

“The voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted and every mountain and hill brought low; the crooked places shall be made straight and the rough places smooth; the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of the LORD has spoken” (Isaiah 40:3-5).

"A VOICE IN THE WILDERNESS"

Why was I called? Why did God raise me up to begin this end-Time ministry? What is the story behind Triumph Prophetic Ministries? What is reason another ministry is desperately needed in this time of world crisis – “End Time”? Where and why have all the other remnant churches gone into grievous error and sin? Here is the plain truth! Here is the true story behind this end-time Work of God!

William F. Dankenbring

Often I have looked back over my life and reflected on God's dealings with me, and wondered in *amazement* to myself, "Why was I called?" "Why did God call me?" "For what special or specific purpose did He call me?"

Perhaps you have often wondered the same thing about yourself!

We know that Jesus Christ said, "No man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father" (John 6:65). Jesus added, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me *draw him*: and I will raise him up at the last day" (John 6:44).

Obviously, then, none of us called ourselves. It is God who calls us, and chooses us, for His purpose!

Our Calling

The apostle Paul had more to say about this question. he wrote to the Corinthians, "For you see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and *base* things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence" (I Cor. 1:28-29)

Humanly, we would all like to glory in the flesh, in our nobility, or mightiness, or wealth, or wisdom. But God shows here that we cannot do so. Rather, God has called us and chosen us precisely because we are weak, and despised, and base, and virtually non-existent – the scum of the earth – the dregs of the world – the least among men!

Humanly we would like to glory in that which we are, or desire to achieve or accomplish of ourselves, but of ourselves we can do NOTHING spiritually (John 5:30)! Therefore, Paul tells us, "That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him *glory in the Lord*" (I Cor. 1:31).

When we are called of God, we are nothing admired or looked up to in the world. We are less than nothing. Yet, as Paul wrote to the Romans, "For God's gifts and his call can never be withdrawn; he will never go back on his promises" (Rom. 11:29, *The Living Bible*).

Paul added, "And so God's blessings are not given just because someone decided to have them or works hard to get them. They are given because *God takes pity* on those he wants to" (Rom. 9:16).

Those of us in God's Church were specifically *called!* God took pity on us, and lifted us out of the muck and mire of the world!

Why were we called? Specifically, to inherit eternal life as one of the firstfruits – and to reign as kings and priests and teachers during the Kingdom of God (Rev. 5:10). But we were also called to fulfill a role, and to help accomplish the Work of God during these last days – to do our part in God's great purpose and plan in getting the gospel out to all the world as a witness before the end comes (Matthew 24:14)!

Paul wrote the Philippians, "For God is at work within you, helping you want to obey him, and then helping you do what he wants" (Phil. 2:13).

The "Cutting Edge" of Truth

My own calling of God, as I said, I have often reflected over. All the fruits and evidence seems to show clearly and conclusively that God has specifically called me to write and publish books that support His great Work, and provide a foundation of truth – books containing the knowledge He has revealed to me, and to others, who are on the "front lines" of learning new truth, Biblical knowledge, and research, whether it be history, health science, archaeology, or prophecy! He has also called me to publish *Prophecy Flash* magazine, a unique magazine of understanding and in depth knowledge of the truths of God, as well as prophetic insight. And, He has called me to prepare Bible Studies on the "cutting edge," as it were, of new truth and deeper understanding of the truths of God.

I have been told by some in the past, that the books I publish are on the "cutting edge" of truth exploring the frontiers of new knowledge!

However, not everybody appreciates the wonderful books we publish. Nor does everybody appreciate the *Prophecy Flash* magazine, or our Bible Study tapes. *I have my*

"critics," and sometimes they can be very cutting, sarcastic, and bombastic. Sometimes I feel like a martyr, being vilified and slandered and smeared for the good work I am striving to do by the grace of God! Sometimes I feel very strongly and poignantly Jesus' words when He said, "And he that taketh not his *cross*, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me" (Matt. 10:38).

Because some of my writings, and Bible studies, contain NEW truth, and new revelation from God, some people are suspicious, distrustful, and doubtful of the contents or purpose of these writings and tapes. Some accuse me of being a "false prophet." Others worried about alleged "heresy," or "false doctrine." In such cases, what the people who are concerned ought to do is sit down and carefully *read* the material in question, and PROVE IT, one way or the other - and not allow themselves to react superficially, with a purely emotional, glandular response!

Unfortunately, some look upon *conformity as unity*. They would like us all to speak the same things, on every thing, *even if it is in error!* But if we did this, and the end-time Churches refused to accept new truth or revelation, no matter what the source, then the Churches would *cease to grow* in truth and grace. They would begin to atrophy, and wither, like a dead fig tree, and would cease to produce good fruit!

As all living things, we must all either GROW, or die!

However, whenever anything NEW is presented to human beings, even in fields of historical science, it often meets with a great amount of initial resistance – even if it is true! Robert Fulton's idea of a steamboat was initially hooted at with derision and laughter – until he proved to the world that it would work!

Thomas Edison was laughed at and jeered for his attempt to invent an electric light bulb. And people laughed at the Wright Brothers, for thinking they could ever invent a machine heavier than air that would actually fly!

The Principle of Tolerance

Even so, human nature is slow to accept new truth. However, none of us is PERFECT in knowledge. Therefore we should learn to be tolerant of new ideas, new truths, new revelations which we may not have yet investigated or proved. The principle of tolerance is part of the paradox of learning and discovery. If we close our minds to new ideas, we become reactionary, recalcitrant, ossified. We cannot grow. We must strive to be open to new truth which God chooses to reveal to us, and not shut Him out because of preconceived opinions or ideas, prior prejudice, a spirit of intolerance, or an attitude of superiority, pride, or stubborn or even mulish obstinacy.

We should all humbly confess, as Sir Isaac Newton did, that we are all like a little boy standing before a huge seashore of knowledge, before the vast ocean of truth, remaining to be discovered.

Only despots profess to have absolute knowledge. Only tyrants claim to have complete certainty and truth. But the open-minded, humble person should always maintain capacity for re-

evaluation, re-analysis, and even rethinking old concepts, when new knowledge or data bring them into question. Dogmatism is a fool's game which only fools play. When any belief becomes encrusted as dogma, error becomes enshrined and worshiped, and truth lies fallen in the dust.

Oliver Cromwell once said to his compatriots in England during civil war that raged in the land, *"I beseech you, in the bowels of Christ, think it possible you may be mistaken."* His words seem to have fallen on many deaf ears, not interested in proving whether their opinions are right or wrong – even many in the end-time church of God! Unfortunately, those guilty of dogmatism and ossified thinking seldom are willing to accept new facts and embrace new knowledge which would force them to divest themselves of old error and fallacious beliefs which they have held for many years.

It is *hard to change!* As Herbert W. Armstrong has often said, "It is *ten times harder to unlearn old error* than to accept new truth!" It requires a truly converted mind to be willing to always look at the facts, and REPENT, and CHANGE, when it is in error!

Because Triumph Publishing is on the salient edge of the discovery of new truth, there seems to be a lot of sparks flying, criticism, and reproach. Because of this fact, God has taught me that I must have the thick skin of a rhinoceros, and thick hide and immovability of an elephant, and the boldness and courage of a lion!

Character, Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong has said many times, is "to come to know what is right, to decide to do what is right, and to do it, regardless of the consequences."

Thus, for me to persist in the quest for truth, in the face of opposition and reproach, requires character of steel, and iron resolution – an iron will determination, with the help of the Spirit of God!

Would it be all right if I were to "compromise" with any of the new knowledge or revelation God gives to me? If I believe others might not accept it, should I just store it somewhere, and wait for a more "propitious time" to reveal it or share it? Should I just bury it somewhere, out of fear that others might not think well of me? This very idea was suggested to me in years gone by, by a very personal friend, whom I had considered a rather close friend, as we had worked for years together in the "Personal Correspondence Department" of the Worldwide Church of God, during the somnolent sixties and roaring seventies. However, I spurned such advice as being mischievous and false, coming from Satan the devil, the arch-adversary of truth and who will stoop to anything to squelch and stomp out "truth." He will even "compromise" with it, so long as it isn't being "proclaimed" and "preached"!

The Spirit of Compromise

Herbert Armstrong, in a "Personal" in the December 1976 *Good News* magazine asked a similar question. He queried: "Wouldn't it be all right to compromise, 'just a little,' on some 'unimportant minor point'?"

He later answered the same question by saying, "Nevertheless, *if we begin to compromise with God's TRUTH, even in smallest, slightest manner, we have allowed Satan to get a foot into the door of the Church, and soon he will push open the door (he is stronger than we) and take over the whole Church. A little leaven leavens the WHOLE LUMP!*"

Mr. Armstrong continues, "I have been charged with the commission of KEEPING GOD'S WORD. Keeping it inviolate – NO COMPROMISE! I have NEVER compromised with God's TRUTH – regardless of the cost or the circumstances. I never shall!"

However, Mr. Armstrong went on, "I *will* CHANGE whenever proved wrong. I will accept NEW TRUTH as often as PROVED to be new truth to me or to the Church.

"But I will not compromise with the truth! I never have!" He sums up: "I won't compromise – *not even 'just a little.'*"

I feel exactly the same way, about any new knowledge or TRUTH which God in His divine mercy has revealed, or will reveal, to me!

I cannot compromise! I will not! I shall not! I dare not! To compromise is to slap Jesus Christ, the Revelator, right in the face – it is to shame and dishonor Him! To compromise with the TRUTH of God, as He reveals it, is to despise the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and to walk all over His bloodied body!

In an article in the December 1978 *Plain Truth*, Herbert Armstrong acknowledges, "Many NEW truths have come to light in the past thirty years. Some have been revealed through various of God's ministers. And also God has continued to reveal important and basic truths through me."

We Are All Human

Even so, we are all human, We all are capable of making mistakes. Mr. Herbert Armstrong wrote in the January 1985 *Good News*, "We are all human. We are all fallible. I have been wrong. I have made mistakes. The same is true of all those God is using in HIS WORK."

He goes on, "God says, 'PROVE all things.' That means *you* are fallible. That means all the 'great' men are fallible! ALL are human. ALL can be wrong – and nearly all are. The *whole world* is DECEIVED (Revelation 12:9). That means its religious leaders and churches are deceived!

"The very recognition of that fact is the *beginning* of right knowledge. We do recognize it – and that we ourselves could be wrong. That is the *first step* toward coming out of the fog of error and deception, starting toward truth."

Herbert Armstrong adds, with sharp insight, "It is not a matter of who has the greater intellect. A man may have the highest IQ in the world, and in his intellectual VANITY refuse to

admit he could be wrong – reject all correction – and thus embrace error and deception."

Therefore, says Mr. Armstrong, "The second step, if you would know TRUTH, is to be *willing* to admit being deceived or in error, and to reject it and accept truth new to me – when *proved* even though unpopular – even though it cuts me off from my family, friends, associates or club members – even though everything in my selfish and vain nature rebels against it! Am I willing to *act on* it – OBEY the truth – no matter what the cost?"

This modern day servant of God adds, "To find and live the TRUTH requires a HUMBLED mind." He asked incisively, "Did you ever know a person of great intellectual powers who did not have the kind of VANITY that shrinks from confessing he has been WRONG – and has misled others?" I know of several such people – ministers in the end-time churches of God – who have acted in this manner! Such an attitude is a shame and a reproach to them!

Mr. Armstrong continued in this article, "But God had humbled me. He brought me to repentance and faith. And He opened my mind to HIS TRUTH by the gift of His Holy Spirit.

"But *I had to be willing, continuously, to confess being wrong*, and to embrace truths constantly NEW to me."

How many people do you know, who are willing to do that? How many are humble enough to publicly admit it and confess it when they are wrong?

Precious few, indeed!

We must all be willing to confess error, and to admit being wrong, and to CHANGE, and to embrace truths new to us, if we are to really GROW in "grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ," as Peter wrote 1900 years ago (II Pet. 3:18).

Even as Mr. Armstrong wrote, I, too, have found, that "As I studied a portion of the Bible, I could now understand it. But I had to *walk in the 'light' as* God opened my mind to see. Regardless of the cost in the esteem of men, or in countering opposition and persecution, I had constantly to BE WILLING to follow GOD and not man. . .

"It is a matter of WILLINGNESS – not of superior and lofty minds. It is a matter of being LED by GOD'S SPIRIT into His ways that are so CONTRARY to this world's established customs and beliefs, not of personal human powers."

Mr. Armstrong says he did not start the Work of God, in his day, of his own accord at all. He added, "IT IS GOD'S DOING!" Even so I say of this END-TIME WORK of God, called Triumph Prophetic Ministries (Church of God), even though it is very small, compared to various other end-time church groups, *this is not a work of "mere men."* I did not start it of my own accord at all. I did not want to do it. Or desire to. I desired to stay in the church – if only the church would be righteous and serve God in truth. But it went astray. It cast me out! So I determined to steadfastly obey God, regardless.

It never entered my mind to begin a NEW WORK. IT IS GOD'S DOING! As Mr. Armstrong wrote, "By circumstances, God forced me to submission. The living JESUS CHRIST so manipulated events and the force of circumstances that he literally PLUNGED me into His work. It is not my work – it is THE VERY WORK OF GOD."

Mr. Armstrong stated, "And *THIS* can be easily proved, to those willing to know the TRUTH!" *So I say to you, right now, THIS is the very work of GOD – and it is NOT “my work” – and this can be EASILY PROVED by those willing to know the TRUTH!*

How This Work of God Began

Even so, this present "Work" also was begun by Christ, through me, through the pressure and force of circumstances beyond my personal control. God led me throughout my life. He brought me to Ambassador College in Pasadena, California, at age 18, to attend as a full-time student. I entered the Freshman Class in the fall of 1959. I was still "wet behind the ears," and very naive and inexperienced. I quickly saw, however, that Ambassador College was not the "Kingdom of God." There was much wickedness and sin there, and division under the surface – and politics and hypocrisy.

During this time, however, God trained and taught me, through His Word, and led me to serve full-time in 1963, upon graduation, in the Letter Answering Department ministry. For several years I worked there, and became the most prolific letter answerer they had. God then began using my talents as a writer for the *Good News*, *Tomorrow's World*, *Plain Truth* magazines, and the *Ambassador College Bible Correspondence Course*. And then He arranged circumstances to have me begin work on a book on creation versus evolution, and a series of Bible courses on Health, and Proof of the Bible. But these projects were all stopped in mid-stream, and in summer of 1974 I found myself suddenly without a job, terminated, in a political power-play of Machiavellian proportions, when Garner Ted Armstrong "fired" the entire Plain Truth staff and the chief editor, Dr. Herman Hoeh, in a sudden unexplained "blitzkrieg" move.

Apparently Garner Ted Armstrong felt there was "disloyalty" to him personally among staff members. That may have been true, since he had been revealed to be a clandestine womanizing seducer of young college co-eds, and a whore-monger, and despite these revelations Herbert Armstrong believed he had sincerely repented and could be trusted, so he placed him in charge of all Church operations. This was in 1973-74. But whereas Dr. Hoeh was "relocated" to a "counseling" ministry at the time of the sudden staff dismissal and firings, I was "let go" and given my "walking papers," with nary so much as a sad apology or a fond "farewell."

It was at this time, with no more support than faith and a desire to continue serving God, directly and personally, that I embarked on a new career publishing BOOKS, and inaugurated my own publishing company, called "Triumph Publishing."

In the course of the next 12 and one half years, I published nineteen books, including books on Bible prophecy, Proof of God, basic books on Church Doctrine, and many others -- books read by thousands of people. God blessed the new infant publishing work, although we

experienced many trials and tests along the way.

Finally, though, in 1987, one year to the very day of the death of Herbert Armstrong, I was "put out" of the Worldwide Church of God by its new administration – at the personal decision of Joseph [Judas] Tkach, Sr. He wanted no interference from me, as it turned out, as he began to lead the church in a direction 180 degrees DIAMETRICALLY OPPOSITE to ALL the basic, underlying teachings of Herbert W. Armstrong, putting the "lie" to Mr. Armstrong's entire ministry and life's work!

Knowing this was going to happen, God raised up this present Work, which had been "co-existing" with the Worldwide Church of God during the life-time of Herbert Armstrong, and brought it into full independence in January, 1987. It was at this time that we were led by God's Spirit to begin publishing *Prophecy Flash*, then a 12 to 20 page newsletter, and Bible-based reprint articles. Today, *Prophecy Flash* is a full magazine of about 88 pages, published bi-monthly, with about 4,000 subscribers. In addition, God is using us to reach about 500 people regularly with our Bible Study cassette tape programs, including many prisoners, and over 100 people by CDs of our Bible studies. But most come in contact with us through our websites on the internet -- at www.triumppro.com and www.triumphpro.org.

Although this may seem "small," in the eyes of many, it is a precious work. Jesus said, "Fear not, *little flock*" (Luke12:32). The word for "little" here means, literally, *micro*, as in *microcosm* and *microscopic*! In other words, God's TRUE Work is so small you can *barely detect it!*

Although we are very small, God Almighty and Jesus Christ at His right hand have blessed this Work, and given us the opportunity to discover and learn many precious NEW TRUTHS – truths which are easily proven, and yet viciously and vigorously DENIED by ALL of the other "off-shoot" branches of the former Worldwide Church of God, not to mention that church itself, which has plunged all the way back into mainstream Protestantism and Scriptural apostasy -- Babylon the Great!

How to Handle "New Truth"

When Mr. Herbert Armstrong began learning God's truth, it was revealed to him "a truth, a subject, a teaching, or a doctrine at a time" (Feb. 1972 *Tomorrow's World*, "Personal"). He did not get it all at once.

He wrote, "There were instances where, having felt I had come to understand the true Biblical teaching on a certain subject, other Scriptures discovered later put a different light on it. *I had, on occasion, to confess I had been in error, and to correct it.*"

He says, "I did not get it all *perfectly* at the beginning. No one could," he confessed, "And sometimes, in the light of other Scriptures, I had to confess error *and correct it.*"

Mr. Armstrong writes, "*There were at least two occasions when I was accused by hostile women, bent on discrediting me, of error. On more thorough research, in these two instances, I*

discovered I had unknowingly been in error – and they were correct. Humiliating or not, I openly and publicly corrected these errors at once."

Some, unfortunately, are only willing to admit error, or to be corrected, when it comes from an *authority above them!* They would never admit error when corrected by some lowly no account, or some lay member. If two hostile women brought a new truth to such modern end-time "ministers" – without a doubt, they would summarily cast the women out of the Church of God, and brand them as heretics, and forbid church members to have any connection or fellowship with them whatsoever!

Do you see the difference in attitude, between Herbert Armstrong, and the attitudes of these other "end-time ministers," who all claim to follow in his footsteps, and who profess to be wearing "his mantle"?

May God help you to understand, and to see through these modern imposters, and "show-boaters" and "pretenders"!

Mr. Armstrong wrote, "To confess and correct error is to be branded a false prophet!

"Yet they are all HUMAN. They are ALL subject to error, and so are YOU – and so am I – and so is this Work of God. Even though it is God's Work, directed, empowered and blessed by Him, He carries it on through frail, weak HUMANS, and we humans are ALL of us subject to mistakes!"

Mr. Armstrong continues, "If and when we find one [an error] in the future, we shall correct it! The one who follows that principle is the *MOST FREE FROM ERROR!*

"So, confessing such an error is one of the SUREST proofs to identify the people through whom the living Christ IS WORKING – and whom HE is USING!" (italics in quotation mine).

Why This Ministry Is NEEDED

What a statement! Yet the "fruits" prove beyond any doubt that ALL of the end-time "churches" that came out of Worldwide have REFUSED TO ADMIT ERROR – *to confess that they have been WRONG on such major doctrinal points as the true date of observing Passover, and the true manner, and the correct date to observe Pentecost! On these two TEST COMMANDMENTS they have all FAILED miserably!*

God raised up Triumph Prophetic Ministries, and He revealed to us the correct dates to observe Passover and Pentecost. It was nothing "spectacular," I suppose. I studied into these issues with an open mind, and came to see that the Jews have been observing the correct dates for thousands of years, and never lost this fundamental truth! Yet all the end-time branches of the churches of God, who observed the "annual holy days," *all were in error on this major point of truth!*

How can we explain this? Why are they so oblivious to the clear and precious truth?

WHY are they so BLIND?

Is it because they are together fulfilling the role prophesied in the book of Revelation -- the role of the end-time LAODICEAN CHURCH? God says of that church, "So, then, because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing, and knowest not that thou art **wretched, and miserable, and poor, and BLIND, and naked . . .**" (Rev.3:16-17).

Thre Vital New Truths and Understanding!

Look at three major "fruits" of this Work of God, Triumph Prophetic Ministries (Church of God)! Nobody else teaches these things, to our knowledge, on the face of the whole earth, at this time!

1) In the last twenty years, I have written many articles proving from many points of view that Passover should be celebrated on Nisan 15, after the "preparation day" of Nisan 14, when the original Passover lambs were killed (Exo.12:6). The Jews have been right all along! Read our articles "When Should Passover Be Observed?", "Keep the Passover Right – or Perish!", "A New Look at the Passover," "The Real Meaning of BenHa Arbayim," "When Should We Observe the New Testament Passover?", and "The Incredible Plot against the Passover!" And study our four Bible Correspondence Course lessons on the Passover.

2) I have also been led by God to write many articles proving the true date Pentecost should be observed – fifty days after the Passover, which occurs on Sivan 6, each year. Read our articles, "How Should We Count Pentecost?", "Pentecost – the Final Answer!", "A New Look at Pentecost," "When Should We Observe Pentecost?", "Pentecost – Sunday or Sivan 6", and "Pentecost – New Testament Proof!"

In other words, the concept of a "Sunday" Pentecost is not only unbiblical, it is WRONG! It is a sinister deception foisted off upon the unsuspecting church by a wily and cunning devil!

3) God also revealed to me the TRUTH about His holy calendar, the basic underlying foundation for all His annual holy days. The deplorable truth is that the common-accepted "Jewish calendar" is wrong – the Jews went astray in 358 A.D. and CHANGED GOD'S CALENDAR, corrupting the true calendar by adding "postponements," based on HUMAN TRDITIONS, and abolishing the God-given commandment to "observe the New Moons" to determine the beginnings of months!

God's calendar is HOLY – it is an abomination for men to "tamper" with and "change" God's holy time-table of festivals and keeping record of the months and time itself!

Many, today, keep "pretend" Feasts which are a sham and empty fiction, because they observe the WRONG DATES of a MAN-MADE CALENDAR, based on human "traditions," which Yeshua/Christ said, "**Do not follow . . .**"!

How many *years* have we spent not acknowledging the Creator's own reckoning of TIME? He is the One who set the heavenly bodies in their orbits to determine the correct foundation of TIME and the Calendar! (Gen.1:14-16). He is the One who set the New Moons to determine annual Festivals and Holy Days (Psalm 104:19). He commands, "Blow the trumpet AT THE TIME OF THE NEW MOON, at the full moon, ON OUR SOLEMN FEAST DAY" (Psalm 81:3), "for this is a STATUTE for Israel, a LAW of the God of Jacob" (same verse).

It is not good "enough" to observe any other day than those appointed times which are appointed by God Himself! Being a day or two or three, or even a month "off," due to human interference and changes to God's own timetable – His own divinely-inspired calendar – is an egregious SIN in the sight of God – an example of DISOBEDIENCE and LAWLESSNESS!

Now there is an alternative to celebrating the annual Feasts on the *wrong days according to a man-made calendar system based on and governed by Jewish rabbinic traditions and unbiblical rulings!* No longer do we need to keep "holy" days God has not declared "holy," or to fail to observe the days God has really determined as "**holy to Yahveh**"! Write for our booklet, "A New Look at God's True Calendar," "What's All The Furor over Postponements", "When Does the Year Begin?", and "Can Passover be Observed before Spring?" They will enlighten your eyes and give you precious new understanding.

These are just some of the major re-discovered TRUTHS God has revealed to us, and to me, personally.

But have any of the off-shoot churches that came out of Worldwide, when it plunged into doctrinal apostasy, been willing to look at the evidence – ascertain the facts – and REPENT, and accept these wonderful foundational truths? Don't hold your breath.

No! Not a single one!

Nevertheless, it is God's intent that there be an END-TIME WITNESS – a Work that will truly serve Him, and proclaim His true MESSAGE to a wicked and rebellious world, as well as to a rebellious end-time Church! For this reason, He raised up this Work of God.

Different Office and Duties

God has called each one of us to do a particular job. Whatever it is, it is *important* to God, and to His Work! How are we to best understand our calling?

The apostle Paul wrote: "Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of Spirit is given to every man to profit withal [that is, to profit others and God's Work as a whole]. For to *one* is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to *another* the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of MIRACLES; to another prophecy [or inspired preaching]; to another

discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues [foreign languages]; to another the interpretation of tongues [who can't speak them but can interpret them]; but ALL THESE worketh that one and the self same Spirit, dividing to every man severally *as he will*" (I Cor. 12:4-11).

This passage of Scripture means, GOD gives the different GIFTS of His Spirit to each man, according to God's will, for the benefit of the Church of God and the Work God is doing! This isn't a matter of OUR choice. It's a matter of God's doing! He is the One who decides WHERE to place His Spirit, and its gifts, and HOW they will be used in His Church. This is a matter of *God's will – not man's will*.

We have no say-so of how God will use us in His Work. I am an instrument in His hands, to use where He chooses, for the benefit of the overall Work of God! – and, at the same time, for my greatest benefit, although I may not necessarily *see* it at the time! It was "hard" being disfellowshipped "without due process" and "without cause" by the ministers of the Worldwide Church of God in January 1987. I didn't want to be ejected from the Church, the body of believers, and be cast out on my "own."

Nevertheless, I knew I could not compromise, or come "crawling back" to a church which had already begun to go astray, which was misusing and abusing "authority," and which was in "denial" of new truth which God had brought to them through me. In this case, the "new truth" was a new understanding of the amazing prophecies of Daniel 8 and the "2300 day prophecy." The new Tkach church government rejected it completely, without even looking into it. They decided to "disfellowship" me because of my independent publishing of religious books, and my intent on publishing a newsletter at the time. They viewed this as "competition," but Herbert Armstrong had allowed my book publishing business to continue without opposition from its inception in 1974 until his death in 1986 – almost 12 years.

As a recently disfellowshipped person, I had to pray and endure, and search the Scriptures for what God wanted me to do. He made it plain to me that I should continue preaching and teaching the truth of God, no matter what the consequences or circumstances. Some things may be hard to understand, at the time they happen – such as being disfellowshipped – but we must learn *to accept* them, in FAITH, and go on, doing our best to serve God in the job and position where He places us!

Notice what Paul says: "But now hath *God set the members every one of them in the body [in the Church, and in the Work of God, today], as it hath pleased HIM*" (I Cor. 12:18).

This isn't man's decision, It's not, never has been, up to *man*. **GOD IN HEAVEN** determines these things!

OUR responsibility isn't WHERE we are used in God's Work, or even HOW we are used. OUR responsibility is HOW WE FUNCTION in the job *God* gives us. YOUR duty is to do your BEST in WHATEVER job God gives you! God Himself put me in the writing and ministerial work, through Ambassador College. And then He called and chose me to publish books, in order to keep the truth of God alive. And then He inspired me to begin *Prophecy Flash* magazine, as a

final "witness" to this end-time wicked and rebellious world, and as a final "witness" against the works of the end-time churches that profess His name, but deny Him in their works and doctrines and false teachings!

Herbert Armstrong -- "NOT a Prophet!"

In the February 1972 *Tomorrow's World* magazine, Herbert W. Armstrong asserted emphatically, so that no one could miss the point: "Thousands know that I, personally, have been called and chosen for a very definite commission in God's service. But I have definitely NOT been called to be a PROPHET. . ."

He continues, "*Emphatically I am NOT a prophet, in the sense of one to whom God speaks specially and directly*, revealing personally a future event to happen or new truth, or new and special instruction direct from God -- separate from, and apart from what is contained in the Bible. And I never have claimed to be."

Mr. Armstrong continued, writing in 1972, "There is no such human prophet living today!" And, of course, he was absolutely right! If there were any at that time, I surely didn't know of them! The only ones I knew would have to be called FALSE prophets! This frank admission and confession by Herbert W. Armstrong certainly puts the LIE to the statement and belief that he was the "Elijah" prophesied to come before the return of Christ! Read our article, "Is Herbert W. Armstrong the Elijah to Come as Many Believe?"

But does this mean that God will not raise up men to the station of prophets during these last days, immediately prior to the second coming of Jesus Christ?

The Office of "PROPHET"

The answer must be an equally emphatic and resounding, *NO!*

The office of prophet is very clearly one of the offices which Jesus Christ ordained for His Church. He distributes gifts in the Church through the Holy Spirit. As the apostle Paul wrote, "But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom . . . to another *prophecy*" (I Cor.12:7-10).

Paul emphatically stated, "*And God hath set some in the church*, first apostles, secondarily, PROPHETS. . ." (v.28). He goes on to ask, "*Are all prophets?*" (v. 29).

In the New Testament church there were "prophets." "Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers . . ." (Acts 13:1). "And in these days came prophets from Jerusalem unto Antioch. And there stood up one of them, named Agabus, and signified by the Spirit that there should be great famine throughout all the world, which came to pass in the days of Claudius Caesar" (Acts 11:27-28).

In fact, Paul tells us, the Church of God is "built upon the foundation of the apostles *and the prophets*, Jesus Christ being the chief corner stone" (Eph.2:20).

God Does the Calling

Did the original twelve disciples choose to become apostles of God, and then fit themselves for such a mission in life? No – notice the words of Jesus Christ: "Ye have NOT chosen me. BUT I HAVE CHOSEN *YOU*, and *ordained* you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain" (John 15:16).

This should be perfectly *plain*. They did not seek this office. Why, Peter and his brother and cousins were simple *fishermen*. When they began following Christ, they *STILL* had no idea of what really lay ahead of them. They thought Jesus would set up a physical kingdom on earth, right then and there. They had no idea He was training them and commissioning them to become *APOSTLES* of His Church! They thought, at best, they would be His aides and governors and assistants in administering a physical kingdom which He would establish!

But they were wrong, weren't they?

Jesus called them for a *PURPOSE* – to become "fishers of men." They were called and chosen, because of natural ability, strength and talents [along with their personal weaknesses] to become pillars in the Church – the *FOUNDATION* of the Church of God (Eph. 2:20), along with the prophets!

The Prophets and Patriarchs

But what about the men of God of old? Did Abraham choose to become the "Father of the faithful"? No – look at the record. "Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country . . . and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing" (Gen. 12:1-2). Again, you see, *GOD* did the choosing. He *APPOINTED* Abraham to this high office (he was a prophet, but much more than a prophet – the original *promises* were made to him!).

And, of course, what about Moses? Moses was one of the *GREATEST MEN IN* the Bible – responsible for writing the *LAW*, the first five books of Scripture! Did he choose this awesome job? "And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush . . . And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. And when the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, *God called* unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I" (Exo.3:23).

Moses had a right attitude – his heart was right. He wanted God to perform everything He said He would for Israel. But Moses, himself, did not begin to feel worthy to be the chosen vessel of God to *DO* these things! Moses was well aware of his weaknesses. He objected. "O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant: but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue" (Exo.4:10).

Do you see how Moses tried to get out of it? *Vanity* was not his problem. He was,

perhaps, too negative, too self effacing, and didn't have *enough* confidence. God had to "jack him up" and encourage him, "Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing. or the blind? have not I the LORD? Now therefore Go, and I will be with thy mouth, and TEACH thee what thou shalt say" (vs. 11-12).

Still, Moses was reticent – and God had to get strong with him – and COMMAND him to go, telling him Aaron would help him where he was weak!

When God called David to be king over Israel, he was only a *runt* of a family – the youngest of eight, the tail-ender of the brood – a young shepherd boy. Samuel wanted to anoint one of David's older, more powerful appearing brothers – but God said, "*Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as a man seeth; for a man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart*" (I Sam. 16:7).

When the older brothers were paraded before Samuel, he told Jesse, "The LORD hath *not chosen* these" (v.10). No one thought about bringing David before Samuel. "There remaineth yet the youngest," Jesse said, thinking, "Who would ever want to see David? He's just a youngster – a boy!" And he added, "behold, he keepeth the sheep" (v.11). But when David came bounding in, God told Samuel, "ARISE, anoint him: for this is he" (v. 12).

David naturally, had NO IDEA of what they wanted with him! He did NOT choose himself to become KING over Israel! God chose him! He was merely a young lad, serving God as a shepherd – and he was probably very content with being a shepherd out in the hills, where he could commune with God and talk with Him, while composing beautiful music under the stars, as he drew close to God!

Let's go a little further. What about Isaiah? When God called him to be a prophet, and showed him an awesome vision of His Throne, Isaiah cried out. "Woe is me! for I am undone [Heb., cut off; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts" (Isa.6:5).

Isaiah did not feel worthy, either. Yet God cleansed him, and converted him, and inspired him to be a mighty prophet!

Jeremiah was another young lad, like David, whom nobody would have paid any attention to. Yet God said to him, "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb, I sanctified thee, and I ORDAINED thee a *prophet* unto the nations" (Jer. 1: 5). What was Jeremiah's response on learning of this?

"Then said I, Ah, Lord GOD! behold, *I cannot speak! for I am a child*" (v. 6). God, however, did not listen to his excuses as to why he could not be a prophet. God had chosen him, and that was it! God answered Jeremiah, "Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak. Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the LORD" (vs. 7-8).

Jeremiah had no choice about the matter. God didn't ask him, "Would you like to be a prophet?" God simply told him he was chosen to be a prophet – and that was that!

Jonah was another chosen to be a prophet by God – but he tried to run away. He finally came to see there was nowhere to run, no way out for him. Finally, Jonah repented of running away from his responsibility – and God sent him to preach to the city of Nineveh, prophesying its downfall.

Notice! All these great men of God were CALLED by God to do a job – to perform a "work." They did not have high opinions of themselves. They were not inflated with ego. They were "small" people, as the world would look upon them – and yet God called them, and prepared them, and then USED them to do His Work for that time and age! What about us, today?

God's Standard

Will God justify and honor one man more than another, merely because of his office? Does God have "respect of *persons*?" Of course not!

David wrote: "Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie: to be laid in the balance, they are altogether lighter than vanity" (Psa.62:9).

Isaiah wrote: "Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a *very little* thing." And, "All nations before him are as NOTHING; and they are counted to him *less than nothing*, and VANITY" (Isa. 40:15,17).

God's true servants are well aware of this. They are not inflated with self-importance. They do not strut in pride and vanity, proud of their office, preening their feathers and glorifying themselves. They know – they *KNOW* there is no unrighteousness with God, and that God will judge each man fairly, not according to his office but according to HIS WORKS! For this reason, God's true servants humble themselves – strive to remain "small" in their own sight. They fight against getting the "big head" over their position of honor and respect. They don't allow their office to "turn their heads." They would be AFRAID of the descending judgment and wrath of God! They *KNOW* God is able to humble and abase a man who allows pride to lift him up!

In some respects, although he was a minister and an apostle of God, Paul felt somewhat inferior to the other apostles. He wrote, "For I am the *least* of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God" (I Cor.15:9). It should be plain, Paul did not have a big head over his job and duty. He felt very little – very humble. He did not "exalt his office."

Nevertheless, of course, Paul did have great respect for the OFFICE which God gave him. He did not belittle it or its responsibility. "But by the grace of God I am what I am," he said, "and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I labored MORE

ABUNDANTLY than they all: yet *not I*, but the GRACE of God which was with me" (v.10).

Paul felt very humble. And so God used him very much. Paul never glorified himself, or his office. He wrote the Ephesians, "Whereof I was *made* [not took to myself, or made myself, or because of my merits I "qualified"] a minister, according to the GIFT of the GRACE of God given unto me by the effectual working of HIS power [not Paul's own ability and struggling, or choosing!]."

He continued, explaining how he felt about this tremendous "honor," as most people would look at it – but realizing that as GOD looked at it, it was not an honor or badge for him, it was a DUTY, a job, he had to perform – Paul continued, "Unto me, *who am less than the least* of all saints, is this *grace given*, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ" (Eph. 3:8-9). He appreciated God's calling. He did not "put it down," or "take it for granted," or deprecate it, or diminish its importance. But, on the other hand, he never got a "swelled head" over it, or an "inflated ego," either!

"The Calling and Gifts of God"

Paul writes, "For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance" (Romans 11:29).

God calls whom He calls, and chooses whom He chooses, for each job He needs to have done.

Therefore, God tells us through the apostle Peter, "As every man hath *received the gift*, even so MINISTER THE SAME one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If any man speak, let him speak as the *oracles of God*, if any man minister, let him to it *as of the ability which God giveth*: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen" (I Pet.4:10-11).

The apostle Paul added, with divine insight, "So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. *Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us*, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching, or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness. *Let love be without dissimulation*" or pretence and falsehood (Romans 12:5-9).

I know, from the fruits, and the history of God's dealing with me, that He has called and chosen me to write and publish and proclaim His end-time Message – His Truth – to a dying, sin-sick world of suffering and wickedness. God has called and chosen me to go forth and to "bring forth much fruit." He says: "Ye have not chosen me, but *I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain*; that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father, in my name, he may give it you" (John 15:16-17).

The *Prophecy Flash* magazine, the Bible Study Tapes, the reprint articles, the books of Triumph Prophetic Ministries – these are the tools God has given me to use to serve Him at this

time and place. I know that God Himself raised up this Work. I know that it is HIS Work.

I know that God has blessed me with certain "gifts" in this regard.

Even so, in these "last days" of this present world system, I rejoice in the gifts and calling God has given me as a writer, speaker, leader, and an instrument in His hands to reveal amazing new truths of God – to write with divine power and inspiration! I thank Him often and repeatedly for "calling" me, and giving me the talents, experiences, training and ability to preach and teach, to make prophecies plain and understandable, to make doctrine clear and easy to comprehend. I thank Him also for the ability to make Bible Study tapes, CDs, DVDs, and to post our Bible Studies on our websites on the internet! I thank Him also for those whom He has given to us, to help us so mightily and powerfully to continue and to accomplish this end-time ministry!

Where would we be without all our faithful co-laborers and co-workers? Nowhere, that's where! God sent each one of them to help us, and how we appreciate their effort and sincere help, their financial donations and contributions, their self-sacrifice, and desire to serve in any way possible!

We are very thankful for God's people, and Paul reminds each one of us: "For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered (served) to the saints, and do minister (or serve)" (Heb. 6:10). God also encourages us when He says: "Keep up the good work and don't get discouraged, for you will be rewarded" (II Chron.15:7, *The Living Bible*).

God calls each to do a special, particular job – so the over all WORK OF GOD can be done of preaching the gospel to the world and bearing witness to the TRUTH of God, BEFORE Jesus Christ returns! (Matt. 24:14; Mark 13:10.)

We all have a job to do! Even though you may not be called to be a minister, YOUR job is important!

The Purpose of Triumph Prophetic Ministries

Why did God pick me to do this particular "job" or "Work"? What qualifications do I have? Have I "exalted myself" to this position and responsibility?

Some, judging by the appearance, may conclude that such is the case. But Jesus Christ says, "Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment" (John 7:24).

The apostle Paul also says, "PROVE ALL THINGS; hold fast that which is good" (I Thess.5:21). Solomon wrote, "The simple believeth every word, but the prudent man looketh well to his going" (Prov.14:15). The way to prove whether a man is truly serving God, or himself, or Satan the devil, is to check up on him, and judge "by the fruits" (Matt.7:20).

Isaiah wrote, "To the law and to the testimony [of the apostles and prophets]: If they

speak not according to *this word*, it is because there is NO LIGHT in them" (Isaiah 8:20).

The way to evaluate this "work," and every other "ministry," is to compare them with the Word of God, and judge according to the "fruits." Who is preaching the TRUTH? To whom is God revealing NEW TRUTH? Where is new understanding coming from?

We should never assume, or take any thing for "granted." *We could be wrong!* It never hurts to "prove," and to "check up," even one more time – just to be certain! Some might say, "Well, I proved that many years ago, there is no need for further study!" But in saying such a thing, they prove that they have closed their minds, and are not willing to admit it if they were wrong!

Who Am I, Anyway?

That is a fair question. According to the Word of God, there is much meaning in a "name." My name from birth is "William Frederick Dankenbring." My father was not a religious man, he was a Lieutenant in the United States Navy. My mother was a "southern pearl" from Kinston, Alabama, a "Richardson." Her maiden name was "Fanny Jewel Richardson." Her forebears came from England. The name "Richardson," or "Richard's Son," very likely indicates that her ancestors trace their lineage back to King Richard the Lion-Hearted, King of England.

My father's side of the family came from Germany. The name "Dankenbring" is a German-construct name – that is, it is not really "German," but "German-sounding." Many people when they hear it wonder if it is "Dutch." An engineer at the Jet Propulsion Lab in Pasadena tells me my ancestors were very likely "Jewish," because Queen Mary Teresa of Austria compelled all the Jews in her empire to exchange their Jewish names for Germanic names.

The name itself means "Danken" – "Thanks"; "bring" – "bringer" or "one who brings." If the name were "Bringendanke" or similar, it would mean "one who brings thanks." But because the name is turned around, it literally means "Thanks for bringing" -- that is to say, it means, by translation, "Bringer of good news or glad tidings," or "messenger of good news" – that is, people will thank me for bringing them the "good news." In ancient times, when a messenger brought bad tidings or evil news, he was often summarily shot, or hanged. Messengers who brought good news, however, were handsomely rewarded! In my case, the name literally means "one who brings good news," causing people to be thankful and rejoicing.

The name "William" means, literally, "Iron-will," "helmet of will," "Resolute." My middle name, "Frederick," in German means "Kingdom of peace" – "freid" means "peace," and "rick" comes from "reich," meaning "Kingdom" – i.e., "peaceful kingdom" or "kingdom of peace." That, of course, is a reference to the Kingdom of God!

Thus, put together, in German, my name spells out: "The resolute, iron-willed bringer of glad tidings or good news of the [coming] kingdom of peace [the kingdom of God]."

I find that very interesting, since I had nothing to do with the choice of either my last

name (I was born into it), or my first and middle names! I find it even more interesting, however, since Isaiah the prophet foretold of one who would fit this description! He wrote:

"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that BRINGETH GOOD TIDINGS, that PUBLISHETH PEACE; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth SALVATION; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!" (Isa.52:7).

We are indeed bringing the world "good tidings" of the coming of Yeshua the Messiah! We are also "publishing peace" – publishing articles and books and *Prophecy Flash* magazine, with the theme being the way to "peace" (God's truth), the "peaceful kingdom" – the Kingdom of God.

Are we fulfilling this prophecy? Has God called me specifically to do this end-time "Work"?

Interestingly, also, is the *Hebrew* meaning of my cognomen. "Dankenbring," in Hebrew, contains the roots "Dan" which means "Judge," "judgment," and "ken" – which is short for "cohen," which means, by definition, "Priest." Therefore, my name identifies me as "the priest who brings judgment," "the priest who judges," "the priest who announces judgment," "the judging priest." This indicates that my lineage goes back to the "cohen," who were of the Levites, the priestly tribe that served at the Temple of God, but not only that, who were also descended from Aaron – the *cohanim*.

Has God called me to "JUDGE" His end-time Church? That is, has God called me to announce *His* judgment, and to proclaim *His* anger and wrath, and to *warn* the end-time churches that they had better get their house in order, and get their "act" together, and REPENT of their sins NOW, before it is too late? Think about it! God says: "For the time is come that *judgment must begin* at the house of God; and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" (I Pet.4:17-18).

The Spirit of Rebellion, Strife and Competition

Unfortunately, some lust after the gifts and responsibilities and offices which are distributed by the Spirit of God! They are not satisfied with what God gives them. They are jealous of others. Like Korah in the Old Testament, they rebel against God's own appointed servants and authorities, and try to take God's mantle upon themselves. They viciously persecute and "attack" and "rail upon" God's true servants. They vindictively accuse us of distributing "venom" and being exceedingly vile and wicked.

They usually have a "populist" type of message – one that appeals to the common man and woman. They usually preach a form of "democracy" in "church government." Why? Because they refuse to submit to church government, as God institutes such government. They rebel against following "ANY MAN." They have a "thing" about "government" in general.

Such was the notorious "Korah" and his band of renegades. He got the malcontents together, and all those who were unhappy with Moses and his leadership. He then accused Moses before all the people, assuming that Moses was just like him – ambitious and self-seeking – and had used "magic" and "personality" to delude the people. Korah didn't see God's hand in things at all, but viewed Moses and Aaron through carnal, cynical, unconverted eyes! He declared, "Ye take too much upon you, seeing *ALL the congregation is holy, everyone of them, and the LORD is among them*: wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the LORD?" (Num.16:1-3).

When Moses heard that populist message, which would appeal to the common person, he saw it for what it really was – a sneaky and perverse way for Korah himself and his followers to seize power for themselves. "And when Moses heard it, he fell upon his face" (v.4).

Moses was a humble man. He committed this insurgency, this traitorous rebellion, this hostile attempted "take-over," to God Himself! And what happened? In the final analysis, God showed who was His, and who were the interlopers and self-centered miscreants. He destroyed Korah and his followers by having the ground swallow them up alive – and they tumbled into the chasm that formed as a mighty earthquake rent the desert, and Korah and his ilk became "history."

Think about that! It is the height of foolishness to think the pastures are "greener" on the other side of the fence! Korah and his followers rebelled against Moses and desired the priesthood for *themselves*, thinking they were just as qualified as the sons of Aaron for such a responsibility. Perhaps, in native ability, some of them WERE just as "qualified." But the point is, **THEY WERE NOT CHOSEN!** *GOD* does the calling, selecting, and **CHOOSING** of His own servants. It is **NOT** an office a man takes unto himself.

But even today, there are people envious of me, and the Work God has given us to do. They viciously attack, accuse me of being a false prophet, and seek to destroy this Work of God. But in God's own timing, they, too, will perish. As Gamaliel the chief Rabban said to the Sanhedrin when they were attacking the apostles and the early church of God: "Ye men of Israel, take heed to yourselves what ye intend to do as touching these men . . . Refrain from these men, and let them alone; for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nothing; But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it, lest perhaps ye be found even to fight against God" (Acts 5:35-39, Scofield Reference KJV).

The Right Attitude

Paul shows us the attitude we should have towards our place in God's Work, whatever it is! "Having then gifts differing according to the **GRACE** that is given to us, whether *prophecy*, *let us prophesy* according to the proportion of faith; or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching; or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness" (Rom. 12:6-8).

And meanwhile, Paul says, "Let LOVE be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. Be *kindly* affectioned toward [NOT COMPETING AGAINST]one another with brotherly love; in honour PREFERRING ONE ANOTHER [not exalting oneself and comparing oneself with others!]; not slothful in business [our particular job]; FERVENT in spirit; *serving the Lord*" (Rom. 12:9,11).

How many really have this loving, outgoing, considerate attitude today?

Remember what Paul says in the beginning of this same chapter: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye PRESENT YOUR BODIES A *LIVING SACRIFICE*, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service" (v.1)

What IS a "living sacrifice"? It is one that is DEAD to SELF! It is DEAD to selfish ambitions. It is alive unto *God*, in complete dedication and service. Have you SACRIFICED your own ideas, ambitions, ideas, attitudes, aims – putting *them on the altar* before God? Have you yet really GIVEN UP YOUR LIFE to God, sacrificing your own time and desires, to do what HE wants you to do, WHEN He wants you to do it?

Our duty, then, is to strive to honor and serve and glorify God as best we can with our lives – to be a GOOD servant before Him – to please Him in all we think, say, and do. We are instructed to do our work, "with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, *as unto Christ; not with eye service, as men-pleasers*, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart" (Eph. 6:5-6).

Remember the words of Paul: "And whatsoever ye do, *do it heartily*, as to the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that *of the Lord* ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye SERVE the Lord Christ" (Col. 3:23-24).

Whatever our calling, it is nothing to glory about, or to be proud of. Paul said, "For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, *woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!* For if I do this thing *willingly*, I have a reward: but if against my will, a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me" (I Cor. 9:16-17).

God says, "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth *glory in this*, that he *understandeth and knoweth me*, that I am the LORD which exercise *lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness*, in the earth: for *in these things I delight*, saith the LORD" (Jer. 9:23-24).

Do you glory in knowing God? Do you rejoice in understanding God's truth and His plan? Do you marvel in knowing the Creator of the ends of the earth?

God doesn't say He regards, or respects, the mighty and noble man – or the man in a high office. There is no respect of persons or offices with God. A ditch-digger has just as much right to get on his knees and pray to God as does the President of the United States. And a truly humble ditch-digger is a much better man than a proud and haughty President!

And in God's Church, a newly converted babe in Christ can have just as much access to God as a well-known evangelist! – that is, *total access* through Jesus Christ!

But God says, "But to *this* man will I look even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word" (Isa.66:2). God does not have respect to those who are vaunted up in their own self-esteem; nor to the proud, for God is far off to the proud – "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble" (Jas. 4:6). James says, therefore, "Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up"(v.10).

This is the way to TRUE exaltation, honour, and glory, both now, and at the return of Jesus Christ to reward His saints!

Beware of End-Time Critics, Impostors and Pretenders

At the same time, I know there are those who are insanely jealous – there are those who accuse me of being "mean spirited" and a host of other vicious adjectives, too crude and coarse to mention here. There are many who love to sternly frown, and sit in seats of judgment, who love to criticize and find fault!

They seem to have forgotten the admonition of the apostle Paul, who wrote "*But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one us shall give account of himself to God. Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way*" (Rom.14:10-13).

So don't listen to critics and fault-finders! Listen to GOD! Look at the FRUITS! Compare the teachings with God's Word – and THEN decide who is right, where the TRUTH is, and obey IT!

Paul knew what he was talking about. He himself had to stand up against highly placed individuals of the Church of God, even at headquarters, to *defend* his own ministry. He was called on the carpet, and called to account, because he did not compel Gentiles to be physically circumcised when they repented of their sins (Acts 15:1-30; Gal. 2:3-10). Paul said of some of these "leaders" of the Church, "*But of these who seemed to be somewhat, (whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth no man's person)* for they who *seemed* to be somewhat in conference added nothing to me. . ." (Gal. 2:6).

Apostasy Prophesied!

At this juncture, Paul even had to rebuke *Peter*, the chief apostle sent to the circumcision, because he was carried away with the hypocrisy of the Pharisaical brethren! (see Gal. 2:11-14). Even Peter sinned at this instance, because of the Pharisees in the Church – men of considerable power, rank, influence and authority at headquarters in Jerusalem!

You know, brethren, Satan is not blind. Nor is he helpless. He is just as able to stir up

controversy, and strife, within the scattered remnants and branches of the Church of God, today, as he was 1900 years ago! He is just as able to insinuate his servants at or near the highest offices within the Church of God, to strive to lead the Church astray, into error – particularly Pharisaical, self righteous error!

Haven't we seen this very thing occur, over and over again? Look what happened to the "flagship" end-time Church of God – the U.S. "Worldwide Church of God"? Like a mighty battleship, it proclaimed the truth of God to a wicked world, led by Herbert W. Armstrong, a man who had his faults and shortcomings, but a man who strove never to "compromise" with the Word of God. But after his death, look what has happened to the very Church he founded, and gave his life for!

Obviously, the end-time Worldwide Church of God has gone into error – apostasy – just as Scripture foretold would happen (II Thess.2:1-10). It happened in the days of the apostles (Jude, II Peter 2, II Tim.3-4). It has happened again. And again. And again.

Are we sometimes naive, and blind to the truth of this fact? Don't we recognize how Satan often pulls a "flank attack" in order to attack us from a direction we are not facing, or expecting? He is an expert in military strategy and tactics. Therefore, he often tries to mislead us *from within* the Church, through individuals who unwittingly or unknowingly have allowed him to influence their attitudes and minds. He tries to get to *us – each one of us – through our FRIENDS, and people we know!* He is no "fool." He is very clever, and tries to get us "off the track" of truth through erstwhile "friends" and people whom we "trust."

But God says, "Trust NO MAN." He says, "Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help. His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish. Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the LORD, his God; who made heaven, and earth, the sea, and all that therein is; *who keepeth truth forever*; who executeth justice for the oppressed; who giveth food to the hungry" (Psalm. 146:3-7).

David was inspired to write: "It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man. It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in princes" (Psalm 118:8-9).

Sometimes our worst opposition and persecution comes from *within* certain elements of God's Church, as in the case of Paul!

So take note! If you see these things begin to happen during our age, you should not be overly surprised, or caught off guard – just remember, it has happened before, and it will certainly happen again! Only the faces and names change – but the attitudes remain the same! The machinations of the devil remain constant! Things therefore are never as rosy and serene and unified as they may appear on the surface!

This is why it is necessary for each one of us to **DRAW CLOSE TO GOD**, as never before, and *prove all things* from His holy Word (I Thess. 5:21). This is your duty – your God-given obligation.

May God help each and every one of us learn to love and appreciate each other, and the gifts and talents that God has given to each one of us. And let us remember that we truly love one another without dissimulation or hypocrisy – with genuine, heartfelt, fervent love, as Paul exhorted (Rom.12:9), and with "fervent charity" as Peter encouraged (I Pet.4:8), for this kind of love will "cover a multitude of sins" (I Pet. 4:8).

And let each one of us *do our part faithfully in the END-TIME WORK OF THE LIVING GOD*, for God has said, "Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved; for he will *finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness; because a SHORT WORK will the Lord make upon the earth*" (Rom.9:27-28).