

RESTORING THE TRUTH – THE WHOLE COUNSEL OF GOD

Our Father, we thank you for the opportunity to come before your feet to worship you, sing hymns of joy and thanksgiving and to give you praise, honor and glory. Bless us on this day of rest and bless the speaking, the message and the hearing. Help us all to understand and incorporate into our life the lessons we need to learn, so that we might be better servants in your hands and better examples of your way of life. We pray that you will enable us to let our light shine forth in clarity, purity and boldness and to look forward in great anticipation to the coming of your Son and our Savior, Jesus Christ our Lord and Master. Amen.

Shabbat shalom! We are half-way through November with Thanksgiving Day on the Thursday the 28th, and the dramatic appearance of the sun-grazer comet ISON in our hemisphere. It potentially should be the brightest after it passes the sun. **Genesis 1:13-16** says that God gives the comets, sun, moon and the stars for signs and for seasons. Ison could be one of the major great signs of the end-times pointing to the coming of the *Great Tribulation* and the *coming of the Messiah*. **Amos 4:12**—we are to “*prepare to meet our God*”, who is coming soon. We are to keep our eyes open to the signs of the times as we prepare, study the Bible and pray.

Article—*Huffington Post*, U.K., (7.1.13) “Britain’s First Atheist Church: The Sunday Assembly Meets in North London.” Britain’s first atheist church held its inaugural meeting on Sunday, gathering in a former church in North London to sing songs and celebrate life—just with no mention of the man upstairs. The Sunday Assembly is a godless gathering set up by comedians Sanderson Jones and Pippa Evans but is more than just a live comedy show. It is championed as a chance for disillusioned former believers, nostalgic atheists and anybody searching for a sense of community, to meet and “turn good intentions into action. With the tag line ‘live better, help often, wonder more’ the brainchild has the pastoral aims of provoking kindness and encouraging the people to volunteer in their local community. Songs such as Oasis ‘Don’t Look Back in Anger’ were sung. The idea has come under attack from both atheists and the religious. Critics have suggested by holding the meeting in an old church (albeit deconsecrated) and by following a format of songs interspersed by reading and addresses, the comedians are at risk of turning atheism into its own sort of religion.” This is a blatant hypocrisy.

Christ’s is going to return in power and glory and coming to rule. Every eye shall see him. He is coming with divine fury to eradicate wickedness and rebellion, to bring salvation, to eradicate sin from the earth and make all things new and rule the kingdom of God on earth in truth and justice for all. You can read this for yourself in the Bible.

Now that I have received a new lens in my right eye I’m able to see a lot better and my vision is restored to where I can read easily. It is a miracle to me; God’s miracles are ongoing. He used

the knowledge and skills of the eye surgeon and his team to accomplish this wonderful gift which allows me to continue the job God has given me to do.

This following letter and question came from a follower of Christ and a friend of ours in Florida. This man has persevered over more than 20 years since he learned the truth of God. “It is hard to believe that it was 20 years ago that you proved to me and Miriam which is the correct Passover and Pentecost; the calendar and more. In Miriam’s last 2 years it was she and I alone for Passover and for the last 3 years it was me alone. But we kept the weekly Sabbath by ourselves since about 1997. It is good mental exercise to discern and separate the wheat from the chaff. I have to go over the doctrines (basics) and re-prove them or the proofs fade and then you get like the offshoots where they act as automations—they never change, never question, and never reprove but become simply Armstrong idolaters.” Amen to that!

“I have no doubts about the Thursday crucifixion and Friday annual holy day (which is also the first Day of Unleavened Bread). The Emmaus ‘third day’ supports this Passover date. Christ was crucified on Thursday, Thursday night Passover and Friday the first Day of Unleavened Bread. Nor do I have any doubts about the Omer count from Abib 16 (the Omer count begins on the day after Passover) to Pentecost. But could the wave sheaf really be offered on the day after the Holy day? Friday was a Holy Day, an annual Sabbath and Saturday was the weekly Sabbath...both days on which no work was to be done. So how could there be any sheaves harvested and then offered on the weekly Sabbath? Edersheim and others say this was cut after the Holy day ended. How does Judaism handle this when the annual holy day, Abib 15 is the day before a weekly Sabbath, as in 30 AD? Do you have any data or research of explanation which solves this problem that appears to be conflicting? I don’t have your depth of research and resources to see the solution and would greatly appreciate your help and response. My 90 year old mind can’t see the solution.”

There is a lot said in my friend’s question. The answer is really very simple. So many people today are blinded by the different churches of God that came out of the Worldwide Church of God and just don’t get the truth. Many people come and go and do not stick with the truth. The problem exists in the lack of perseverance, determination, and lack of consistency. For over twenty-five years I have been teaching the truth of God. Edersheim says in *The Temple and Its Services* that if the new moon occurred on a weekly Sabbath day in ancient Judea, a courier would mount an animal (camel, horse or donkey) and travel for miles to report the sighting of the new moon to the Sanhedrin. That is work compared to using a cycle to cut down a few sheaves of barley to be offered as commanded in the law. There are biblical explanations for what appears to be direct conflicts. The Bible says that if a man’s ox fell into a ditch on the Sabbath day, it was permissible to get the ox out of the ditch. It takes a lot of manpower and effort (work) to pull an ox out of a ditch. There are emergencies which require “work” – resolving. Christ and the disciples who were hungry pulled ears of grain to eat on the Sabbath day—the Pharisees called it “work”. It is alright to cut the wave sheaf *for that offering* on the weekly Sabbath day. It is not contrary to God’s law. It is not working and harvesting a field of grain. It is a ritual that takes a few minutes to obtain the first-fruits of the new grain to offer before God as he commands to be done.

Herbert Armstrong was blinded to what day Passover is, and he got it confused with what is called the Lord's Supper. So the Worldwide Church began keeping what they called the Passover on the night that they thought was the Lord's Supper, and they were wrong on both counts. See my article on proving that ("*A Profound Look at Jesus' Last Week*).

Christ left us an example that we should follow his footsteps. **1 Peter 2:21**—"What glory is it, if, when you are buffeted for your faults, you shall take it patiently? But if, when you do well, and suffer for it, you take it patiently, this is acceptable with God." **Luke 9:62** speaks a lesson to us all—"No man, having put his hand to the plough and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." We must persevere (last) in obedience to God until the end.

In 1974 I stopped working for the Worldwide Church of God, although I remained a member of the church and I determined to keep writing articles on my own. I wrote the book Overcoming Satan, books on prophecy, proof of God, and articles on the pagan holidays, Law and Grace, and major doctrines that I understood at the time. In other word, I proved everything all over again just *to be sure*. When I did leave, I kept the truth that I had proved and rejected the apostasy and Laodocean spirit and idolatry that had taken over the church back into Babylon. Joseph Tkach took the church back into keeping Sunday, Easter, Christmas and wearing of the cross. He got rid the Sabbath and annual holy days. Very few members went back to reprove the doctrines. Some held fast to what they had been taught by Herbert Armstrong in the 30's through the 70's, and others began to leave that church when those changes were made.

But like the man writing this letter, I set out to reprove all the doctrines. When I did, I found that Passover was being kept on the wrong day. The church leadership never repented, but I changed and began keeping Passover on the day that the Jews, Christ and the Apostles kept it. It is not the Lord's Supper. It is the Passover. Pentecost was kept on a Monday every year. Then about 1973 WWCG switched to a Sunday every year. But the truth is that the Omer count begins the day after Passover, beginning at sundown the day before. The 50th day is Pentecost which can occur on any day of the week. God has blessed us for keeping his weekly Sabbath and annual holy days (annual Sabbaths).

It is incredible what churches are doing. It boggles my mind! They are basically counting 50 days from Easter Sunday to keep a Sunday Pentecost which the Catholics call, "Whit Sunday". It is really the day of the ancient pagan fertility goddess, *Maya* and ancient *festival of Maya* which relates to their Easter worship of the pagan goddess, *Astarte*, or the *queen of heaven*. So the Pentecost that they are keeping is pagan and they don't even realize it. By the seduction, diversion and delusion of Satan they are keeping a Passover and Pentecost inspired by Satan, the prince of this world—the devil. Keeping these pagan days is not honoring God and his appointed times, but keeping Satan's counterfeit days in a pagan manner. The Passover is a *family festival* with a family meal together with unleavened bread and wine recounting the miracles that God performed when Israel came out of Israel, not a solemn formal church meeting with the taking of wine and bread (eucharist) in a very similar manner to that of a Catholic pagan mass. The god of this world has blinded those who refuse to obey God.

2 Corinthians 4:1, 3-7—Paul says, "we (apostles and ministers of God) have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, *nor handling the word of God deceitfully*;

but by open demonstration of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. But if our gospel be hidden (veiled), it is hidden to those who are perishing (in understanding): In whom the god of this world has blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and we ourselves are *your servants for Jesus' sake*. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, has shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.”

The truth of God about Passover and Pentecost and the holy days is a great illumination shaft of pure light. It is truth. However, people of the different churches have been blinded by the deception of false teaching, so they do not believe the truth about Passover and Pentecost or the true calendar because they are caught up in the traditions and teachings of men. For one reason or another, they went astray and did not grasp the truth of the matter. It is like being called out of spiritual Babylon, and they go only so far spiritually. It is like a person in Los Angeles, California whose goal is to relocate to a very desirable location in London, England. After leaving L.A. on their way to London, there is a *layover* in Chicago. After arriving in Chicago, having left old ties behind in L.A, a look around Chicago causes the person to decide to stay there instead of continuing on to their true destination which is still a thousand miles away. The person never arrives at their destination because of being distracted and stopping half-way there.

This can be likened to a person who learns about the holy days of God, but did not proceed to learn what days they are and how to keep them and quit half-way. Satan, the devil, is the god of this world. Satan is also called the prince of the power of the air. **Ephesians 2:1-2**—“And you he has quickened (made alive) who were dead in trespasses and sins. In time past you walked according to the course of this world (world's ways), according to the prince of the power of the air, *the spirit that now works in the children of disobedience.*” He has blinded those who do not believe the truth of God and that they need to obey God's command to obey his laws. David says to God in **Psalms 119:18**—“Open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of your law.” Basically law begins with the Ten Commandments. Those are subdivided into the statutes and the judgments which include the holy days of God that reveal the plan of salvation. But if you get mixed up and keep the wrong days, you have gotten side-tracked and led astray.

It is not a waste of time to reprove Bible basic doctrine. Review and reproofing them confirms and reestablishes them, and sinks these roots deeper into our hearts and minds. We are given the weekly Sabbath day so we can review our commitment to God and build upon our foundation of knowledge. This is why we have been given the annual holy days which we keep every year. It has been said that “repetition is the strongest form of emphasis.” Some people think and say that repetition is a waste of time. I do not agree. Even in writing articles, I learned that I need to repeat what I say. What I say, I do not just say it once and expect that everybody is going to get it. If I say it once, it will be forgotten. But the point must be first brought up, then brought up a second time, and then repeated a third time until it begins to sink in and becomes part of the foundation of the individual being taught and with whom I'm communicating. Tell them, tell them, and tell them! Tell them over and over again, but not consecutively which can evoke

boredom or stir up rebuttal and anger. But bring the point back from time to time as God does in reinforcing his truth.

Repeating, reviewing and enlarging upon the principle foundation established is a valuable lesson that all good thinkers know and do. Great discoveries of nature were made by men like Einstein, Sir Isaac Newton and others in chemistry, math and physics because they learned to think and spent time in meditation. A lot of God's people need to review the concepts of the Passover, Pentecost, and the calendar sitting in a chair and just thinking it through and remember why they do not keep Christmas and Easter, or eat unclean meats. Many assume they are unequivocally right and are unwilling to reexamine and reprove their basic Bible beliefs saying "I proved those things twenty years ago" and remain blinded by choice.

Letter continues. "Now most of my best friends in this area have died. I stay in touch via e-mail with some real old friends of 20-30 years back, spread around the states. Most are in off-shoots, the ABCOGs, **Armstrong Based Churches of God** and a few in Messianic Jewish groups. There are still many I know in the local United Church of God and Church of God Western Association (COGWA) groups but I can't really meet with them as one can't really stand the wrong doctrine which gets delivered. They have made it known I would be welcomed but it would be deceit and cover-up on my part. I don't belong there. It would be like attending Seventh Day Adventists groups. My backside can't take two hours of those usual metal seats and listening many times over to boring sermons and the puerile preaching given in most sermonettes."

"Did you ever read George Barna's book called Pagan Christianity? He shows the pagan origin of church buildings, of sermon and service practices, of the elitist ministry as a profession and only teachers. The whole Christian religion structure and culture has pagan sources. 'Christianity did not defeat paganism; it adopted it'— (historian, Will Durant —*The Story of Civilization*). The method was by infiltrating Christianity and taking it over. "HWA gave us a good base, but he got only 80 % there and he adopted Roman Catholic Church government (pyramid structure) and Protestant/Catholic services format and activities. WWCG and Roman Catholic Church Passover services are not dissimilar." *Armstrong was at the top of the pyramid (called apostle general) and acted like a general the way he ran the church.*

Christ had John write down letters to the seven churches on a mail route in Asia Minor beginning with Ephesus on the coast and ending with Laodicea. These became a type of the churches of God through the ages. These churches are all believers/brothers, but they all have different problems. The first letter begins with the Ephesus era and progresses through the other church eras winding up at the final church age, Laodicea whose name means the church "where the people decide" (*lao*=the people; *dicea*=decide)—the people rule the church. The end-time church of Laodicea was noted for being lukewarm. A church who has lost its fiery zeal, thinks it is rich and increased with goods (has the truth) like the churches today. We are living in the Laodocean age/era of the church as a whole. This last church era is the worst one of all.

When the United Church of God was getting started about twenty years ago by people just beginning to come out of the Worldwide Church of God, we met with the UCG and attended their first meeting. The evangelist who spoke made the comment that he was using the same Pentecost notes he had used many years ago when giving his first sermon on Pentecost. This was

the same Pentecost sermon from year to year. His basic conclusion was that the day of Pentecost in **Acts 2:1-15** was the day when the Holy Spirit came upon the Apostles and the church. That is all it meant to him. He had no concept of what it means to be the first fruits and what the original holy day in the Old Testament symbolized and represented. The Jews understand that Pentecost was actually the day that God gave the *Ten Commandments* to Israel on Mount Sinai, the day when the law of God was delivered (Torah) and God married Israel as his people/wife and Israel agreed to accept God as their ruler/husband.

Letter (*concludes*)—"It seems the closer to the truth you get, the more isolated you get. But we and they all operate with trust and faith in those beliefs that God has allowed us to obtain. Most ABACOG beliefs are frozen back to 1986 when HWA died. I don't fault nor condemn them. I have been wrong quite enough on my own over 35 years now. God will get us all thru this and I believe all the offshoot folks are believers and brothers; just in different churches cited in Revelation. I don't argue debatable issues with anyone. Even Sabbath or Sunday is debatable to most Christians. I don't have anyone as a good friend who comes close to agreeing with me. A few closest friends are still Protestants. Tolerance and love comes along with older age. One of my kindest neighbors is a Muslim family—an ex-U.S. Marine and good neighbor."

This letter points out a situation that happens to people. If a person is going to obey God today in this generation and age, you are going to face the feeling of being cut off and isolated from people who are not going to agree with you or believe and understand the truth of God. People are not going to come along. You are going to be like Christian in John Bunyan's book, *Pilgrims Progress*, which is a Christian *allegory of a pilgrim's progress* from this world to that which is to come delivered under the similitude of a dream. Christian, an *everyman* character, is the protagonist of the allegory, which centers itself in his journey from his hometown, the "City of Destruction" ("this world"), to the "Celestial City" ("that which is to come") atop Mt. Zion. Christian is weighed down by a great burden from the knowledge of reading "the book in his hand" (the Bible). This burden is so intense Christian starts his journey to seek deliverance alone because his wife and children can't be persuaded to come with him.

When God calls you to follow him and you begin to follow him and walk in the light of the truth that God gives, you will encounter different situations in your journey and people who from all indications look like they are going the same place you are going and join up with you. But at some point they get distracted by things around them, take the wrong turn, get stuck or lose their courage, become despondent and fall by the wayside when going gets tough and persecution comes up, or find other fellowship.

I thought I would share these things with you, because of the many people that are still caught on the cross-hatches of religious groups and splinter groups instead of coming out of the errors and separating completely from Babylon as God says in **Revelation 18:4**. If we come out of Babylon and do not partake of her sins which have reached up to heaven, we will not receive her plagues. **2 Corinthians 6:11-18**—Paul says, "we have spoken freely to you, Corinthians, and have opened wide our hearts to you. We are not withholding our affection from you, but you are withholding yours from us. You are not restricted by us, but you are restricted by your own affections. (This is what is holding you back from spiritual growth). Now in return for the same, I speak as I would to my children, open your hearts wide to us." Then Paul says, "Do not be

unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? What harmony is there between Christ and Belial (the devil)? What does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? What agreement is there between the temple of the living God and idols? For, we are the temple of the living God. As God has said, “I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people.”

Unbelievers means anyone who does not believe/accept the whole truth of God. Then you are yoked with unbelievers—those who are restricted in what they believe and talk about because their ministers have rejected the truth of God in selected areas, like the calendar and holy days or whatever else it might be. The point is, God inspired the apostle Paul to say to each and every one of us *do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers* (not equal). Do not put yourself under the authority and administration of the minister of a church who does not teach the truth. What fellowship can you really have with those who keep God’s holy days on the wrong days and in the wrong manner? Some ministers coming out of the WWCG are guilty of idolatry. They have put HWA on a pedestal and worship his image. Our fellowship is with the Father and the Son.

1 John 1:1-7—“That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have touched concerning the Word of life—the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us—that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. And these things we write to you that your joy may be full. This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son purifies from all sin.” This is the important fellowship, not fellowship with unbelievers who are blinded and refuse to progress further.

Many people followed Herbert Armstrong and his teachings and some called him an apostle, others called him the Elijah to come in the end-time but without proof. He claimed that he restored the truth of many doctrines to the church. Recently I reviewed some of those claims, some of which are as follows:

- the “*lost ten tribes*” of Israel – the identification and location of the modern day tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh. He got it backwards, Britain is not Ephraim, but Manasseh, and America is not Manasseh but Ephraim.
- Passover
- Pentecost – the 50 day count is to be started on the day after Passover, not after weekly Sabbath
- Church government – copied the Roman Catholic Church

- True calendar – Kept the Jewish mathematical calendar with all of its modifications and postponements, but the months and festivals are to be determined by *observation* of the new moons *at the appointed time*

He was in error on Divorce and Remarriage saying that the only ground for divorce was sex before marriage. *Pornea* means immorality (married or unmarried). There was a lot of truth left un-restored. For the most part, split-off groups from Armstrong have made few changes if any, to restore the truth of God as once delivered, but continue in the same errors and all competing with one another building their own following and emulating Herbert Armstrong.

Paul taught the whole counsel of God and held nothing back. Check it out in the scriptures.

Acts 20:16-24— On his way to be at Jerusalem on Passover, Paul sailed past Ephesus so he would not have to spend time in Asia because he was hurrying to be in Jerusalem, if possible, on the day of Pentecost. So from Miletus he sent to Ephesus for the leaders of the church to come to him. When they arrived he said, “You know from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have lived among you at all seasons, serving the Lord with great humility with many tears and trials, although I was severely tested by the plots of the Jews. You know how *I kept back nothing that was helpful to you, but showed you, and taught you publicly from house to house, testifying both to the Jews and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.*” “Now compelled by the Spirit, I am going to Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me there, except that the Holy Spirit witnesses in every city saying that prison and hardships are facing me. However, I consider my life worth nothing to me, if only I may finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me—the task of testifying to the gospel of God’s grace.”

Verses 15-35--“Now I know that none of you among whom I have gone about preaching the kingdom will ever see me again. Therefore, I declare before you today that I am innocent of the blood of all men. For I have not hesitated to proclaim to declare to you the whole counsel of God. Therefore, *keep watch over yourselves and the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers.* Be shepherds of the church of God which he bought with his own blood. I know that after I leave, savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock. Even from your own number men will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples after them. So, be on your guard! Remember, that for three years, I never stopped warning each of you night and day with tears.” “Now I commit you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified. I have not coveted anyone’s silver or gold or clothing. You yourselves know that these hands of mine have supplied my own needs and the needs of my companions. In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive’.”

2 Corinthians 6:1—“As God’s fellow workers, we urge you not to receive God’s grace in vain. For he says, “In the time of my favor I heard you, and in the day of salvation I helped you.” “I tell you: now is the time of God’s favor, now is the day of salvation. We put no stumbling block in anyone’s path, so that our ministry will not be discredited. Rather, as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: in great endurance; in troubles, hardships and distresses; in

beatings, imprisonments and riots; in hard work, sleepless nights and hunger; in purity, understanding, patience and kindness; in the Holy Spirit and in sincere love; in truthful speech and in the power of God; with weapons of righteousness in the right hand and in the left; through glory and dishonor, bad report; genuine, yet regarded as impostors; known, yet regarded as unknown; dying, and yet we live on; beaten, and yet not killed; sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; poor, yet making many rich; having nothing, and yet possessing everything. We have spoken freely to you.”

Revelation 14:1—this is talking about the second coming of Christ at his return. “Then I looked, and there before me was the Lamb standing on Mt. Zion and with him 144,000 who had his name and his Father’s name written on their foreheads.” We belong to God; we are his people and his church. “I heard a sound from heaven like the roar of rushing waters and like a loud peal of thunder. The sound I heard was like that of harpists playing their harps. And they sang a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders. No one could learn the song except the 144,000 who had been redeemed from the earth.” **Verse 4**—“These are those who **did not defile themselves** with *women* (false churches—Proverbs 5), for they are virgins (chaste/pure/holy). They are the ones who **follow the Lamb** wherever he goes. They were purchased (**redeemed**) from among men and offered as **first fruits** to God and the Lamb. **No lie was found in their mouths; they are blameless.**” These first fruits are the resurrected ones who join Christ (the Lamb) at his second coming.

Let’s read this passage again carefully. These 144,000 are clean spiritually and scripturally. Brethren, we are called to be first fruits. Listen carefully and take heed. Let nothing take away your crown made for you. Amen!