's within us.

Not many understand any of the things I am telling you. No other church on the face of the earth understands it. It's the Word of this Book -- the Bible. They don't understand the Bible. They don't believe it. It's what God says, and they don't believe what God says!

You know I was stunned, back here 49 years ago, when I read in Romans 6 and verse 23 I believe it is: "*The wages of sin is DEATH.*" You know I'd always been taught that I was an immortal soul, and that the penalty I'd get paid for sin ... And sin was going to the Matinee on Sunday, or going to a theatre at any time for that matter. So we kids, when we were about 12 or 13 years old, we had to sneak out and go to the Matinee on Sunday when our parents didn't know it, because the church said that was sin. Well, we wanted to sin!

I don't suppose any of you were like that? Maybe you're not human, but I can tell you I've been human. I have sinned, and sometimes I've thought I was the greatest of sinners. But I don't want to sin. Sometimes it's hard to go the other way. And I know that not only women can suffer birth pains; but men can -- now, believe it or not. It wasn't for the birth of another human being; but I have suffered birth pangs that this campus could be here, and that you could be here right now enjoying it. You didn't have to suffer that. I did it for you.

I had to suffer birth pangs that I could come into the truth and be able to give to you what you can get no other place on this earth. You'd better hang on to it! It's very precious, believe me. What God has in store for us is beyond the greatest imagination of your mind; and He wants to give it to us, but we've got our part. You don't earn it. You never could.

Anyway, God adopted a 7,000-year plan. The first 6,000 years He's keeping hands-off of the world primarily, and He's letting men go their own way, accepting the way of Satan, to show the results by human experience of 6,000 years. The experience has been going on, the lesson has been written; but nobody believes it, and nobody seems to understand it. That is, virtually nobody.

THOSE CALLED BY GOD (PLAY FROM 48:51)

And about the first 2,000 years from Adam, God was not calling humanity for salvation. We find that Abel was called "*righteous Abel*." So he must have had God's Spirit. Enoch walked with God. We don't know any of the details of the circumstances of it. Noah was the only one found righteous on earth; but because of Noah, his family was saved with him, a total of eight people. God wasn't calling anybody else.

Then we don't find anybody being called of God for eternal Life until we come to Abraham; and then Isaac, and Jacob, and Joseph. Four hundred and thirty years after Abraham, his descendants were slaves in Egypt. God called them and offered them the opportunity to have His government as a nation. The only promises He gave, and what it would get them, were **national and material promises** -- great wealth, peace, the greatest nation. They'd be the head and not the tail of all the nations on earth. But there was no (what-we-call) "salvation" -- spiritual salvation. Eternal Life was NOT offered.

Only the prophets and they were given God's Holy Spirit to get a job done. Not just that they could have it and sit back, and say, "Well, I'm saved." They weren't saved! They aren't yet. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob will be; but they are not yet. Not until the time of the resurrection. You read that in the 11th chapter of Hebrews.

But we come down to the time of Christ; and look at the millions, and billions, of people that had lived. God wasn't calling anyone to try to get them saved. God isn't trying to get humanity saved now, and hasn't been, and never has **as yet**. But He's got a program going. He has a purpose. We are here for a purpose -- that we be made the children of God, and that we develop the character of God -- because then there's a great job for us to do; and we are called to get a job done.

Right now what we are called for is to get this message of the coming Kingdom of God out to the world -- not to convert them, not to get them to believe it (which they won't), but that they'll know they have heard it; and, when it happens, they'll know THEY'VE BEEN TOLD (even though they didn't believe it). That's why **YOU** have been called, brethren! I hope I can get you to really see that and completely understand it.

THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST (PLAY FROM 51:51)

Now from Abraham to Christ, only the prophets (as I said); and from that time on, Christ came with a message -- a gospel. He wanted the message to get out.

The early apostles did get it out, but notice here in Galatians. I've read this so many times before. Here you get it once again, where Paul wrote to the Church at Galatia. He said:

*Galatians 1:6-7 I marvel that ye are so soon **removed** from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel [That was even read here last night.]: (7) Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.*

There were enemies trying to have what they call "this new teaching" even then, trying to get them away. Satan is active. He has his ministers. You read of it in II Corinthians 11. It's no great thing if his ministers appear as the ministers of righteousness and claim to be the ministers of Jesus Christ. But he [Paul] pronounces a double curse on man or angel that would preach any other gospel than the one he had preached, which was the gospel -- or good news -- of the Kingdom of God.

The Kingdom of God is the Family of God, into which we may be born. The Kingdom of God is the GOVERNMENT of God, and it's the Family who is doing the governing of God's government; and God's government is based on God's law. The only reason humanity is here is to, once again, get the government of God and the law of God established on this earth.

And yet even ministers will go out of this Church, who have been taught it, and say "The law is not in effect for us at all any more, and you can work on the Sabbath all you please and go right in to God's Kingdom." Oh, no, you can't! I wouldn't give you a plugged nickel for your chances, because I speak the Word of God; and I speak it WITH AUTHORITY, and you know I do. I don't say "maybe." I don't say "This is my opinion." I have been called by the Living God to get a job done. I'm getting it done, and I need you to back me and to help me. I'm very thankful that you do, or I couldn't keep going.

Now, I'm going to read a little bit more here, beginning with verse 10, because I can say this with the apostle Paul.

Galatians 1:10-12 For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ. (11) But I certify you brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. (12) For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.

As Paul said, now beginning with verse 15:

Galatians 1:15-17 But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, (16) to reveal his Son in me [and His Son's message; and His Son is the King of the Kingdom of God], that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood; (17) neither went I to ...

... any Bible seminary, any denominational religious ministerial college; but I went to the Word of the Living Christ. Jesus Christ is the personal Word of God. The Bible is the written Word of God. As God in person taught the apostle Paul, so God through the **written** Word taught me. I had to come at one truth at a time (and it took years, believe me) that you might have it.

PREPARING THE WAY (PLAY FROM 56:46)

Now let's go back to Malachi and get this prophesy once again.

*Malachi 3:1-2 Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant [That's Christ, the Messenger of the covenant. But another, human messenger, was to prepare the way before Him.], whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come [That's Christ.], saith the LORD of hosts. (2) **But ...***

Now I want you to pay attention to the next verse. What kind of a coming of Christ is this really speaking about?

Malachi 3:2-4 But who may abide the day of his coming? And who shall stand when he appeareth? For he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap: (3) And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the [Eternal] an offering in righteousness. (4) Then shall the offering of Judah and Jerusalem be pleasant unto the [Eternal], as in the days of old.

Did that happen at Christ's first coming, any of that? No, not at all! Notice:

Malachi 3:5-6 And I will come near to you to judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against false swearers, and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow, and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not me, saith the LORD of hosts. (6) For I am the LORD, I change not.

That is talking about what Christ will do at His Second Coming. This shows two comings -- a Second Coming of Christ, and a messenger to prepare the way! Now in Mark the 1st chapter, you find the beginning of the gospel of Christ and about how Elijah prepared the way before Him. That was His First Coming. But this is talking primarily of THE SECOND COMING. Is anyone preparing the way?

Now, we know it is imminent; or this gospel of the Kingdom would not be going around to all of the world. The way is being prepared! Brethren, God called you for **your part** in getting that done. You say, "We're behind you 100%, Mr. Armstrong." Well, I'm certainly glad. If you're not, the job isn't going to get done. But I want you to realize what it means to be back of me 100%. If you are only back of me in your prayers (if there's no money to help financially) you

have no conception of how much **your prayers** can do! But you've got to be in earnest about it, and you've got to believe. Then it will be done.

GREAT APOSTASY (PLAY FROM 1:00:00)

What I read to you in Galatians, was about ... let's see, I think it was about 68 A.D. The Church was founded in 31. The false church was started in 33, only started. Now I'm going to show you more about that, and the way is now being for the Second Coming. One way it's being prepared is to announce about it: The coming of Christ and the government of God being restored to the earth, and the Kingdom of God.

As the gospel went out in the first century by the apostles, there was a great apostasy then; and, as it's going out now, there has to be another one now. I want to go into those scriptures. I want you to notice now in II Thessalonians, the 2nd chapter and beginning with verse 11. No, no, that's wrong somewhere. I mean ... Oh, no, beginning with verse 1, the second chapter.

*II Thessalonians 2:1-2 Now, we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, (2) that ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter **as** from us ...*

They were getting messages over in England that purported to come from headquarters. Now they came from Pasadena all right. So this is one of the deceptions that Satan would use. His men said over there, "Now this is the new teaching from Pasadena." And the brethren thought it came from me, and my son (Garner Ted), and from us here at headquarters; and it's just the opposite. I found over there, when we rushed over there as soon as we found what was going on, that here was some of my good friends; and they believed. Well, yes, they were just going right along. "Well, we thought that was your teaching, Mr. Armstrong." And, as soon as they found it wasn't, they were through with it. I don't know yet if some are going to go that way and believe it, but most of them are not.

II Thessalonians 2:2 ... as that the day of Christ is at hand.

Now this is the second letter that Paul wrote to them. Let me see, I think I have some notes here, that this was written about 52 or 53 A.D. The "falling away" it speaks of here ...

II Thessalonians 2:2-3 ... that the day of Christ is at hand. (3) Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first...

Now this "falling away" comes from the Greek word "apostasia," in other words, apostasy and apostatizing: In other words, turning away from the truth to error

and false teaching. It's a dereliction of essential truth, or a corruption of truth and correct doctrine. That, it says here, had to come first.

Well, Paul had written a letter to them; and the second letter to the Thessalonians was written later that same year -- within the same year, less than a year later than the first. Apparently a messenger had come from Thessalonica and had told them that these brethren thought that others were spreading the gospel. They had what they called this "new teaching" that was come to the Church now, and they purported that it had come from the apostle Paul (So the people would believe it immediately, if it came from Paul.) and that the day of Christ was at hand, that it was just going to come right away. So he said:

II Thessalonians 2:1-2 We beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, (2) that you be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter AS from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand.

ANNOUNCING THE COMING PEACE (PLAY FROM 1:04:36)

Now I mentioned a while ago that we've been in "the day of man," or you can call it "the day of Satan;" and that's for this first 6,000 years. Then there's going to be 1,000 years when God's going to take over through Christ. Christ is coming again as King of kings and Lord of lords over all nations on the face of this earth. That's when we're going to have peace.

Now I'm an ambassador without portfolio for world peace, and I'm sort of recognized as such in capitals of the world. God has to have someone getting this message out. And peace is coming when Christ comes, and when Satan is put away, and when he can't pump his kind of attitude into the minds of people through the spirit that is in them; and it won't come any sooner.

Now I'm not trying to bring about peace. I'm only announcing WHAT GOD IS GOING TO DO. I go as an ambassador really -- ambassador for Christ, with His message. And I've had to wait until I could learn to put it in the kind of language that people would understand, and not in Bible language. I simply say, "What I'm bringing you is something that no religion has ever revealed, something science has never been able to find out, something that is not taught in the colleges and universities. It's the most important knowledge!" That makes it sound more respectable.

They've had enough of missionaries and that type of thing. If I go as a church man, they think I am a missionary or coming with a religion; and, what they know of as religion, they don't want any more of. They've got their own religion anyway.

BELIEVING A LIE (PLAY FROM 1:06:34)

Now, let's go on in this 2nd chapter of Thessalonians. Someone apparently had told them that it had come from Paul, and they were believing that. He said:

*II Thessalonians 2:3 ... except there come **a falling away** [or an apostasy from the truth] first, and that man of sin be revealed ...*

He was already there! And really the "man of sin" started out as (this man in the 8th chapter of the book of Acts) Simon the sorcerer. He founded the great false church. That church is still in the world today, and it is a great church. It has ruled over governments of Europe. You don't have to guess very far to guess what church that is.

II Thessalonians 2:3-4 ... and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; (4) who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.

"Most holy father," they call him. There can only be one who is the most holy Father, and that is God Himself.

II Thessalonians 2:5-7 Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? [Paul's reminding them, but they were forgetting it.] (6) And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. (7) For the mystery of iniquity doth already work [even in Paul's time].

This was probably about 52 or 53 A.D. They were already with a false gospel he said just a little later, when he wrote to the Galatians. That was going out then, and it's filled the world ever since.

II Thessalonians 2:8-11 And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming [at the coming of Christ]: (9) Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, (10) and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. (11) And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie.

You come to believe a lie, and you'll depart from one truth of God; and pretty soon you depart from another, and another, and another. I said, when some of these apostated and went out of God's Church (and did it with a matter of duplicity, pretending they were with us) ... One got a leave of absence with full pay for a year, and used that money to try to destroy this Church and this Work. And he's getting out this so-called "new teaching" nullifying every important thing in the teaching of Jesus Christ. Now, if you want to follow that, there's the door back there. I won't try to keep you from it. But I'll tell you where you are going. It will be a lot worse than following the ox into the slaughter. A lot worse! And you'll leave all of the truth.

I Thessalonians 2:11-17 God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie. (12) That they all might be damned who believe not the truth, but had PLEASURE in unrighteousness. (13) But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren [And I say that, with Paul, to you.] beloved of the Lord, because God hath chosen YOU to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth. (14) Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, (15) Therefore, brethren, STAND FAST, and HOLD the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle. (16) Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, (17) comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work.

WARNING FOR US (PLAY FROM 1:11:47)

Now we go next, a little farther here, to I Timothy 4. I Timothy the 4th chapter, and beginning again with verse 1:

I Timothy 4:1 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith...

Here comes this apostasy again -- going to false teaching, and some drawing some away after them. This is another evidence brethren, we are right down into the last time. The day of God and God's interference in world affairs cannot come until this has happened. Now here some shall depart from the faith (In this case, this was written about 64 or 65 A.D.) and depart from the truth (The Greek word again is another form of the word "apostatize" or "apostasy"), bringing in doctrines that render the proof of the gospel null and void.

One that that church has always taught and I think many Protestants take it up, is that the Kingdom of God has been here all these years anyway and it is the church. Now some Protestants have come to a new wrinkle on that -- that the Kingdom of God is some mysterious nothing set up in the hearts of men. They make it so meaningless it means absolutely nothing to you.

The Kingdom of God is the message that Christ brought. That is the message of the gospel!

I Timothy 4:1-2 ... giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; (2) speaking lies and hypocrisy.

Let me just say that these things, and these letters that Paul wrote to the Churches (and this to Timothy), were a message to them at that time all right. But also it applies to us today. Most of the Bible, I feel, was written and has been kept primarily **for us** of this time now. Most people in past ages never had a copy of the Bible. Printing wasn't established until just about, what, three or four hundred years ago. There couldn't have been any distribution. The Word of God had to be copied; and, through the Middle Ages, people would be burned at stake if they had a copy or if they tried to make a copy. They did everything

they could to try to stamp the Bible out, and that was done by the religion -- this false religion. But God didn't let it ever get stamped out.

I Timothy 4:2-5 Speaking lies and hypocrisy [That did happen back then, but it's happening again now; and, to a more or less extent, it's been happening all through this era.] speaking lies and hypocrisy, having their conscience seared with a hot iron; (3) forbidding to marry [I don't know that the people going out today are forbidding to marry, but certainly they did then. They forbid their ministers to marry. They forbid their nuns to marry.], and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving [Well, they have their meatless days; and you can't have any meat but fish on Friday; and they have certain days when you can't have meat and things of that sort.] ... (4) For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving. (5) For it is sanctified [which means set apart] by the word of God and prayer.

Now the Word of God sets apart the animals that are for meat, and the vegetables, and so on, that we shall have for food; Leviticus 11. It's already set apart by the Word of God.

FAITH AND GOOD DOCTRINE (PLAY FROM 1:16:14)

I Timothy 4:6-7 If thou put the brethren in remembrance of those things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine ... (7) But refuse profane and old wives' fables [and being blown about by every wind of doctrine that comes along.]

That's exactly what some are using to try to apostatize now. However, there are more new brethren being baptized and brought in than that kind of thing can take out. Now isn't that strange and wonderful? Oh, yes! Prophecy is being fulfilled.

In Revelation 3 it speaks of this Church, and the Work we are doing, and of the door open to get the gospel out. In the 11th and 12th verses it speaks of how, when the Great Tribulation comes (which will end our Work), we are not going to have to go through it **if** we are faithful. If you know how terrible that is you'll want to escape. I don't expect to have to go through it.

Let me see. Well, I said a while ago, the Bible is written primarily for us of this time because they didn't understand it before. Now {4} the apostatizing began while Jesus Himself was on earth, and I want to read that to you. John the 6th chapter and beginning with verse 66:

John 6:66-71 From that time many of [Jesus'] disciples went back [Not the ones who became apostles, but others.], and walked no more with him. (67) Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? (68) Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. (69) And we believe [They believed what He said. Many others didn't.] and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God. (70) Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil? (71) He spake of

Judas Iscariot the son of Simon: for he it was that should betray him, being one of the twelve.

Even Jesus had a traitor of those He Himself had called! Now I just want to read one final scripture in II Thessalonians, again in the 1st chapter, beginning with verse 2. I want to say this, with Paul, to you brethren here.

II Thessalonians 1:2-5 Grace unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. (3) We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren [Now this is the way I feel towards you, just as Paul did towards those at Thessalonica.], as it is meet [or fit, or proper], because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity [or love] of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth; (4) So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure: (5) which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer.

I just wanted to express how much I appreciate the fact you **are** loyal, you **are** back of this Work of Jesus Christ. You are back of me. I will be gone again for some very important meetings on this trip. From {5}Bricket Wood I leave two weeks from today. I hope that one the next day, Sunday, I will fly again to the Bahamas, Nassau. I'll be there for a week again of meetings and one thing and another. Then Friday, Saturday, and Sunday nights there will be the big campaign there; and I hope we'll have a big audience. After that, I'll come back and hope I can be with you a few days again. I don't know how long yet. We haven't got that planned. That's it for now.

{1} Editor's note: Mr. Armstrong said, "the planets all over the earth." Undoubtedly, he meant to say "the planets all over the universe."

{2} Editor's note: Mr. Armstrong said Genesis, but he read from Revelation.

{3} Editor's note: Mr. Armstrong first said, "God didn't create Satan..." But then he said, "I mean Adam..."

{4} Editor's note: There was a false start at this point, where Mr. Armstrong first said, "Now the apostles." But he immediately corrected himself and said, "I mean the apostatizing."

{5} Editor's note: Mr. Armstrong started by saying "From London;" but then he corrected himself, saying "Or from Bricket Wood ... "