

A FEW GOOD GOALS

[a guest commentary by Bill Glover]

The March 31, 2003 issue of *The Journal* featured a lead article, written by Dixon Cartwright as he had attended a meeting of one of the larger groups of the many "churches of God where they discussed the problems in the churches titled "Churches need a few good goals." This well written article dumbfounded me as I carefully read and re-read it several times. This article was a factual account of a conference where leading ministers and stewards from varying groups that splintered off from the Worldwide Church of God gathered to evaluate the "Church of God" and its people. Following is my response to the article mentioned above which *The journal* also printed in the succeeding issue.

The conclusions reached at this conference were most profound. These men actually identified many of the problems experienced by members of the church but seemed unable to identify and articulate solutions. Actually the primary reason they could *not* arrive at definitive **WORKABLE SOLUTIONS** is because they began their quest from a *WRONG PERSPECTIVE*. This wrong perspective is that they seem to believe they [as humans] **HAVE THE RESPONSIBILITY TO CHANGE GOD'S PEOPLE**.

Having been a member of the Worldwide Church of God for over fifty years, I am intimately acquainted with its teachings. I **ENROLLED** in Ambassador College in 1953 and graduated in 1957. My parents and older brother and sister were baptized by the **FIRST** student baptismal tour from Ambassador College in 1948. After my graduation, for years I personally answered letters from around the world on behalf of Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong. [My response article in the April 2003 *Journal* netted me letters from some with whom I corresponded **OR KNEW PERSONALLY** some fifty years ago.]

Looking back over these fifty plus years and reflecting on the sermons I preached or hear from others and the articles written it is now crystal clear that the Worldwide ministry **FALSELY** believed that it had the responsibility to **SPIRITUALLY CHANGE GOD'S PEOPLE!** [That fallacy continues to this very day in **ALL** the splinter groups that sprang out of Worldwide.] Nothing could be farther from the truth. A minister *cannot* change the people and should *not* even try. God has **NOT** given any minister that power or that responsibility. Not even Jesus Christ could do that as He clearly shows in Luke 22:31 – 32. Note what we find here. Christ told Peter that Satan had desired to gain control of Peter so he could sift him like wheat. Did Christ say, "I took care of Satan so that he could **NOT** bother you?" Read it for what it actually says. Christ showed that **ALL HE WAS ALLOWED TO DO** was "I **PRAYED** for you that **YOUR FAITH** would not fail you" (vs. 32). Peter had to *develop his own spiritual character* by making the right choices in **RESISTING THE DEVIL** (see James 4:7 - - making his own personal Mount Carmel decisions to serve God - - see also 1 Kings 18:21). Notice that Christ did the same for each of us who followed after Peter and the other New Testament Christians. We find this in John 17:9 which reads: "I pray for them (true followers) . . . which Thou (the Father) have given me; for they are yours."

What Christ did besides praying for all of us is **GIVE US HIS WORD** along with the Holy Spirit which will lead us in making the right choices so as to gain eternal life **IF WE FOLLOW GOD** (vs. 14 of James 4 compared with II Tim. 3:15 – 17. Now John 17:15 shows us that we are not to be taken out of the world but that the Father would **PROTECT US FROM THE EVILS OF THE WORLD**. Again note that Christ

did this THROUGH PRAYER. Then in verse 17 Christ asked the Father to sanctify the true followers THROUGH THE TRUTH AS GOD'S WORD IS TRUTH. Then as John 17:8 states "I have given them *THE WORDS YOU GAVE ME* and they have received them." He also gave to us the Holy Spirit to empower us to carry out His will!

The point is quite simple. What God the Father and Jesus the Christ are doing in and through TRUE FOLLOWERS is developing God's nature and character in each. This involves CHOOSING THE RIGHT OVER THE WRONG (see Deut. 30:19). Neither the Father nor Christ FORCES us to choose His way. This is the clear message from Genesis to Revelation. Review the first murder of a human being - - Cain slaying Abel - - to see clear evidence of this. The member of the God family dealing with Cain was the one who became Jesus Christ. He preached a sermon to Cain. Note this sermon as recorded in Genesis 4:6 - 7. Cain was told he had a CHOICE to make - - to choose either good or bad - - and that if he chose the good he would be blessed and if he chose the bad he would pay the consequences. This is clearly God's way of dealing with all mankind from Genesis through Revelation.

I once counseled with a man who told me emphatically: "I get really angry with God. I ask God to make it impossible for me to sin and He has not answered that prayer yet!" I replied: "He is NOT going to answer that prayer!" He asked "Why? God tells us not to sin so why would He not answer that prayer?" I explained that we humans are in this fleshly body to learn to develop the very character and nature of God **BY USING THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT** to resist the pulls of the flesh, our selfish nature and temptations from the devil. That if God made it impossible for us to sin then He would be taking away the ABILITY to develop His character and thus thwart the very purpose for our being in the flesh [carefully study Romans 8:14-23]. Note especially verses 19-23 which show that GOD HAS HOPE THAT WHAT HE HAS INVESTED IN US WILL EVENTUALLY NET THE RESULTS HE INTENDS - - **OUR REDEMPTION AS SONS OF GOD**. Actually, it would be well if each person reading this article would carefully study EVERY WORD in Romans 8 word by word and ask the Almighty God to grant him/her the understanding He wants each to have on this subject.

We are to personally and individually EXAMINE OURSELVES WHETHER WE ARE TRULY IN GOD'S FAITH (I Cor. 11:28, II Cor. 13:5). We have the PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY to prove all things and then hold fast to those we find to be true (I Thessalonians 5:21 and Gal. 6:4). We INDIVIDUALLY have the personal responsibility to STAND before God by and through the help of the Holy Spirit (see Eph. 6:10-18). We are to WATCH and PRAY not only for ourselves but for all of God's saints (fellow Christians) - - see verse 18 especially. We must always realize and remember that our personal salvation is an individual matter between us individually and the Almighty God. That we are personally responsible for that salvation God offers to us. That NO HUMAN MINISTER can save us, change us or even motivate us spiritually. That such is done BY GOD THROUGH THE HOLY SPIRIT. A true minister of God will remind members of this regularly. He will constantly tell the people "DO NOT TRUST ME WITH YOUR SALVATION - - TRUST GOD AND GOD ALONE!" Any minister unwilling to do this is definitely suspect and should not be trusted.

But what has been the practice of so many of the ministers who formed splinter groups from the old Worldwide Church of God? Honest questions or dialogues are NOT allowed. Anyone who questions a practice or belief is immediately threatened with expulsion and will be expelled on the spot unless that person recants and withdraws his question. Such a practice is NOT the Biblical approach. Scriptures quoted or referred to in other portions of this article prove that such is NOT OF GOD! Clearly such churches are NOT the true representatives of God. Pastors of such churches are merely trying to build their own "empire." The motivating drive of the true minister of God is the spiritual well being of each member that God brings to him. If actually challenged about his calling, A TRUE MINISTER OF GOD will follow the example of Moses and FALL ON HIS FACE BEFORE GOD AND LET GOD DEFEND HIM AGAINST HIS ACCUSERS (see Numbers 16:1-4 and 22 - 35 and chapter 12 and compare this instruction with 2 Timothy 2:24-26).

For the fifty plus years I have been affiliated with the church I have NEVER witnessed a minister TRUSTING GOD TO DEFEND HIS MINISTRY OR HIS "AUTHORITY!" What I have witnessed for over fifty years is a DIRECT VIOLATION OF WHAT CHRIST CLEARLY TAUGHT IN MATTHEW 20:25 – 28. Why is it that these ministers have NO FAITH THAT GOD WILL BACK UP THEIR MINISTRY? Getting angry, raising one's voice, shouting *threats* of banishment and gathering your "goon squad" of deacons to back up your threats is not God's way. And a deacon who allows himself to be *USED* in such a manner is NOT a true servant of God and most likely not even a true Christian. And, certainly, a minister using such tactics is NEITHER A CHRISTIAN NOR A TRUE MINISTER! God's word - - The Holy Bible - - makes this crystal clear! If you, as a person, are following a minister who practices such then you are NOT following a man of God!

As a minister of the Almighty God I truly and deeply love God's people. But I must always remember that THE CALLING is from God. Any spiritual change in a person's life IS OF GOD. That, as a minister, I can read God's word to His people in sermons and in writings but I CANNOT GIVE GOD'S PEOPLE UNDERSTANDING OR DISCERNMENT. Such comes ONLY from God the Father through the Holy Spirit (study John 6:44 and I Cor. 2:14). Specifically it is the job of THE HOLY SPIRIT to ENLIGHTEN GOD'S PEOPLE (see John 14:15-17 and vs. 26). A minister should never try and do the job of the Holy Spirit!

There are many other passages that clearly illustrate that GOD AND GOD ALONE can change and motivate the human heart and mind. No amount of preaching, cajoling, threatening with the lake of fire, using scare tactics etc. is going to bring about MEANINGFUL CHANGES in another. A minister is wrong to use any of these tactics as he eventually *cause harm* to the individual because such tactics are misleading and confusing to the people. People can and do understand that they must make their own choices and they MUST ALSO LIVE WITH *THOSE CHOICES*. No one else answers for the decisions I make personally and I personally do not answer for the decisions others make. We each stand alone before God and God (and God alone) decides our fate (see Ezek. 14:14 & 20 and II Pet. 4:17- 9). Individually we are to STIR UP THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT that has been given to us (II Tim. 1:6-7).

Thus, a true minister realizes that he is merely a TOOL in the hands of the Almighty. That he has the responsibility to "Cry loud and spare not showing God's people their sins" (see Isa. 58:1). But that he CANNOT change the people himself. That such must be left in the hands of God, Christ and the Holy Spirit.

It appears that the ministers at the conference mentioned earlier in this article were laboring under the false impression that they are supposed to *effect* the changes needed in the lives of God's people.

The only truly sad aspects of being a true minister of God is seeing that despite all your efforts, your concerns, your empathy, your prayers, your admonitions, etc., you must *patiently wait for God* to grant understanding and discernment to the person to whom you are ministering (see II Tim. 2:24-26). Read that passage very carefully and digest what it says. A true servant of God must not strive but be gentle to ALL, apt to teach, patient and "In MEEKNESS instructing those who oppose themselves; IF GOD PERADVENTURE WILL GIVE THEM REPENTANCE TO THE ACKNOWLEDGING OF THE TRUTH!" (2 Timothy 2:24-26). Read it! That is the clear teaching of the Bible. Yet most ministers of the splinter groups go totally contrary to these clear instructions from God. They LORD IT OVER THE PEOPLE!

As I read the article in *The Journal* it seemed that the ministers assembled there were sincere but genuinely troubled by not being able to *effect* the changes they truly believed were needed. How relieved they would be if they actually understood that it is not their personal responsibility to "CHANGE THE PEOPLE!" Such is actually the JOB OF THE HOLY SPIRIT and yet "ministers" have tried to usurp that responsibility (job) given to the Holy Spirit. Trying to do so is spiritual arrogance!

Let me tell you that it is extremely frustrating to see these problems in the church and to preach about them and to counsel people as to what they could do to improve their spirituality and then recognize that the people just are not getting it. But a true minister trusts God and the Holy Spirit to change people.

But, it truly helps when you finally come to see that once you have preached your heart out over these points and when you are able to *back off* and allow God and the Holy Spirit to give people the discernment they need to make these changes and they begin to change. It is truly rewarding when one comes to you and says "You know I finally see what you mean by what you have been saying!" Then, and only then, do you fully grasp and understand that these things are **SPIRITUALLY UNDERSTOOD** because it is God who "granted each the ability to grasp and understand these spiritual truths" (see II Tim. 2:25 again).

I would then like to propose "A FEW GOOD GOALS" to these ministers (and all ministers reading this). The first "goal" I would set forth is that of a concerted effort to make it clear that **EACH PERSON IS RESPONSIBLE FOR HIS OR HER OWN SALVATION**. I have done that and many people have gotten the message **BECAUSE GOD REVEALED IT TO THEM** - - not because I was clever enough to make the subject plain and understandable.

At this point I wish to list some of the problems these ministers set forth as their "findings" in the church. After paraphrasing each "finding" I will then insert what I consider an appropriate "goal" in addressing these needs.

Following are twelve "findings" set forth by these ministers:

1). The "finding" that "The major gospel preaching effort should be directed toward the *un-churched*. [**SUGGESTED "GOAL"**: That, as true ministers of God, we recognize that the object is NOT to get people "churched" but to help people see the need for repentance and **PREPARING TO MEET OUR MAKER** (Acts 17:30). The **COMMAND** is to "FEED THE FLOCK" - - not brow beat it (Matthew 20:25).]

2). The second "finding" was the quest for making as big an impact on the world as possible. [**SUGGESTED "GOAL"**: Realize that God at no time instructed His true servants to go and "make as great an impact as possible on the world!" Did Christ go about trying to make a big impact on the world? Did Paul or any of the other apostles? Did God command Jonah to go and "IMPACT" Nineveh as much as humanly possible? We need to actually study the life of Christ and see how He conducted His ministry. We should study Paul's life and practices too. As God's ministers we are to preach the gospel "to the world as a witness" while recognizing that the overwhelming majority will reject it and even turn on us.]

[NOTE: Christ taught very clearly that **NO ONE CAN COME TO CHRIST UNLESS AND UNTIL GOD THE FATHER CALLS HIM/HER** (John 6:44). It is God who decides whom to call and whom to keep blinded (Acts 2:47 and Rom. 11:7). The true minister's job is to preach the word and then let God convert through the work of the Holy Spirit (see Acts 2:39 and 47). Also see I Cor. 1:26-31. It is the Holy Spirit that **ENLIGHTENS** and **TEACHES** God's true people (see John 14:15-18 and vs. 26).]

3). The third "finding" was: How to finance the doing of the *work*. (This one has very slippery slopes.). [**SUGGESTED "GOAL"**: Exactly what is the *work of God* any way? Most of us have *assumed* that "the work" is something like we have known for almost fifty years; namely, the World Tomorrow broadcast, the Plain Truth magazine, the Good News. Ambassador College (University), dynamic preaching over the air, beautiful facilities, etc. But all those things were merely **PHYSICAL FACADES** - - **WINDOW DRESSING** which we have seen crumble and disintegrate before our very eyes. What is actually left of all those "beautiful facades" we once believed in so much? **WHAT TANGIBLE AND LASTING FRUITS WERE PRODUCED?** All those were nothing more than "WINDOW DRESSINGS" which impressed people but **CREATED NO LASTING CHANGES IN THE CHARACTER AND NATURE** of human beings - - including those **MINISTERS** who were conducting "THIS TYPE OF WORK!" The true

work of God is WHAT GOD IS EFFECTING IN THE LIVES OF EACH PERSON HE SINGLES OUT AND TURNS OVER TO JESUS CHRIST FOR SPIRITUAL GROOMING THROUGH THE HOLY SPIRIT.] (Can we get off the slippery slope and begin to realize **HOW** God works and begin to trust Him to do His work in the lives of each person He selects?) God's work is NOT large human endeavors or edifices.]

4). The fourth "finding" was: How to send members on their way to do some "work". [**PROPOSED "GOAL"**: Part of this is covered in point number three above. But the *MAIN WORK* that God sets out for the member is TO BE A LIGHT AND EXAMPLE TO ALL WITH WHOM ONE COMES INTO CONTACT. Our lives are to reflect the very life, attitude and nature of Jesus Christ (Matt. 5:16 and Phil. 2:12-15). The New Testament is replete with similar instructions. So this "goal" is to constantly set before God's people how they should LIVE THEIR LIVES BUT GIVE THEM SPACE TO MAKE THESE CHOICES THEMSELVES.]

5). The fifth "finding" was: Try and make disciples of the "un-churched." [**PROPOSED "GOAL"**]: Realize that we can DO NOTHING OF AND BY OURSELVES to affect the lives of the "un-churched. Either God calls and converts a person or that person is not going to respond to anything we do personally (John 6:44). Again, too many are laboring under the wrong impression and little wonder they get frustrated when they see no meaningful results from their "labors." God just is not going to bless a *work* that is not in accordance with His will clearly expressed in His word.]

6). The sixth "finding" was: Help members, once converted, to mature. [**PROPOSED "GOAL"**]: This is one of the few "findings" that really makes some sense and has meaning and is actually "doable." The New Testament is replete with information as to how this can and should be done and why. Space restraints do not allow me to reproduce the entire New Testament here but we have articles available that help.]

7). The seventh "finding" was: The need to eliminate the duplication of efforts among the "different" churches of God. [**PROPOSED "GOAL"**: WOW! Is this point ever complicated and diverse - - as diverse as the many different people represented in these many different splinter groups AND MOST HATE AND CONDEMN THE OTHER GROUPS. The solution here is extremely SIMPLE and yet IMPOSSIBLE. It is "simple" in that GOD IS NOT DIVIDED INTO ALL THESE DIFFERENT SPLINTER GROUPS. There is ONLY ONE church of God. There is only one way to serve and worship that God. But each person has the absolute responsibility to see that he is not placing his personal interpretation on these matters. As a minister of God I will not try and convince anyone of ANY of these points since I KNOW that if God has not opened their minds to see these things then I am totally helpless to effect any changes in their attitudes. These things are "spiritually discerned." God does state clearly that there is a way that SEEMS RIGHT TO HUMANS but that it leads to death (Prov. 14:12 and 16:25). Many are not going to be willing to learn this fact until they find themselves squarely in THE GREAT TRIBULATION or when they are brought before the judgment seat of Christ and He DENOUNCES them (see Matt. 7:12 and 21-27). Only Christ can open the minds of those set in their own understanding and I am happy that I have no responsibility toward them other than to merely state what Christ Himself taught (compare Ezekiel 33). We have an article entitled "Feast of Reconciliation" should any wish to request it. God has given His true Church the GOSPEL OF RECONCILIATION (2 Corinthians 5:17-21) but none of the splinter groups will preach this "gospel or word of reconciliation" since they are UNWILLING to follow the clear words of God in the Bible. What we have today is a bunch of "professing Sabbath and holy day keepers" calling themselves the "Church of God." Sabbath and holy day keeping does NOT make you a true Christian!

8). The eighth "finding" was: The suspicion church members have toward the "church" and its ministers. [**PROPOSED "GOAL"**: The ministry in the Worldwide Church of God, as well as the many splinter groups, brings with it a dismal track record of spiritual abuse of the members. I tried to deal with this in the 90's while still with Worldwide in Eugene, Oregon. I pointed out that the members had made it clear

that the ministry HAD NO CREDIBILITY WITH THE PEOPLE. I argued that for a minister to be able to help the members he had to *first establish his own credibility*. I volunteered to meet with other Worldwide ministers and pledged to allow them to show me where I was lacking in credibility and what I needed to do to begin establishing credibility with the people. I was refused because every minister present knew that if they took the occasion to "run me through the mill," so to speak, that they all would have to subject themselves to the same by all the others. There was no way these men were willing to do this. They "**OUTWARDLY CLAIMED**" a willingness to help the people of God but NOT A SINGLE ONE WAS WILLING TO PAY THE PRICE PERSONALLY! If a minister is unwilling to submit to a critical evaluation by other ministers as well as the members of the congregation then HE IS NOT A TRUE MINISTER OF GOD! I cannot make it more plain than that. Yet these ministers tenaciously hang on to the "position" they claim to hold as a minister. These "ministers" are going to have a rude and sad awakening when they are brought before Christ in the judgment and required to give an accounting (see Heb.13:17, Acts 20:28, I Pet. 5:3, II Tim. 2:24-26, 11 Cor. 13:10, Gal. 5:10, Heb. 4:13 and many other passages). Probably the most serious sin a human can commit is to claim to be a minister of God when God does not recognize him as such. I personally know of a lot of men who will have much to answer for when they come before Jesus Christ for judgment. If you are a minister and reading this then Ezekiel 33 directly applies to you - - you cannot claim ignorance [merely because you may not like me as the one advising you of this] for you have now been told straight out. But if you are TRULY a minister of God then you had better make certain **YOU ACTUALLY HAVE CREDIBILITY FIRST WITH GOD AND THEN WITH THE PEOPLE** and that you have TANGIBLE PROOF OF YOUR MINISTRY. Merely having a ministerial certificate or merely having been ordained by a "church" does not mean you are a **minister of God or "ORDAINED BY GOD!"** Being able to deliver a sermon and being "liked" by the people is NOT proof God honors your ministry.]

9). The ninth "finding" by these ministers was: To enhance our "internal" image.[**PROPOSED "GOAL"**]: Once again, WOW! And I say again "WOW!" A true minister of God will do everything within his power to help God's people see that THE MIND, THE NATURE AND THE CHARACTER OF JESUS CHRIST IS TO BE ENHANCED WITHIN US. The books of Job and Proverbs clearly define what God thinks of our "internal image of ourselves." God says that the carnal mind (the natural "internal image" we have of ourselves) is ENMITY AGAINST GOD, IS NOT SUBJECT TO THE LAW OF GOD AND NEITHER CAN IT BE SUBJECT TO GOD AND HIS LAWS (Rom 8:7). But, as verse 6 states, the "inward image" we have of ourselves is death. A true minister of God teaches the people of God that they must humbly turn to God in total submission. Paul constantly stressed the need to divest oneself of this "inward self" and surrender to God so that the LIFE OF CHRIST WILL BE CLEARLY EVIDENT IN EACH OF US - - or, as Christ put it, we are to CLEANSE THE INSIDE OF OUR CUP (see Matthew 23:25-28 and then verses 23-24).]

10). The tenth "finding" was: The fact that only a small percentage of the members actually support the ministerial work of the different groups. [**PROPOSED "GOAL"**]: Carefully evaluate the abuses the church has forced on its membership over the past fifty plus years. Evaluate the hundreds of millions of dollars wasted on projects that had no intrinsic, lasting, or meaningful value. Where is there any proof whatsoever that would justify the hundreds of millions of dollars Herbert Armstrong wasted on meaningless endeavors with "so-called officials" in the Philippines, in China, in Japan and other MISADVENTURES? He was using TITHE MONEY to try and buy for himself a Nobel Peace prize. And the hundreds of thousands of tithe dollars to procure and maintain a sleek jet plane for his son to use to fly to exotic places around the earth to sexually seduce gullible Ambassador College girls.

[SPECIAL NOTE: These statements are NOT found-less claims but based on facts - - I was at the headquarters and it fell my lot to witness these events and assist many of these vulnerable girls to rebuild their lives after they were cast aside as used *garbage* to make room for the next sexual victim. And as Herbert Armstrong learned of these sexual seductions he called the girls into his office and called them every slutty name he could think of as he accused them of seducing Ted. The spiritual harm done to these

girls was unbelievable. The spiritual harm done to God's people all over the earth when they learned of these sins is reprehensible.

By the mid sixties God had totally withdrawn from the World Wide Church of God and it was left adrift with a bunch of greedy and grafting men trying to seize or maintain control of a multimillion dollar corporation.. Look at the lifestyle of the ministry and the lives they lived. They lived in very nice homes, drove nice cars, and had everything handed to them on a silver platter WHILE THE BRETHERN HAD TO STRUGGLE TO PAY FOR ALL THESE PERKS THAT WERE NOT EARNED BY THAT MINISTRY. And those "ministers" constantly spiritually abused the people - - God's heritage - - so as to KEEP THEM UNDER THAIR CONTROL!]

Joseph Tkach learned of the many horrendous sins and used this KNOWLEDGE to force Herbert Armstrong to appoint him pastor general. Once Tkach had established CONTROL OF THE ORGANIZATION he began to show his true colors and set out to take the church into Protestantism. Once this was recognized, different "ministers" decided to sneak around and grab as many members of the church they could so as to have a financial base for the church they intended to start. Once they felt they had enough FINANCIAL SUPPORT (which was their main objective) they launched their churches. But, I personally witnessed God turning His back on Worldwide BEFORE Herbert Armstrong's death. None of the men who went out to start their own church (OR ALL OF THEM COMBINED) HAD ENOUGH FAITH IN GOD OR THEIR OWN MINISTRY TO STAND UP AND REFUSE TO ALLOW THESE HORRENDOUS SINS. Now all these groups are wondering why they do not have ANY FRUITS THAT PROVE THEY ARE TRUE MINISTERS OF God and that their church is actually the true church. All they have is EMPTY CLAIMS NOT SUPPORTED BY FRUITS OR THE Holy Spirit.]

At this point I would like to quote a portion of the letter I wrote to Joe Tkach, Jr. of Worldwide dated March 3, 1996. (It should be noted that I stayed with World-wide trying to get the leadership to address major problems that had done immeasurable damage to the members and to the church.) It really explains the problems the church itself created in the lives of God's people. I did at first try to work with Tkach until their true motives became evident. I told them they had no authority from God to change the things they changed - - but they were "wise" enough to stage a hostile takeover of the church and the bank account. Why didn't these other SUPER MINISTERS stand up and be counted. If they were truly God's ministers and if they actually had any faith in their ministry and faith in God they would have stood their ground and GOD WOULD HAVE BACKED THEM! But they obviously had no faith in their own ministry OR IN GOD. God is NOT the author of confusion but look at the confusion these SUPER MINISTERS HAVE CREATED! And they are clueless as to how to handle the problems they created!

The letter to Tkach reads as follows:

Dated: March 3, 1996

We just received the member letter. Shortly after reading it I received a telephone call from a local member - - actually a person born in the church who is now 35 years old and who has been a baptized member for well over ten years. The question she asked me (and that I found very difficult to answer satisfactorily) forced me to reflect back on the foregoing memo [the first portion of this letter to Joe].

This 35 year old, sensitive and intelligent woman (lifetime in the church) was asking how the church could Really expect members to financially support the work when, for all her lifetime, all she and countless others received from the church was hurt, retribution and psychological and spiritual harm - - a crippling. I thought this an excellent question to pass on to you so you can have a better grasp of what you, as Pastor General, face.

This lady has made positive changes in her life in the last few months - - but she cannot attribute any progress

that she has made to the church since it has literally wrecked so many lives for, in so doing, one is actually funding such practices

In other words - - in the view of this clear-thinking young 35 year old woman BORN IN THE CHURCH - - You, as Pastor General, are on trial. It seems to me that you will need to CLEARLY ESTABLISH that these wounds are being healed and that God is truly behind the work you are proposing to do. As this lady put it, "Why should I support a work that has wrecked so many lives for so many years?" And, "How can we truthfully say that God was behind the work of the Worldwide Church of God all those years when so much harm and damage was done to God's people?"

She truly "WANTS" to get behind this work wholeheartedly but, at the moment, says that she and her husband can't. I truly believe this summarizes the problem you are facing. In other words, because of the church's track record, "WHY WOULD A PERSON EVEN WANT TO FURTHER THE WORK OF THIS CHURCH?" We can no longer merely "claim" that "this is God's work" and such automatically prompts people to support it. The ministry (as a whole – not every last man) placed God in a very bad light by, in essence, claiming, "I represent God - - don't you dare question me or my authority or else I'LL kick you out of the church!" (Browbeating people – God's heritage.)

It truly burdens me to write these things but they are things being asked about and that should never have existed in the first place - - or should have been addressed long ago!

I truly believe you are going to have to get across to the people that you are for real and that you are pledging to do all in your power with God's help and guidance to CORRECT THESE THINGS. That one of the main reasons you need financial help is to have the means to make spiritual healing available to all who need it."

It is evident that Tkach rejected this admonition and proceeded with the apostasy. It is also evident that the very last paragraph in this letter to HIM applies to ALL MINISTERS CLAIMING TO SERVE GOD. We must be willing to PAY THE PRICE by showing God's people THAT WE ARE FOR REAL - - THAT WE ARE CREDITABLE! I do not know of a single minister or group of ministers WILLING to do this!

11). The eleventh finding was: The churches of God in general are losing the dedication of the people. [PROPOSED "GOAL": Help the people see that their DEDICATION is to be TOWARD GOD AND NOT TOWARD A PHYSICAL CHURCH ORGANIZATION. The reason we have so many splits and so much disharmony today is because too many are DOING THEIR OWN THING (building their own little empires) rather than seeking out the will of God. These splinter groups are attempting to create dedication from the people TO THEIR OWN CHURCH GROUP RATHER THAN DEDICATION TO GOD AND JESUS CHRIST. Romans 8 fully explains what our DEDICATION SHOULD BE - - being SONS OF GOD, HEIRS OF GOD AND JOINT HEIRS WITH CHRIST SO THAT WE WILL BE GIVEN THE CHANCE TO BE GLORIFIED WITH HIM (verses 14-23). How many splinter groups are preaching this? I do not know of any! This point is further explained in the preceding points.]

12). The twelfth finding was: Attendance at the Feast of Tabernacles has fallen off in recent years due to a change of attitude in the people. [PROPOSED "GOAL": This finding is absolutely true. [INSERTED THOUGHT: I personally addressed this problem at our feast site in Pine Mountain, Georgia in 2002. I point out in this sermon that this problem is real but that those of us in the ministry CANNOT SOLVE

THAT PROBLEM. That each person individually must evaluate his or her own attitude and once he or she **SEES THIS AS A PROBLEM** must go to God for the help needed to rekindle the keen desire to serve God **AS SONS OF GOD, HEIRS OF GOD AND JOINT HEIRS WITH CHRIST** as He wants us to do.] These ministers have chased the horse out of the barn and then sit back and wonder **WHERE** the horse went and **WHY** he ran off. - - **WHY CAN'T THESE MINISTERS REALIZE THAT GOD IS GOING TO HOLD THEM ACCOUNTABLE FOR THESE PROBLEMS?** (Hebrews 13:17). There is coming a **DAY OF RECKONING!**

In concluding this commentary on the article from *The Journal* let me quote one of the ministers attending the conference referred to. He stated: "I think the church in general is losing the dedication of the people. They are not committed to the church; they are not committed to the feast; they are not committed to second tithe; we're just losing a lot of the basic foundations of the church."

What this "minister" **SHOULD HAVE SAID** is "We ministers have lost [or **NEVER HAD**] true dedication to God and His calling to the ministry or to the true people of God. We are **NOT** truly committed to the **BODY OF CHRIST** or the duty to explain to the people that we are **THE SPIRITUAL SONS OF GOD, HEIRS OF GOD AND JOINT HEIRS WITH JESUE CHRIST TO BE GLORIFIED ITH HIM** (Romans 8:14-18). We have not been truly dedicated and committed to the **FEASTS OF GOD AND WHAT THEY REPRESENT**. And, since we ministers do not pay second tithe, we are not committed to that tithe and cannot teach the people to be committed to it either. And, since we have lost [or never understood] **THE BASIC FOUNDATIONAL TENANTS OF GOD AND THE CHURCH THEN HOW CAN WE TEACH SUCH TO THE PEOPLE? WE CANNOT TEACH AND TRULY PRACTICE WHAT WE OURSAELVES DO NOT GRASP OR UNDERSTAND!** Here we have "the blind trying to lead the blind (Matthew 23:23-39 and Luke 6:39-42). I am stating very emphatically that I have known personally most of the **BLIND LEADERS OF THOSE BLIND SPLINTER GROUPS AND I KNOW (AS WELL AS GOD) THAT THEY ARE DOING LITTLE MORE THAN CREATING MODERN SPIRITUAL PHARISEES**. These are the specific and powerful words of God and I make no apology for accentuating them! I did not put these words in the Bible - - **GOD DID!** And we are all going to be **JUDGED BY THESE WORDS**

When I read the above statement from this "minister" I could not help but recall the clear teachings of Jesus Christ as found in Matthew 23:23-28. Like the Jews of Christ's time on earth, God's people have been led to **COMMIT THEMSELVES TO WHAT WAS PERCEIVED AS THE BASIC FOUNDATIONS OF THE CHURCH**. These "Basic Foundations" were Sabbath keeping, holy day observances, tithing, church attendance, church government (which meant "AUTHORITY") etc. These were our **rituals** and our **routines** which somehow was supposed to make **IT APPEAR** we are right with God.

The Jews had their own rituals and routines. They were extremely diligent in following these rituals and routines. They had a strict "Sabbath day's journey" and also would carefully tithe every leaf of their herbs and spice plants to make certain they totally fulfilled the tithing law. But note what Christ taught. He first commended the Jews for tithing even the small items (He said, "This you should have done!" vs. 23). But note specifically that Christ corrected them for **NEGLECTING THE WEIGHTIER MATTERS OF THE LAW**. Note what Christ said these "weightier matters of the law" are. They are **JUSTICE, MERCY, AND FAITHFULNESS**. *Please note that Christ specifically taught that we are to be PRACTICING THESE WEIGHTIER MATTERS OF THE LAW SUCH AS JUSTICE, MERCY AND FAITHFULNESS BUT NOT LEAVE THE OTHER MATTERS UNDONE.*

It is **RIGHT** to keep the Sabbath and the holy days. It is right to diligently tithe and to refrain from murder, adultery, theft, lying, etc. These are things **GOD EXPECTS OF HIS PEOPLE!** But doing all these things do not **EARN** a person his salvation and do not prove that those who follow these laws are automatically God's people any more than the Pharisees of Christ's day. The Pharisees obeyed all these laws and yet Christ called them hypocrites, liars and sons of their father the devil.

What did Christ state was PROOF that a person is a true follower of Christ? "By this LOVE FOR ONE ANOTHER shall all know that you are my disciples" (John 13:35). Also we must bear in mind what Christ taught in Matthew 6:12 and 14-15 where He stated that UNLESS WE ARE WILLING AND ABLE TO FORGIVE OTHERS THEIR SINS *GOD WILL NOT FORGIVE OUR SINS!* This is where TRUE CHRISTIANITY IS CLEARLY DEFINED AND IDENTIFIED!

All our righteousness [our law keeping OF AND BY ITSELF] is as filthy rags to God (Isa. 64:6). Job was self-righteously obedient UNTIL GOD CONVERTED HIM (see Job 42:1-6). Paul, before his conversion, was a self-righteous Pharisee. Once he was converted and saw what God really wants from us humans (*CLEANSING OF THE INSIDE OF OUR CUP*) he was able to abhor himself (as did Job). God EXPECTS outward obedience from us but what He really wants for His family is *INTERNAL CHARACTER FROM THE HEART!* A broken and contrite heart that trembles at His word (Isa. 66:2).

Job was an extremely OBEDIENT man from a LEGALISTIC POINT OF VIEW but then learned that God wants us to INTERNALIZE His law and make it a part of our very being. As Christ taught, it is not enough to avoid the physical act of adultery - - one must avoid *THE VERY THOUGHT OR DESIRE TO COMMIT ADULTERY* (see Matt. 5:27-28). The same is true with murder. Christ taught that if we are angry and hateful against another we have already committed murder "in our heart" (see verses 21-22). Now carefully study verses 17-20 to see what Christ actually taught and what we are to follow. Yet the different splinter groups HATE AND CONDEMN OTHERS WHO KEEP THE SABBATH AND HOLY DAYS AND OTHER POINTS OF THE LAW BUT ARE *NOT* A PART OF THAT PARTICULAR "GROUP." Do any of these splinter groups believe and even try to practice James 4:10-12, Matthew 6:14-15 and Romans 14. Have these modern Pharisees never read Mark 9:38 where we find direct instructions from Jesus Christ? I would like even one of these splinter group "ministers" to show me where they are practicing Romans 14:10-13. All these groups are so busy judging and condemning everyone else they never get around to PRACTICING the ways of God. If another brother or sister does NOT see every point exactly like you do or "belong" to their little "group" then WHY CAN'T EACH RELY ON GOD TO REVEAL WHICH ONE IS WRONG. Maybe both are wrong and perhaps both need to change. What right does anyone have to condemn another SON OF GOD if GOD HAS NOT YET REVEALED EVERY TRUTH TO HIM OR HER? It is impossible for me to understand the animosity that exists in the different "CHURCHES" claiming to be "the Church of God" when they are not following even the basic truths Christ taught and are totally unwilling to change their judgmental attitude. One of the leading splinter groups publicly reprimanded one of its popular ministers for speaking at another group not specifically associated with their group. That minister should have told "HIS" church officials where to stuff that reprimand in so uncertain words. A true minister of God will preach the word of God wherever God leads him and no church group has the "authority" to stop him - - BY SPECIFIC COMMAND FROM JESUS CHRIST HIMSELF (see mark 9:38 again).

The point is that we, as true followers of Christ, are to *be DEDICATED TO DEVELOPING THE TRUE NATURE AND CHARACTER OF JESUS CHRIST AND NOT MERE LEGALISTIC OBEDIENCE TO THE LAW THROUGH ITS CUSTOMS AND TRADITIONS.* We are to *REMEMBER THE SABBATH* but what we should remember about the Sabbath is - - *WHAT THE SABBATH REPRESENTS.*

The Sabbath was MADE FOR MAN (Mark 2:27-28). It was MADE when man was made (Gen. 2:2-3). Why was the Sabbath made at the time man was made? It was made (*CREATED*): 1). As a memorial of God as the Creator; 2). As a memorial of creation itself; 3). As a memorial that we are the created beings which are destined to become the literal spirit SONS OF GOD; 4). It keeps us in WEEKLY contact with our Creator; 5). It keeps us in touch with the plan and purpose God is working out through us here on this earth and 6). It is a type of the millennium (the seventh "one thousand year day" of God's plan [seven thousand year "week"] on earth). Are we really using the weekly Sabbath to remind us of all six of these points? Token obedience to the law will net us nothing (as Job and Paul learned before they were converted). Keep in mind that we worship GOD on the Sabbath - - we don't worship the Sabbath.

Those ministers who met in Tulsa were possibly sincere and conscientious. But that just is not enough to fulfill God's requirements (see Matt. 7:21-27). I wonder how long it has been since they individually and personally STUDIED WORD BY WORD the specific and clear teachings of Jesus Christ AS FOUND IN Matthew, chapters 5 through 7, - - as well as the scriptures in this article and APPLIED THESE WORDS TO THEIR OWN PERSONAL LIVES so as to see if they actually understand the "GOALS GOD HAS SET FOR US HUMANS." We must first understand fully God's goals if we hope to have GOOD GOALS for ourselves and be able to teach these goals to the people. One cannot find the correct answers to life's questions *UNLESS HE BEGINS WITH THE RIGHT QUESTIONS* and makes certain that those questions are *ASKED OF ONESELF!*

We are have the responsibility to point out the ways and will of the Almighty UNKNOWN God. We have no religious ax to grind. We are not trying to amass a following after ourselves. We tell you straight out that your salvation IS YOUR PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY and that you should not trust that salvation to "ministers" who actually do not know God but are seeking to build their own religious empire. We do no proselytizing. We never try to talk you into or out of any practice or custom. That is because it is *YOUR* personal responsibility to SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES DAILY WHETHER THESE THINGS ARE SO (Acts 17:11). Our job is to POINT THE WAY TO SALVATION. You then must choose whether you will prove these things to yourself. Since you have now finished reading this article you have now switched THE BALL INTO YOUR OWN COURT (see Ezekiel 33:4-10). The words in this article are true since they come directly from the Word of God - - The Holy Bible. You must now decide what you will do about these matters. The ball is squarely in your court. You and I perhaps will never meet personally (even though I know personally many of those "ministers" who started splinter groups). But, you are destined to meet the words of this article again and again until you get all these matters squared away with God. Remember, your personal opinion of me is not what will judge you or me. But your reaction to these spiritual principles set forth clearly in this article will definitely judge you. There is no escaping that fact! You will be judged by the scriptures found in this article.

You may be one of those who tries to disregard these spiritual principles FOR NOW because they threaten your perceived status with your group but keep in mind that you will be brought before the judgment seat of Christ. You may choose to criticize me for my human flaws but that will not cut any slack it with God for He KNOWS all my human flaws and has clearly advised you of the type of person He chooses to do His work (see I Cor. 1:27-29). You have now had this witness trumpeted to you in clear understandable language. Since I have fulfilled my responsibility toward you by giving you this message, your rejection of this message will NOT affect my personal salvation. But it will affect yours!

Should you choose to do so, you can contact us further by various means. My personal mailing address is: Box 2784, Eugene, Oregon 97402, or e-mail: billgloverlgm@comcast.net or telephone (541) 461-3337 or FAX (541) 461-3666. Or you can contact the home office of this publication.

Since we do no proselytizing, we will not be hounding you to "follow us!" If you wish further contact you will need to make that move. We are here to serve God's people with no strings attached. We do not charge for the services we provide. If you know of someone whom you feel would benefit from our material then give them this article or have them write for their own copy. We will never try to tell anyone what to believe or practice or what not to believe or practice. Your religious beliefs are between you and God. If you have convinced God that you are right in your beliefs then who are we to try and change you? Only God can do that! And God will do just that in the judgment!

Our goal is to provide meaningful spiritual help to God's people who need this help but we make no demands of anyone in return. We have helped people in 21 countries on four continents. It truly is more blessed to give than to receive! Please feel free to tell others of this ministry!

Sincerely, your servant in Jesus Christ! *Bill Glover*

POST SCRIPT: We welcome any honest feedback regarding our ministry and our material. If you have a sincere and honest question about anything we say you should feel free to ask it and we will deal with it objectively. Should we be wrong on any issue you will find that we are more than willing to correct the matter and apologize to our readers! Though we do not argue or debate we are not afraid of honest questions and dialogue.

We believe that God has committed to His true people the GOSPEL (MINISTRY) OF RECONCILIATION (2Corinthians 5:17-21). That Paul, through the inspiration of God, made it crystal clear that we are NOTY to follow men - - even true ministers - - BUT TO FOLLOW JESUS THE CHRIST AND GOD THE FATHEDR (see 1 Corinthians 1:10-15 and chapter 3:1-15) How can anyone NOT see how disgusted and disappointed God is over all the different splinter groups competing with each other over followers when God's people BELONG TO GOD AND NOT ANY SPLINTER GROUP?

Please let us stop being so carnal (as Paul put it) and begin conducting the gospel (ministry) of reconciliation - - reconciliation first with God and then with each other! If Christ is truly living His life in us then how can there be such animosity ?We should all be ashamed!