Montevideo, Uruguay:

Greetings brethren, from South America! I’m writing this article from the capital city of Uruguay, on the east coast of South America. Mr. Rea and I have been having important conferences with radio station managers, governmental employees and businessmen. We have been gathering information which will be useful in spreading the Gospel of God’s government to this darkened part of the world when God opens the door.

The realization of the tremendous task yet to be accomplished sweeps over us with overwhelming force here, when we see the ignorance, poverty and superstition—the strangle-hold of the Catholic Church on the impoverished masses of people, the political turmoil and fear that grips most of South America. Also, it makes us realize all the more what a united, single-hearted, completely dedicated body we must be, if we, as the very body of Jesus Christ, are ever to really fulfill the great task God has set before us!

False Ministers

Just as the early beginnings of our Church were fraught with dangers, so is this present age bringing us ever closer to the same identical dangers. When Jesus told His disciples of the times just before His return to this earth, He warned, “Take heed that no man deceive you” (Matt. 24:4). In His warning about deceptions, Jesus talked of false ministers who would be masquerading as true ministers of the Gospel, who would “show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect” (Matt. 24:24).

This warning was about OUR times—NOW!

And to whom was the warning given? To the Church!

Brethren, the time has come to candidly warn you of a very grave danger that could mean the loss of salvation for many of the “babes in Christ” who have been called into the wonderful light of God’s truth.

The early Church, there arose false ministers, and lay members, who began to set themselves up as “teachers” and “leaders” of the people. The whole theme of the New Testament, from the very inception of God’s true Church to the end of the book of Revelation is one of Apostasy, one of God’s true Apostles and ministers constantly struggling against false doctrines creeping in, and against counterfeit ministers who were trying to lead off people after themselves.

Notice, the council at Jerusalem was held for this very reason! “And certain men which came down from Judea taught the brethren, and said, Except you be circumcised after the manner of Moses, you cannot be saved” (Acts 15:1). Notice further that these men wanted to argue about the small, physical question of circumcision. “When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question” (Acts 15:2).

God’s government went into effect, and a decision was rendered by James, the chief Apostle at Jerusalem (vs. 19), and the other apostles then delivered a decree (binding, authoritative decision, as a law) to the brethren in the Church (Acts 16:4).

Paul’s Experience

In Paul’s letters of correction and exhortation to the early Church, he was often forced to show them, by the manner of his calling and training the authenticity of his office. Notice how many of his letters begin with statements of
Divinely-ordained authority. (See Rom. 1:1-5, I Cor. 1:1, II Cor. 1:1, Gal. 1:1-24, etc.)

Almost immediately after the beginning of God's true Church, certain men arose who began to lead away followers—out of human jealousy and vanity! 'For I know this,' Paul said to the Ephesian elders, 'that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of YOUR OWN SELVES shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them' (Acts 20:29-30).

In the three cities of southern Galatia, Iconium, Lystra and Derbe, the story had been circulated, apparently, that Paul was merely Peter's "mesenger boy," and an attempt was made to appeal to supposed conflicts within the ministry in order to confuse and divide the Church. Paul, for that very reason, unhesitatingly stated the mistake Peter had made in disfellowshipping the Gentiles in presence of the Jews, and told the Church, "But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the Gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, 'If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of the Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?'" (Gal. 2:14). The remaining verses of this entire chapter are the inspired words Paul spoke to Peter! The often quoted, wonderful statement of Paul, "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but CHRIST LIVETH IN ME" (vs. 20) was a statement made directly to Peter to show the authority by which Paul spoke. It was Christ who inspired Paul to speak thusly. Make no mistake! Peter and Paul were not enemies! Everything was done for the advancement of the Church, for the good of the flock. The important thing to notice also is that Peter did take the correction and later called him beloved brother—exhorting the Christians to take heed to the things Paul had written in his epistles! (II Pet. 3:15-16).

Does this ring a familiar bell to any of you?

Many have tried to accomplish the same identical thing in this Church age. Some have tried to say Mr. Raymond Cole teaches one thing, and Mr. Armstrong another, or that Mr. Herman Hoen says one thing, and Mr. Meredith another, or that I say one thing, and my brother another. THESE ASSUMPTIONS AND RUMORS ARE SIMPLY FALSE!

As my father has said so many times, the decisions have always been 100% unanimous whenever God's true ministers gather together to settle a question—or when doctrinal points are discussed in the annual ministerial conferences. And, so long as we remain God's Church, in which dwells His Holy Spirit, this will continue to be true! God's True Church is a UNITED Church, even as Christ prayed it would be! (John 17:11).

Paul Was Criticized

It has been said the busier a man becomes, the more he accomplishes, the more criticism he will receive. God's word certainly bears this up! Jesus Christ was the busiest and the most criticized man who ever lived. The Apostle Paul was constantly being criticized by unthinking, carnal-minded people who did not really fear God's government as they should have.

The Corinthians were accusing him of being covetous of what they supposed was their money (which was really not theirs, but God's), and Paul answered by saying, 'Mine answer to them that do examine me is this, Have we not power to eat and to drink?' (I Cor. 9:3-4). He then proceeded to prove that the ministry should be supported from God's titles.

The entire first chapter of Galatians is Paul's affirmation of the DIVINE AUTHORITY with which he spoke and wrote.

The important thing to realize is that this defense was necessary only because of the false teachers and "leaders" who were stirring up the people—trying to discredit God's true ministers—trying to lead off a following after themselves!

Paul told the young evangelist, Timothy, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times (now) some shall depart from the faith [doctrine—body of beliefs], giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of demons' (1 Tim. 4:1).

Paul called by name certain false teachers when he said, 'But soon profane and vain babbings, for they will increase unto more ungodliness. And their word doth eat as doth a canker, of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus, who concerning the truth have erred' (II Tim. 2:16-17).

After describing the conditions which will be extant during this very time in the first two verses of the third chapter of his second letter to Timothy, Paul said, 'But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived' (II Tim. 3:13).

Remember, these letters to Timothy were concerned primarily with Church Government! Never forget that even the FALSE ministers will appear as the ministers of Christ! 'For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel, for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness, whose end shall be according to their works' (II Cor. 11:13-15).

A Cloak of Church Authority

Astounding though it may seem, these false teachers who began leading the members astray told direct, deliberate lies, or else led the people to believe by subservage and insinuation that they were known by, commissioned by, and ordained to their positions by God's true ministers!

Yes—they told the people they represented Paul, or Peter, and that they came from them!

Notice, 'I marvel' that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel, which is not another, but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ' (Gal. 1:6-7).

Paul then proceeded to put a binding CURSE on any such practice, even though he himself might turn around and begin preaching differently in the future. 'But though WE (including all the apostles and the ministers) or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be anathema [cut off from Christ]' (Gal. 1:8).

Paul was forced to write to the brethren at Thessalonica: 'Now be seekest ye brethren . . . that ye be not soon shaken in mind or be troubled, neither by spirit (an angel, or evil spirit), nor by word, (oral teaching from others) nor by letter as from us, that the day of Christ is at hand' (II Thess. 2:1-2).

Did you read it? Paul warned them not to be deceived, even though someone wrote a FALSE EPISTLE, and DELIBERATELY.

(Continue on page 8)
The WORK of God's Church Goes Forward!

Here is more inside information about the progress and growth of God's Church. REJOICE with us as we review the blessings God is showering upon His people!

by Roderick C. Meredith

Jesus Christ commanded Peter: "Feed my sheep." He intended that down through the ages His called ministers should strengthen and guide His Church in the paths of righteousness. Christ is the living HEAD of the Church (Col. 1:18). It is through His POWER that lives are converted to the real truth of God, and that local congregations are raised up in many areas. Jesus knew that His Church would be scattered (Matt. 26:31), and that many of its members would not have regular fellowship with others. But from the time of the early travelling apostles and evangelists down to our day, Christ has made it possible for His scattered flock to be fed the spiritual "meat" they require.

As our Head and Leader, Jesus Christ is now showing us that we can minister to you scattered brethren much more than we have in the past. This is truly GOOD NEWS!

Travelling Evangelists

In the article last month, "God's Church GROWS," we told you about the ministers and local congregations in God's Church today. Now we have wonderful news of a newly-begun phase of this work which will enable us to reach hundreds of you scattered brethren personally each year. As a result of two more ministers going into full-time service this past June, Mr. Raymond Cole and Mr. Wayne Cole have now been released from their duties in local congregations and are beginning to visit many of our scattered brethren in the field.

Several dozen of our scattered members have already been visited by Mr. Wayne Cole and his wife. Many of them have written to us about it to tell us what a blessing it was and how happy they were to have this personal counsel and an opportunity to have many of their questions answered.

This type of personal counsel, instruction and encouragement is vital to the growth of God's people everywhere. So we plan to keep this program going as much of the time as possible, and even to enlarge it in the future.

Mr. Raymond Cole, our evangelist-at-large in charge of the scattered local congregations, is planning to do much of this visiting himself, whenever possible. Later on, we hope to have a minister and his wife touring the country the year around and visiting and counseling with those members of God's Church who are unable to attend a local congregation.

This should make each of us realize more fully that—wherever we are—we are members of God's Church—the very body of Jesus Christ through whom He works (1 Cor. 12:27). We must grow in spiritual grace and knowledge and work together in unity as a "team" in order that Christ's message may be carried to the ends of this earth.

May God grant that each of you scattered members will realize more than ever that you are a part of one "body"—the Church that Jesus Christ promised to build (Matt. 16:18).

Baptizing Tours

As each year passes, hundreds of new brethren are baptized by the tours or ministers sent out each summer from headquarters in Pasadena. This summer, three tours have gone out and have already baptized over 250 people!

This is truly wonderful when you realize that our ministers baptize only those who indicate that they are totally repentant and totally surrendered to the will of God. Our tours actually have to turn down more people than they baptize! They encourage those who are not fully ready to "prove all things" a little more, to count the cost, and to wait until they are completely yielded to Almighty God before being baptized.

Therefore, even a few hundred of these truly repentant converts is worth far more in the eyes of God than thousands of half-hearted "decisions for Christ" made in ignorance of what real repentance means.

So we should REJOICE to realize that beside those baptized by our men on tours each summer, other hundreds are baptized by the local ministers and at the annual Church festivals. This year, the total should run around six or seven hundred newly baptized members of God's Church.

Additional happy news is that since the beginning of the year seventeen have been baptized in far off London, England, and Mr. Gerald Waterhouse is now in the process of visiting and baptizing more people in outlying areas. God's Church is taking firm root in Britain. People's lives are being changed and converted by God!

How the Baptizing Tours Help People

In addition to baptizing those who are ready, our summer tours help all those whom they meet in many ways. Perhaps you will enjoy reading part of a letter sent to Mr. Armstrong to thank him for sending out these tours.

A lady from Illinois writes: "Today God answered my prayers that someday I would be worthy to be baptized and become a begotten child of His and receive His gift of the Holy Spirit."

"Mr. Bryce Clark and Mr. Ernest Martin visited me today. I was just getting ready so I could meet them at the post office, as their letter designated, but due to the fact that we are on central standard time, they found themselves with time on their hands, and came to my home. Knowing how pressed they are for time, I consider myself most fortunate for such a nice long visit—and I was enlightened beyond my expectations. I had prayed, studied the scripture and your booklets, and felt I understood them pretty good, but the plain, clear way they presented it made me understand so much better. They are certainly two fine, admirable, sincere young men who are surely inspired by God."

Did you see how Christ is directing His servants to minister to the scattered flock? In due time, people in all parts of the earth are going to have personal help and counsel from the ministers of God's Church.

Although it is impossible to reach them soon, some have already written in from Australia, South Africa and other nations requesting baptism. God's Church is beginning to circle the globe!

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever (Heb. 13:8). Christ is
In reading the letter, did you notice this woman's attitude? She trusted God and wanted to obey God. She wanted to be made worthy of His use. That is why she was healed of tuberculosis!

Another Example of How Christ Heals

Another recent letter of thanksgiving for healing shows the same fine attitude, and is a good example of how God sometimes intervenes for those who cannot call upon a local minister for prayer.

This lady from Kansas writes: "A short time ago I sent a letter requesting prayer for my little girl. Within one hour of its mailing, she began to mend—and today she feels fine. Truly God is gracious and merciful—a God of great power.

"We have requested prayer for the illness of one of our family on several occasions. Always that illness is healed before an answer reaches us—sometimes before the letter has had a chance to even get out of Wichita. We are truly grateful for God's healing and are not putting any trust in the worldly doctors."

"I know you receive many letters, but feel I must tell you how grateful we are to have the two magazines, the broadcasts, and the correspondence course. These are all of inestimable value in my spiritual growth and development."

Here again we see the attitude of love for God's truth and His way. Also, this should be an example to all of you scattered brethren of how God often heals even before an anointed cloth arrives.

After all, it is not the anointed cloth that heals—it is God! And once you have obeyed God's command to call upon His ministers when you are sick (James 5:14), the healing may follow long before your request even reaches our office in Pasadena. That is something to remember when there is an emergency and you may be tempted to think that there isn't time to call upon God's ministers.

Information on How to Reach the Ministers

There is another important bit of information we might give you while we are on this subject of healing. This is to remember that there are times when you may need advice about what you should do in some types of illness. This does not mean reliance upon medicines or drugs, but often it is necessary for you to quit breaking some natural law before God will forgive this physical sin!

In such cases, it would be best, of course, to contact one of our nearby local ministers. However, this is impossible for you brethren in scattered areas where we do not have local churches. So re-

The GOOD NEWS
September, 1957

Meet Frank Longuskie, able and consecrated assistant to Mr. Waterhouse in our London church and office.
Are You “Putting Off” Salvation?

Here is a vital principle which could mean your eternal life! Will YOU lose your salvation by neglecting to practice it?

by Garner Ted Armstrong

BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA:

Greetings, brethren, from South America! Mr. Benjamin Rea, the head of our Spanish Department at Ambassador College, and I are traveling through parts of this continent, gathering information to be used in future articles in the Good News and the Plain Truth, searching out books for our Spanish Department, and taking time now and then to write to you, through articles in the magazines.

Many times, we have printed articles in the Good News about your Christian life, about the necessity of perseverance, of zeal, of real enthusiasm in order to overcome, and obtain salvation. But God has revealed to me a vital principle, which, if you will put it into practice, could very easily make the difference between losing out by either falling into the lukewarm condition of the Laodiceans or letting a root of bitterness spring up in your heart and turn you away from God’s Church, or—on the other hand—of remaining faithful and gaining eternal life in God’s kingdom!

Many to Lose Out

Have you never pondered why it is that God takes so much time and space to warn us, by examples, and by direct statements, about falling away? Even in this present age, filled with the turmoil of a dying world—with our ears attuned to the shrieks of the millions of suffering humans we read about every day, with the prophecies of your Bible being fulfilled each day—some have fallen away! Some have neglected to put these “little things,” as they may have called them, into practice, and for that reason, they are no longer a part of God’s Church!

In addition to His prophecies of a world-wide apostasy and falling away from the truth (Matt. 24:5, 11-12), Jesus foretold of a terrible state of lukewarmness in His own Church! (Rev. 3:15-17). He said, “... when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?” (Luke 18:8). Jesus was constantly reminding His disciples of the grave possibility of falling away. In His parable of the sower, He described the various types of persons who would hear the word—His very Gospel of the Kingdom, and would receive it with joy, and yet would not endure to the end.

“But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he stumbleth” (Matt. 13:20-21).

Notice, this person didn’t have root in himself. The root is the source of the food supply for the plant—and that which gives it stability in the ground. If you are not drinking in of the “milk” of the word (1 Pet. 2:2) being rooted and grounded in the truth, you will fall away and be burnt.

Danger of Worldly Interests

Jesus described the next class of persons as being those who receive the word among thorns. “And the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches chose the word, and he becometh unfruitful” (Matt. 13:22).

Paul, about to depart from the brethren he loved so much at Ephesus, said, “For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves, shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples, after them” (Acts 20:29-30).

Paul was very familiar with the human pulls of the flesh, with the vanity, the lust, the greed, and the utter selfishness of human nature. He battled during his entire ministry to preserve the flock from danger, and to save it from destruction. He wrote to the people in Lystra, Derbe and Iconium, “I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel” (Gal. 1:6) and went on to show they had been led off by failing to practice the things he had taught them during his ministry there.

All through the New Testament, God gives us warning after warning of the grave danger of falling away. Paul’s writings are filled with them, Christ spoke of them often. Jude said it was necessary to get back to the original faith! (Jude 3) John then recorded Jesus’ words, that a whole era—One whole phase of God’s own Church would fall into a disinherited, self-satisfied, neglectful, lethargic lazy attitude—and be spit out! (Rev. 3:16).

Why, oh why can’t some of you see this truth? I know of a surety, as I write these words here in a hotel room in Buenos Aires, some 9 or 10 thousand miles from Pasadena, that most of the very ones who are now in this spiritual danger will carelessly read this article—agreeing with it, as they always do—and then go right on, straight toward Gehenna Fire!

And yet—even knowing this—I know I must go ahead and write this article. May the Almighty Creator shake some of His people—perhaps you—until your very teeth rattle, if need be, until you can be snapped awake, and brought to a peak of spiritual zeal!

Many Aware of Their Condition

As you read these words, perhaps you are actually aware of a great deal of spiritual lethargy that exists in your life. You don’t pray as you should, you can’t seem to spend the time studying that you should, and you just don’t feel as “spiritual” as you know you should! That probably describes the majority of God’s people during this age.

And yet, even knowing they are spiritually lax, many are going to continue toward ultimate destruction—simply because they are failing to overcome this known and recognized trait. Why?

Because they don’t really want to overcome it! Does that shock you? It really shouldn’t—because it is an actual fact—easily recognizable by the fruits of many of God’s own
called and chosen people in this age.

Are you a person who desperately needs something of God? Are you constantly beseeching your Heavenly Father for some great gift, some answer to prayer? Are you in need of healing? And, at the same time, are you subconsciously saying to yourself, 'I'll get spiritual enough for God to hear my prayer—I'll do some righteousness until I get the answer, and then it'll be over—then I can drift again—then I can, after I've achieved my purpose, drift back into the easy-going stream of lethargy, because it's SO MUCH EASIER?

YES! Many are doing exactly that!

Do you ever decide, along about Thursday afternoon, or perhaps late on Friday, that the Sabbath is coming, so you'd better get into a "spiritual mood" before it catches you in the attitude you've been in during the middle of the week? Do you then get into a temporary state of "righteousness" until Saturday night? Are you much happier when the sun goes down, so you can rush out to the pleasures of this world? Or, do you wish the sun wouldn't go down so soon, and that the Church service might not be over so soon, or that you could visit with others of God's Church longer?

If these things describe you—then chances are, you're aware of your condition—yet seem to be powerless to do anything about it.

The Nearest of Sin

Regardless of how close to God a person becomes—sin is always near! Most of us have not really understood just how easy it is for us to 'slip over the line' and let the 'bars' down—drifting into our old ways and habits, and sinning against God by our actions. When Jesus was perhaps the very closest to God, during His long fast of forty days and nights in the wilds of Palestine, Satan came to Him, personally, to tempt Him. Are you the opposite from the good he wanted the Son to become—sin is always near! Most chances are, you're so much更容易?

The Spirit of God did dwell in Paul, "Christ liveth in me" (Gal. 2:20), "For I delight in the law of God after the inward man... so then with the mind I myself serve the law of God" (Rom. 7:22 & 25).

All of us must see that we are literally standing on a huge precipice, with our backs to the dam, horribly gaping maw of debauchery and destruction! We must come to realize that wherever we are, at whatever time, Satan will try to ensnare us in whatever way he can—by playing on our particular weaknesses!

I'll Do It Tomorrow!

It is perhaps so simple, it won't sound like a very important point to you—but the real basic cause for much of this spiritual lethargy in God's Church is an attitude of putting off everything until later, of good intent, coupled with negligence, which could finally result in putting off your own salvation!

For example, you have come to see you really need to talk to God more—or have you—and you have decided to do something about it. You have made up your mind. THIS TIME you really mean it! So, when it comes time to go to bed, you're very, very tired—and your mind just doesn't function very well. After only a few minutes of drugged, half-awake prayer that didn't go any higher than the ceiling, you tumble wearily into bed—intending fully, and even promising yourself that surely you'll 'make up for it' tomorrow morning!

Tomorrow morning arrives. You have overslept, or perhaps you have children, and they awakened sooner than you planned—perhaps the telephone rang early, or something happened—maybe you even FORGOT about it, but, at any rate, you didn't pray as you intended!

Is this you?

Do you 'put off' praying until a "more convenient time"?

Smoking Is an Example

Some in God's Church still smoke. You know that others know it—in fact, you may have even told them about it. Some of you have told me, or else you may know it just because the strong smell of the smoker is almost impossible to conceal from the non-smoker. Smoking is not the cardinal sin of the world—it is not the WORST sin there is, so to speak—but it is a sin! So is chewing tobacco—and so is "dipping snuff!"

I used to smoke, as did many others in God's true Church. But I was just exactly like a lot of you. I always "put off" quitting, because I would say to myself, "Well, this will be absolutely my LAST cigarette! I'll smoke just this once more, and then I'll really use a lot of will power, and I'll just quit!" But—after having just that "one more" I would say the identical thing the next time, and the next, and the next, until I was constantly "kidding myself" that I was in the process of quitting, whatever that is. But there is no such thing as a process of quitting—you've just got to QUIT! Are you like this? I was, but now I can give thanks to the Creator that I was given the necessary will power to quit. By a severe case of laryngitis, in which I lost my voice completely, I became so frightened, about losing my voice that God has given me, that I just QUIT!

Not only are smokers—like I used to be—continually defiling the temple of God's Holy Spirit, and setting a terrible example for others, but are constantly telling themselves, and God, a lie, that they are in the "process" of quitting!

Do You FAST Enough?

It's so easy to tell yourself that you'll get around to really doing things tomorrow. In this way, many have been putting off fasting. God only commands you to fast on one particular day, (Lev. 23:32), but by example, by many direct statements of Christ, and by the teaching of the Apostle Paul, we know you must fast often if you are to remain a spiritual-minded Christian.

Jesus fasted. It was because of His constant nearness to God that He was able to cry out, even with tears, to God for deliverance from the temptations of the flesh (Heb. 5:7). That's how He can be a merciful High Priest to us now—because through fasting and prayer, Jesus was so close to God, that even when evil impulses and temptations came, He was able to cast them from Him. For we have not a high priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb. 4:15).

Even in fasting to stay close to God, Christ set YOU an example (1 Pet. 2:21). Turn to John, the eleventh chapter, and read again the wonderful history of how the living Head of Our Church raised a man (Lazarus) from the dead! Jesus was so deeply moved by the lack of faith of the people that he "groaned in the spirit, and was troubled" (vs. 35), and finally He wept (vs. 35).

But when He came to the tomb, Jesus "lifted up his eyes and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me" (vs. 41-42). Time that short prayer! I did, with my stop watch, and even saying it slowly, it only takes eleven seconds!

(please continue on page 11)
Who Should Young People Date?

Is it best for your children to date unbelievers? Here is the BIBLE answer to a crucial problem our young people have to face, reprinted from the October, 1953 issue.

by Roderick C. Meredith

Dating is a custom which has been practiced, in differing ways, since the beginning of history. If rightly directed, it can be a natural and helpful means of enabling young people to become better acquainted with the members of the opposite sex.

It is God who has made us male and female. It is God who created sex and ordained marriage. God intended that young people come to know each other, fall in love, and marry. Therefore, a true Christian should have no "prudish" feelings about the varied aspects of courtship and marriage. But he should determine how to glorify God in all these things. It is God, after all, who made us male and female.

Dating Necessary

The Bible does not enjoin any particular method of acquainting young people with one another, or of bringing about a marriage. Even in the Bible history, customs have varied in this matter. In many instances, in ancient times, the parents of a young couple arranged for their marriage. The laws in Exodus and Deuteronomy indicate that men often selected their own wives, and courted them as they do today. Consequently, our present custom of courtship and marriage is certainly not wrong, and it seems to be the best practice among modern peoples who are not living in large family groups as in patriarchal times.

Dating, then, is a very necessary custom not only socially, but to enable young people to make a wise choice of a life partner. It is a practice which tends to broaden social interests, to develop personality, and to give that needed experience and companionship with many members of the opposite sex.

"No one should date as though he were 'looking for a wife.' It should be a natural means of fellowship with the realization that some day a life partner will be discovered, and that the practice of dating will give that experience with the opposite sex which should serve as a valuable guide in avoiding hasty decisions based upon 'infatuation,' and not real love.

Since dating is a form of intimate fellowship which may lead to marriage, Christians should exercise great care in selecting the persons whom they date.

God's Warning

Christians are commanded by God: 'Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?' (II Cor. 6:14). We are to avoid anything which would cause us to fellowship or be "yoked together" with unbelievers.

Marriage is certainly the closest form of "yoked together." And dating is a kind of close fellowship which usually precedes and may lead to marriage.

Is God trying to impose His harsh will on you when He forbids this kind of fellowship?

NO! This instruction is a great blessing designed to help you live the happy and abundant life that God intends (John 10:10). True Christianity is a way of life. It is the way that will bring greatest happiness at this time, and eternal life in God's kingdom. It is the way of surrender and obedience to God and His commands, and of spiritually growing each day more like God that we may finally be born into His family and kingdom.

But an unconverted husband or wife is going to oppose and fight the way of life God reveals. Why? "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (Rom. 8:7).

If you marry an unconverted person, you are trying yourself to a ball and chain for the rest of your natural life! God wants to spare you from such a mistake!

The Bible Principle

From Genesis to Revelation, the Bible shows that God's people are to remain separate from this world. In Deut. 7:1-4, God commanded the Israelites not to marry the heathen, "For they will turn away thy son from following me, that they may serve other gods" (v. 4). Joshua warned that if they married the heathen, it would be as scourges in their sides, and thorns in their eyes (Joshua 23:10-16).

I Kings 11:1 shows that King Solomon's foreign wives turned away his heart from worshiping God. The Bible shows time and again that marrying a carnal, unconverted person will lead to retribution, misery, and may well prove to be an obstacle to prevent you from serving God as you should.

Many of you whom we have met on the baptizing tours can testify to this fact. How many times you have wished that your mate were converted so that you could share your lives more fully. What a wonderful blessing it is when both the husband and wife are converted. All of you who are blessed in this way should get down on your knees every day and thank God for it.

A converted couple can encourage one another in prayer, in Bible study, in keeping the Sabbath, in rejoicing together during God's festivals. They can share all the little things in life in a way that is impossible when one party is unconverted.

True Christianity involves the things you eat, the places you go, your interests and hobbies—your entire life. God intended that a husband and wife be a help to each other in all things. That is why He commands: "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers."

What About Dating Unbelievers

Knowing the definite command of God not to marry unbelievers, what about dating them?

As we have mentioned, dating is a very intimate sort of fellowship which may possibly lead to marriage. Should you tempt yourself by dating those whom you know that God forbids you to marry?

You should not!

And regardless of possible marriage, a Christian is not to have fellowship with unrighteousness (II Cor. 6:14). Unrighteousness is simply sin—breaking God's commandments.

In Ephesians 5:1-17, the apostle Paul shows that Christians are not to be partners with the children of this world in their wrong ways. He exhorts: "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them."

Paul wrote to the saints at Rome to present their bodies a "living sacrifice" to God and to "be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind" (Rom. 12:1-2).

If you are seeking God's will and His
guidance in your every thought and action, you will find it a GREAT HINDERANCE to be closely associated with a carnal-minded person—whether on dates, or in any other form of fellowship.

There will always be the tendency to let them pull you away from obeying and serving your Creator. They will continually be urging you to break God’s Sabbath, to eat unclean meats, to attend the wrong kind of movies or spend your time in night clubs and other wrong kinds of amusement.

A carnal-minded companion will exert just the opposite kind of influence from what you should have, if you love God more than this world, its carnal people, and their wrong ways.

**Draw the Line**

James tells us, "Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God" (James 4:4). As a Christian, put God first in your life. Have the courage to draw the line on whom you will, and will not, date.

You are to have no fellowship with unbelievers.

Who is an unbeliever?

Christ said, "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad" (Matt. 12:30). A "believer" is not merely one who believe in Christ as Saviour. Jesus himself prophesied that many would come in His name, preaching about Him, and would deceive many (Matt. 24:5).

A "believer" is one who believes in Christ and His message. Faith that is not acted upon is dead (James 2:26). Notice Acts 2:44, "And all that believed were together, and had all things in common." They had acted upon their belief, and were sharing the material things with one another during their stay in Jerusalem.

One who knows much of the truth, and yet refuses to obey it is not to be regarded as a true believer at all. Such people are often more slick and clever in misleading others than one who is in total ignorance of God’s precious truths.

"And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments" (1 John 2:3). One who really knows God will believe that His way is right and will obey Him. People who refuse to do this are not believers. Therefore, you should have no regular dates or fellowship with them.

**Use Wisdom**

Once you understand the principle of having no fellowship with the world which might weaken your faith, you can apply this to any case which arises.

For instance, there might be a rare occasion when a converted young person would be visiting in another city and a date might be arranged for him by friends who didn’t understand his views. In such a case, he should carefully survey the circumstances. If he knew that the date wouldn’t involve participating in any wrong form of amusement, and would not involve him in any future dates of this nature, he might accept in order not to offend others. This would not be a regular association or fellowship with unconverted persons. But even then, the Christian involved should carefully avoid a recurrence of this practice, and ask God’s guidance in the whole matter.

To cite another example, it would be permissible to date occasionally someone whom you felt quite sure by the “fruits” being called to repentance and obedience to God. You might have good reason to believe that you were helping such a person learn more about God. But here too, be extremely careful that the association is not regular fellowship, and that the other party is not just "putting on" in order to date you. If you are deceived into marrying such a person, it may wreck your life.

Also, some of you who have been married and divorced may wish to date even though you know that it would be adultery to marry again. Common sense should tell you that you are playing with dynamite! You are putting a very serious temptation in your own path, and in the path of whoever you date. If you value eternal life, you will not date except under very rare circumstances or until you become free to marry again through the death of your husband or wife. You may need God’s Spirit to master yourself, but His power is without limit!

**Your Children**

If you are converted and your children are not, should you force them to associate only with converted children?

In the first place, very few people are really converted until the ages of eighteen to twenty years. You should not deprive your child of the opportunity of developing a balanced personality and interests through association with others.

The ideal thing would be to have your children in association with the children of other converted brethren. Although still unconverted, the children would at least have an easier time learning the truth about pagan holidays and other worldly practices. It would certainly be a better means of fellowship.

But the parent’s responsibility is to "train up a child in the way that he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Prov. 22:6). While he is young, teach him God’s truth in a reasonable and tactful manner.

But after your child reaches high school age, if he or she is bound to have a "ring" and date worldly fellows or girls, you may prejudice his mind against God if you are too overbearing about this. Use discretion as any intelligent parent should do, but don’t expect your child to act converted when he is not. Just be sure he is in decent company, and then ask God to convert him in His time and way.

God has provided excellent means for converted young people to become acquainted with one another. This is through attending the annual festivals of God’s people. "We are not to ‘repeat’ in these feasts, and they provide a wonderful opportunity and atmosphere for mixed fellowship. Also, giving your child the advantage of a college education at Ambassador College—God’s college—may also prove a priceless blessing in the matter of finding a truly converted life partner. This is far more important than most parents realize.

The entire matter of dating, then, is to be approached by understanding and obeying God’s purpose in making us male and female, and in ordaining marriage. A converted mate is commanded to love and remain faithful even to an unconverted husband or wife (1 Cor. 7:10-14). But to those yet unmarried, God has blessed us with the knowledge that we MUST NOT marry unbelievers, but that we should choose a mate who will truly help us grow unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ” (Eph. 4:13).

**How God Calls His Ministers**

(Continued from page 2)

*Signed with his name!* In closing this important letter, Paul purposely signed it with his own hand—saying, “The salutation of Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every epistle, so I write [or, after this manner, I write]” (II Thess. 3:17).

He had told them, “Let no man deceive you by any means” (II Thess. 2:3), and then went on to give them an abolute key as to what was sure to happen prior to the coming of Christ.

Peter Gave Warning, Too!

Peter was not unaware of the undercurrent toward apostasy that was beginning then. He wrote, “But there were false prophets among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privately shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction” (II Peter 2:1). Paul had said the “falling away” from true doctrine was a mystery of lawlessness...
that was beginning in his time! (II Thess. 2:7).

The entire second chapter of Peter's second letter is a grave warning against false teachers.

Notice, however, that there is always one thing these teachers have in common. Even Korah, and the ones he led with him in his rebellion against the authority of Moses, showed the same traits (See Nos. 16:1-3).

They promise the people liberty, emancipation from the authority of God! That is exactly what Nimrod did. He promised the people liberty from any rule, any order and government that might regulate their lives in the ways of God's laws, which lead to everlasting happiness and peace.

"Presumptuous are they," continues Peter (II Pet. 2:10). Yes, they are always presuming to enter in among you brethren will always despise the Government of God.

They will talk against the authority in God's Church—promising liberty, emancipation from the authority of God! That is exactly what Nimrod did. He promised the people liberty from any rule, any order and government that might regulate their lives in the ways of God's laws, which lead to everlasting happiness and peace.

"Presumptuous are they," continues Peter (II Pet. 2:10). Yes, they are always presuming to have office, position and authority—while busily engaged in teaching against it! They wish to arrogate to themselves a position of authority—yet promulgate a doctrine of no authority! They contradict their own words by their actions, which are visible to all!

"...self-willed [not doing the will of God, but of self], they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities" (II Pet. 2:10). These are never really submissive to the authority in God's Church, but just "go along" with it, until it steps on them—then, they suddenly show their true colors, and are not in the least bit fearful to speak openly against Mr. Armstrong, or any other of God's called and chosen servants. Have you ever listened to such a person? Are you such a person?

Do you know other people who are—then change your ways, because it is too late!

God says of such: "But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not!" (they never have the facts of the picture, and so jump to false conclusions), and shall utterly perish in their own corruption" (II Pet. 2:12).

The Church, during its first age, called the "Ephesian" age, or the Church at Ephesus, in the letters to the Churches in Revelation, was commended because it had "tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars" (Rev. 2:2). Jesus showed here that many took the titles of offices in the Church and tried to use the sanction of the Church, a cloak of authority, to deceive the flock!

**Same Situation Possible Now**

Most of us are asleep to the danger of this identical thing developing right now! Brethren, whether most of you realize it or not, there are, at this very moment, false teachers within the Church of God!

God's true ministers are aware that there are, at this moment, men who are in scattered parts of the country, holding "Bible Studies" and meetings, even preaching, in so-called "campaigns" from time to time, visiting, perhaps, with some of you people. They deliberately lie, saying they are from the Headquarters Church in Pasadena, saying they were ordained by Mr. Armstrong and the other ministers, and that we in Pasadena have commissioned them to labor in the doctrine!

Yes, astounding though it may seem—some are deliberately lying to listeners of the broadcast—deluding them into believing they represent the ministry of this Church.

We have heard reports of men who have been visiting members, or perhaps just listeners to the broadcast and readers of the Plain Truth magazine, in various parts of the United States.

Every year, at the Feast of Tabernacles, we realize we must be constantly on guard to prevent any lengthy "Bible studies" from developing where certain dominating personalities begin to "teach" the people—false doctrines! It is good that God's people should talk about the Bible. It is right, just and godly that all of God's people should do this—but when certain ones try to set themselves forward as ministers; as teachers of the Word, then God's true ministers must exercise the all-powerful authority God has given them, with the very power of God, in putting down such false teachings in order to protect the flock!

Watch for these things!

Do not allow them to become an "interested" listener to damnably heresies, evil speakings and gossip against someone else, or against God's great work, or against any of the ministers as individuals!

**Ministry a Grave Responsibility**

It is because the ministers must labor in teaching others that God lays such a heavy responsibility on them. Notice Peter's exhortation: "The Elders [all ministers are Elders] which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder . . . feed the flock of God which is among you . . . neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock" (I Pet. 5:1-3).

To cause another human being to lose salvation is the most startlingly act a person can commit! Notice what Jesus said of such an act: "But whomsoever shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea." Woe unto the world because of offenses [causing another to stumble—and go back into sin!] for it must needs be that offenses come, but woe to that man by whom the offenses come!" (Matt. 18:6-7).

The well-known 3rd chapter of James, the lesson on the evils of the tongue—of evil speaking and gossip—is directed primarily to those who teach others—the ministry.

"My brethren, be not many masters," is better translated, "My brethren, do not many of you become teachers!" (vs. 1).

"...knowing that we shall receive a greater condemnation (judgment)."

Why? Simply because, as Paul said to Timothy, "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them, for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee" (I Tim. 4:16). The minister can help save people by the right, diligent, faithful preaching of God's true word! He can also be responsible for sending people straight to Gehenna fire by the wrong use of the position in which God has placed him.

It is because of that tremendous responsibility that James said, "Don't many of you become teachers?"

But anyone—be he false minister, professing teacher, deliberate liar, or innocent lay member trying to "do good" to others, who teaches doctrines to any other person which lead that person astray—comes under the condemnation of the word of God—which says woe unto that man! (Luke 17:1-2). And, perhaps even without realizing it, you could be teaching false doctrines to another person! Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know not your own selves, how that Christ Jesus is in you, except ye be reprobates?" (II Cor. 13:5). "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (I Cor. 10:12).

Perhaps many of the brethren have not realized the gravity of the responsibility of being a steward of God's word. Many times, "old wives' tales" and cures for petty ailments and afflictions are freely passed out when one person learns another is sick. This could constitute a vitally serious infraction against Almighty God—and against the sick brother or sister! These are just a few of the
ways in which it is possible to cause a brother to stumble! But remember, God's word is literally filled with fearsome warnings to any and all who would presumptuously set themselves up as 'teachers' of the people, when God has not specifically placed them in that office.

How God Calls His Servants

My father fully explained the principles of ordination in his article entitled, "Must God's Ministers be Ordained by the Hand of Man?"

It is God who chooses and calls His servants. (Eph. 4:11, 1 Cor. 12:28). The way He calls them needs to be definitely understood!

Notice, Jesus said to His disciples, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you . . ." (John 15:16). When He was walking by the Sea of Galilee, He said to Peter and Andrew, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men" (Matt. 4:19). Notice, not one of Jesus' disciples whom He called and ordained to the ministry chose themselves!

I want you to think very carefully about this next statement! It constitutes a great principle of God's word—and a vitally important key to be used in God's true ministry.

There is not one single example—Anywhere in the Bible, where a called and chosen servant of God came forward and volunteered for the office!

Moses argued that he was unfit for the job. Jeremiah said he was too young. Jonah ran away, Samuel was directly called of God, David knew nothing until Samuel announced it to him. All of the prophets say, "The Word of the Lord came unto . . ." them, not that they volunteered for the office!

Jesus called and appointed His true disciples. "Paul was struck down by a miracle. Paul "took" Timothy unto him, and so it is throughout the history of God's Church. My father fought vigorously against the truth of God before He was finally called.

However, after a person has been called into the Church, and becomes a Spirit-begotten child of God, it is not wrong, but rather a good thing if he desires an office in the ministry (1 Tim. 3:1).

God Works Through Human Instruments

But Jesus said, "Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them!" (Matt. 7:20). The Scriptural qualifications imposed upon any person whom God is calling to the ministry are so absolutely rigid that there is no possibility of unqualified, uncalled and untrained men being ordained.

One great principle that seems so difficult for some few to understand is that the Creator who gives us every breath of air we breathe accomplishes His plan here below—yes, and even governs His Church—through human beings—His instruments!

God is now sending the Gospel of His soon-coming Government into many parts of this darkened world. But He is not yet shouting with His own booming, earth-shaking voice. He is sending the Gospel over the airwaves by the voice of His human instrument, Mr. Armstrong!

He is seeing to it that you are receiving this magazine, to feed and nourish you in His truth, to warn you of impending dangers, to try to help every hungry "babe in Christ" gain an entrance into His glorious Kingdom. But the magazine is written, edited, typeset, printed, and mailed by human instruments.

It is the same in calling His ministry! Many have assumed the Apostle Paul was the exception to the rule that ministers were always ordained through human instruments, by the laying on of the hands of the ministry! That assumption is false!

Paul's Ordination

Read the account of Paul's ordination by human instruments with your own eyes!

Turn to Acts, the 13th chapter. Here, you see the gathering of the elders at Antioch, and the ordination of Paul. The entire account was explained in a former article, but briefly, remember that Paul had been struck down on the road to Damascus, blinded, and made willing to receive God's Spirit through a real repentance!

He was able to "preach Christ" to the Jews at Damascus then, "proving that this is very Christ!" (Acts 9:20 & 22). But notice that Paul was not a minister—he was not an active member in the governmental body of the Church—he was merely doing what any of you should be able to do—"be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (1 Pet. 3:15).

After this short "witnessing" that Jesus was the true Christ, Paul went to Arabia (Gal. 1:17) and returned to Damascus (vs. 18). After three years (vs. 18), Paul then went down to Tarsus, the city of his birth. Prior to this time, however, Paul had been with the other Apostles in Jerusalem, after Barnabas had told them of the miraculous way in which God struck him down. He learned from them, "And he was with them coming in and going out at Jerusalem" (Acts 9:28).

Just as God's ministers are actually sent out to a local church to preach sermons—-or perhaps even serve as acting Pastor for a period of time—-so Paul was tried and proved in the actual ministry.

Notice how Barnabas, also a disciple of the Church, later took Paul with him when he went to Antioch, and they taught many people for another additional year (Acts 11:25-26). It was only after this time of actual ministerial experience and training—having been alone with Christ in the desert—having been under the direct supervision of the headquarters church at Jerusalem, then taken with Barnabas who was older in the faith, to Antioch, that God finally led His servants to ordain Paul!

Notice, as the elders were ministering to the Lord at Antioch, they were fasting (Acts 13:2). During this time, as they were in fasting and prayer—the "Holy Spirit said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them" (vs. 2).

God's Holy Spirit directed the minds of His praying, fasting servants—His human instruments! For example, the Holy Spirit said, "Separate Herman Hoech and Roderick Meredith unto me for the work whereunto I have called them!" He directly revealed to Mr. Armstrong—who could see by the fruits being borne of these men, by their consecration and dedication to God's work, by the need of the work—by their spiritual leadership and qualifications that God was doing the calling!

And so it was with the Apostle Paul! The ministers were told to "separate" Paul! A set for apart or a "separation" for an office is just another word for ordination! Notice what happened!

"And when they had fasted and prayed as in all cases of ordinations, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away" (Acts 13:3).

There is the record of the ordination of the Apostle Paul by human instruments, in the exact same way God always calls and chooses His true ministers—after conversion, a number of years of study and experience and actual field testing and proving in the ministry, and final ordination when God shows His ministers His will!

False "Visions" and "Dreams"

Some, however, who are always looking for ways to get around the set and established ways of their Creator and Ruler, want to "have their own way," and so try to achieve their own goals by wrong means!

Frequently, some will get a certain "feeling" they are being called to the ministry! Setting their heart on the ministry, they decide God has called them
to be His stewards—and begin to FORCE THEMSELVES IN! Notice, they have NOT been trained—have NOT fulfilled the Divinely imposed Scripturqualifications, have NOT been observed, tested and proved by God's true ministers—they merely "make up their minds" and then VOLUNTEER!

But none of God's true servants have ever VOLUNTEERED in THIS MANNER!

Others have a "dream" and then come to the ministers, telling them God is calling them to the ministry! But WHO HAD THE DREAMS IN THE BIBLE? The one being called? Or the human instrument used in the actual calling?

Notice! In the case of the Apostle Paul, the miraculous vision on the road to Damascus was ALSO coupled with a vision which appeared to Ananias—a truly converted man, who was already in God's Church—whom God used as the instrument in baptizing Paul. Ananias did NOT ordain Paul—he merely baptized him!

God's true servants are not called by weird dreams and visions which God keeps hidden from His already-called and ordained officers of the Church.

A lay member will not be called to the ministry without the ministers being the FIRST ONES TO RECOGNIZE IT—BEFORE THE LAY MEMBER EVER DOES!

A Host of "Volunteers"

The Bible is also explicit on a whole group of men who "volunteered" for the ministry, or a prophetic office, or a position of leadership in the congregation!

"Now Korah rose up before Moses, with certain of the children of Israel—against Moses and against Aaron, and said unto them, 'You take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy... wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation?'" (Nos. 16:1-3).

Notice! Moses and Aaron were accused of having APPOINTED THEMSELVES and "lifting up themselves" over the congregation! You and I know, however, that Moses and Aaron were called of God!

But—as is nearly ALWAYS the case when a presumptuous person tries to usurp authority, he repudiates the office of the one in the already-established position, and accuses that person of having arrogated the office to himself!

Let's never let this happen to any of us! Notice the fearsome END of Korah! 

"... the ground clave asunder that was under them, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their houses, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and all their goods... and they perished from among the congregation" (Numbers 16:31-33).

Satan "volunteered" to take over the office of God! All the false prophets set themselves up, claiming to be the true prophets of God! Adonijah, Solomon's half-brother, tried to set himself up as King over Israel, and was finally killed for his presumptuousness! Simon, the sorcerer, wanted the power of God, and tried to buy it with money! Peter said, "Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money... thy heart is not right in the sight of God" (Acts 8:20-21).

Any person who tries to arrogate to himself an office of the ministry joins ranks with Korah, with Adonijah and all the false prophets, and with Satan the Devil himself!

Many Do Not Know Who All of God's Ministers Are!

As God has granted such wonderful growth and new vitality to His true Church, it has presented another problem we need to overcome!

Many of our brethren are in scattered areas—and do not really know who all the ministers are! Usually, we have always printed in the Good News Magazine an article about any ordinations that have occurred—but many new members have been brought in to the flock of true believers in recent months and years, and they are unsure as to who is a minister, and who is not!

For that reason, we give you the following list, which comprises ALL the God-called and ordained ministers, deacons and deaconesses in the True Church of God for today!


There you have a complete list of all the ordained ministers and officers in God's true Church of this age! I hope all of you are really rejoicing in the growth God is granting, and, as every one of us should be, praying "ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest" (Matt. 9:38).

Remember brethren, God's word warns us of false teachers who will arise—and try to deceive many of YOU! You should not only pray for additional true ministers to be called, but you should also be diligently praying that God will protect His flock—and protect you—from being deceived and led away from His only true Church by a false minister.

God's true ministers are ordained for the good of the flock, for the spiritual edification and growth of each one of you, "till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ!" (Eph. 4:13).

Are You "Putting Off" Salvation?

(Continued from page 6)

"And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, 'Lazarus come forth!'" (vs. 43). And a man who had been DEAD four days walked alive out of his tomb.

Why was Christ able to speak only a short, eleven-second prayer, and publically, in front of the people there, and still perform one of His greatest miracles?

Simply because He was fasting and praying constantly, not just working up a temporary 'spiritual attitude' to perform some great thing—not just 'getting in the mood' for a while. He was in such constant communion with God, that He needed only to lift His eyes to heaven, and break off ONE conversation, with other human beings, and begin a new conversation— with His Heavenly Father. Remember, Jesus is your example.

But, sadly enough, most of us don't have the WILL POWER Jesus had. We constantly tell ourselves, "Well, I'm too hungry today, I'll put it off until tomorrow," or, "I've got too much work to do, that will require all my physical strength—I'll put it off until later!" or, "I won't have a good opportunity to pray today, so the fasting would only be starving my physical body for nothing—I'll wait until I'm not so busy!" In just this fashion,
you can drift rapidly into a state of spiritual lethargy!

God's church is not fasting anywhere near enough!

The Leaky Roof

This type of neglect is about like the farmer whose roof leaks. Always, when he is reminded about the holes in the roof, he begins to reason, "Well, it's not raining now, and I've got so much else to do—I'll put it off until tomorrow." Tomorrow comes, and then several tomorrows, until it finally around in the house to catch the rain after the rain has stopped, he thinks things there is no promises and "good intentions." Save one single soul from the damnation at the house of God: and if it first begin into His glorious Kingdom! You'd better judged ignorant, develop that on earth get busy while the sun is shining, and allow almost the majority of the sinning, of physical agonies and final spiritual of temptation and perseverance—because they are coming!

The Time is Now!

Peter warns us "... the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer!" (I Pet. 4:7). We are exhorted to be diligently working out our own salvation, with fear and trembling (Phil. 2:12) and to be putting off daily the traits and characteristics of the "old man of sin!" (Col. 3:9-10, I Cor. 15:51).

Jesus illustrated this day-by-day fight of the Christian when He said, "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof" (Matt. 6:34). You've got to conquer today's problems today—not make empty promises about "getting around" to it tomorrow!

Christ tells us, "Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; And ye yourselves like unto men that

wait for the Lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately!" (Luke 12:24-36). Are we going to say to Christ, "I'll get up and let you in tomorrow" at His coming! . . . If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Luke 9:23). Jesus said it is a day-to-day process! Notice the example of the Bereans, who were so intrigued by the teaching of the Apostle Paul that they "searched the scriptures daily . . . therefore many of them believed" (Acts 17:11-12). Many are comforting themselves by telling themselves, "I'm trying to quit this or that... I'm in the process of doing what I know I should" and, content to be in a constant state of "trying," they never seem to get around to really doing anything about it!

Notice how much emphasis God places on doing things today! "But except one another one daily, while it is called Today, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin" (Heb. 3:13).

A Broad Principle

Perhaps this sounds like a simple key, a rudimentary truth, which is certainly understood readily enough by the majority of God's people. But it is actually much more than that! It constitutes a tremendous, all-encompassing principal, which, if really practiced, will result in eternal life!

QUIT PUTTING THINGS OFF—AS OF NOW.

Had you promised yourself you would pray more today? THEN DO IT! STOP reading this article right NOW! It will still be here when you return—but time is passing! Go to your closet or bedroom now and pray, if you had intended to do so. Learn this lesson once and for all—DON'T PUT THINGS OFF, if you intend to enter God's Kingdom!

You can return and finish this article later—but you probably won't take time to pray later.

God tells us the coming of Christ is just around the corner in world affairs! It's much later than most of us think! Have you been so securely self-satisfied in the knowledge of prophecy God has revealed that you reason in your mind that Christ probably won't come for another fifteen years or more? Have you begun to reason that there remains plenty of time—and said to yourself, "I'll really put on the pressure right down in the last few years—there's plenty of time yet—I'll put it off over coming until tomorrow?" Probably you have!

But God says to cast down reasonings and face the truth! (II Cor. 10:5).

"But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others, but let us watch and be sober!" (I Thes. 5:4-6).

Yet many of you are asleep! I know some of you by name—and, the chances are, you know that I know, and that other ministers know, and that others of the congregation know! But—what is most important—God knows! Are you going to continue "kidding yourself" that you'll begin putting on the pressure later? Some of you have been physically associated with God's Church for years—and have not grown!

Every time you put off until tomorrow what you could accomplish today, you are weakening—and possibly even destroying part of your character! And character is the very reason for life! Character is what you should take with you into God's Kingdom!

Brethren—don't let this be "just another interesting article" to you! Don't read it, agree with it, and then forget about it! Don't allow Satan to deceive you that you're all right spiritually! YOU KNOW you're not!

Then, in the name of Christ our Saviour, do something about it—NOW! DON'T PUT IT OFF ANY LONGER!

Work Goes Forward

(Continued from page 4)

especially of the local congregations through a regular Church News column. We welcome your suggestions, your comments, and any local church news that you wish to contribute to this column.

Let us know how God is blessing, healing and strengthening each of you in the local congregations—and you scattered brethren as well. Let us all come to realize more fully that—wherever we are—we are members of God's Church, brothers and sisters in Christ Jesus!