

The Good News

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THE CHURCH OF GOD

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Greatest Feast of Tabernacles in 1500 Years!

World history was made. Hundreds came, looked with awe at God's Big Tabernacle, partook of the greatest spiritual feast in a millennium and a half, returned home inspired, determined to STUDY God's Word, to PRAY, and to grow spiritually as never before!

NEVER before in modern times has such a festival been held! It was a small foretaste of the time now soon to come when *all nations* shall go up from year to year to Jerusalem to keep the Feast of Tabernacles! (Zech. 14:16-19).

Jesus Christ will be there *in Person*, then. He was there, *in Spirit*, at this Festival.

Bigger, Better, Every Way

Everyone in attendance seemed to feel this Festival was bigger and better than those of the previous years in every way.

The big Tabernacle is not completed. The carpenters, plumbers, electricians and other workers just laid off work for these eight days. Only two of the booths in which we are to dwell (it is also called the "Feast of Booths,"—Lev. 23:34—Moffatt translation), were built—and they only as samples to show the brethren what the future housing colonies of booths will be like. The grounds were not yet landscaped, and were just dry, dusty sand. Yes, there were all these handicaps. The beautiful playgrounds for children of various ages which are designed by landscape architects were not yet constructed.

But in spite of all these handicaps there was better order and less confusion than any Festival we have held these past twenty years.

More people attended than any Feast of Tabernacles held by the Church of God, so far as we know, for more than 1,500 years. Altogether, approximately ONE THOUSAND PEOPLE were there. The first few days fifty or more people paid for meals and left without registering, and more than 800 registered during the first half of the Festival. Another hundred or so came for the last two days, so that approximately a thousand people were in attendance. It is to be regretted, however, that not more than about 650 were in continuous attendance for the entire eight days. God commands our presence for the entire eight days—not parts of it!

There was more and better preaching, more and better music, a better spirit than any festival of our time, and no friction or opposition or lack of harmony. There was PEACE, and GREAT JOY!

Two Weddings

On the last Great Day of the Festival, two beautiful weddings were solemnized in the Tabernacle. This was the first time

many of our brethren had witnessed one of God's own weddings, solemnized the Bible way.

At 9:30 in the morning Herman L. Hoeh and Isabell Kunkel were joined together by God as husband and wife, Dr. C. Paul Meredith officiating. It was a beautiful, sacred ceremony.

At 2:30 in the afternoon Norman Smith and Charlene Glover were principals in another impressive and beautiful service officiated by Herbert W. Armstrong, in which God bound them for life as one flesh.

Many comments were heard that these marriage ceremonies surely revealed the sacredness and irrevocableness of marriage, popularly taken so lightly and carelessly by the world today. Many remembered Herman Hoeh's article in a recent issue of this magazine setting forth reasons why members of God's church should never be unequally yoked together with those who do not believe, and OBEY, God's Truth, or ever permit a ceremony to be performed by any but our own ordained ministers in the true Church of God. He had suggested, in that article, that if it were impossible for us to send a minister to perform a ceremony in some distant place, that God commands the presence of every one of

us three times a year at His Festivals, and our ministers are always in attendance and available for solemnizing marriages at these times and places. It seemed fitting that he should be the first to set the example, and to practice what he preached, by having one of our own ordained ministers officiate at his wedding.

These two young couples are among the most able and competent young people God has sent to Ambassador College, and very important servants in the work of God. All of God's people rejoice in these two God-formed unions, and pray that they may be productive of very great fruit for God's glorious Kingdom, and may bring, not only blessings to countless others over the world, but abundant happiness to these fine, consecrated young couples themselves.

Better Preaching

The inspiring and powerful preaching by the seven ministers ordained since the Festival at Seigler Springs, California, a year ago, was of course the greatest contributing factor in making this the greatest Feast of Tabernacles of modern times.

A few years ago these Festivals were carried by God's called and chosen minister with a number of promising young men, still students, helping with sermonettes, but with real preaching from only one minister.

Gradually those young men developed, matured, and grew in experience and ability into preachers who have not only the TRUTH, but the earnestness, the sincerity, and the inspired fire and power in delivery to carry deep conviction into the minds and hearts of hearers.

This year, perhaps for the first time, the great conclave of brethren came to realize that this is not just a one-man work of God—but we are the true CHURCH OF GOD—the very Church Jesus said He would build, and did build in 31 A.D.—a Church led by Christ working in and through His called, educated, consecrated, and experienced ministers. This year we heard inspiring, dynamic sermons from several of God's ministers—sermons of real moving conviction and POWER!

Many expressed a thrilled sense of gratitude and rejoicing in the realization, received from Mr. Armstrong's message and Mr. Hoeh's recent articles, on the identity and history of our Church, that WE ARE TRULY GOD'S CHURCH—that we are actually identified in Bible prophecy as the "Philadelphia" Church, for whom God has opened the door for the proclaiming of His true Gospel to ALL THE WORLD, as a WITNESS UNTO ALL NATIONS!

Perhaps the greatest surprise to most

was the powerful and dynamic preaching of Raymond McNair and the earnest pleading and conviction of Dick Armstrong's messages. But scarcely less surprising, and certainly no less powerful and moving, was the improved and mature preaching of Rod Meredith, Raymond Cole, Herman Hoeh and Marion McNair.

Very vital and important messages were brought in sermonettes by five Ambassador College seniors, Dean Blackwell, Norman Smith, Wayne Cole, George Meeker, and Paul Smith; one graduate of the college, Kenneth Herrmann; one sophomore, Ted Armstrong, heard for the first time; and the sermon by Gene Carter of St. Louis. These messages rounded out the diet and made the conclave one complete, well-balanced spiritual FEAST.

Superior Music

The musical portion of the great Festival, so important in any spiritual gathering, planned by Sister Eckert and Professor Leon Ettinger and Lucy H. Martin of the Music Department of the college, was certainly superior in quality, and more abundant in quantity, than any previous meeting.

Mrs. Martin, head of the Music Department, and Professor Ettinger, instructor in voice, flew over from Pasadena Friday afternoon, remaining until after the Sunday morning service.

Under Mr. Ettinger's inspiring and brilliant directing the 30-voice Ambassador Chorale, accompanied by Mrs. Martin, sang two numbers at each service Friday evening, Sabbath morning and Sabbath afternoon, and three on Sunday morning.

Solos were sung by Beverly Gott, Ted Armstrong, H. L. Morley, Gene Carter, and Helen Hammond; duets by Beverly Gott and Ted Armstrong, and violin solos by Dwight Armstrong.

It was a most inspiring experience to see and hear the Ambassador Chorale. It is difficult to believe that a large portion of these young people had never sung before, until entering Ambassador College a year ago. Their beautiful harmony, perfect unison, and splendid technique and dramatic expression have been made possible by two factors—the experienced and superb mastery of Prof. Ettinger's direction, and the zeal and whole-souled application of the students. The Chorale is certainly a splendid tribute to the success of Ambassador College.

Tabernacle Impressive

While the Tabernacle itself was far from finished—and none of the great lounge room to be built on the front erected—yet it was most impressive and

proved a big surprise to nearly every one. The great high ceiling—38 feet high—and the large auditorium, 105 feet wide and nearly 100 feet long, with the beautiful wide redwood rostrum, brought awed looks from many. Every comment overheard, or which came to our attention, was favorable and enthusiastic.

But the principal reason for the great feeling of satisfaction and joy over the big Tabernacle and grounds is the fact that it is GOD'S VERY OWN, deeded at the county court house in His name, and therefore is OURS—since we are His begotten children. Yes, for that reason it is OUR VERY OWN—God's House—and it is clear of all encumbrance. It is all paid for, except for current billing on the construction work.

Of course it was sandy and dusty. The circular, winding one-way roadway from the highway in and out of the grounds was also dusty. We feel sure all the brethren understood this was due to the fact the work is far from finished. When finished the roadways will probably be hard surfaced.

The landscape architects and the building architect have planned special playgrounds for children of various age-groups. These will be under beautiful shade trees, and carpeted with beautiful lawns. The playground for the little tots will be fenced in. Adequate playground equipment will be installed. There will even be a baseball or a softball diamond for older children and young people of college age. There will be wide sidewalks between main points of foot traffic, and grass or other ground covering to eliminate the dusty sand.

The existing kitchen, designed originally only for feeding a smaller number at the Passover time, proved entirely inadequate for such a large number of people. It was decided that the only satisfactory solution will be the building of a large separate dining building and kitchen. However, due to the cost of this project, it will not be undertaken until after the 1954 Feast of Tabernacles, ready for the Festival of 1955. We shall have to make out one more year with present kitchen and dining facilities.

But ultimately, perhaps two years from now, when at least three or four housing colonies of booths are built, the grounds landscaped, the lake and baptistry built, and the new dining and kitchen building completed, it will be one of the most wonderful and efficient and beautiful projects for large gatherings of people anywhere on the face of the earth. Yes, THIS IS GOD'S CHURCH—it is THE DOING OF GOD! Let us be glad and rejoice, and give God THANKS—and put our shoulders to the wheel with ZEAL!

JUDGING and DISCIPLINE in God's Church

*What is Christ's way of protecting His church from troublemakers?
Is there a way we can "judge" evildoers who creep into local
congregations?*

by Roderick C. Meredith

MILLIONS of sincere but misguided people are *mixed-up* about the meaning of Jesus' words recorded in Matt. 7:1-5.

How often have you heard someone reprimanded for stating his belief that someone else had done wrong by the exclamation, "Judge not, brother. Jesus said we shouldn't judge other people, you know."

What about this? Is it wrong, for example, to warn your friends about a certain youth in the neighborhood who is a thief and whom you *know* is a thief because you have caught him in the very act of stealing?

The Bible commands us *not* to bear false witness against another (Exodus 20:16). A talebearer is condemned in God's word (Lev. 19:16; Prov. 18:8). You should always try to help others overcome their sins, and not expose them *unnecessarily*. But is warning your neighbors about a persistent thief "talebearing"?

Of course not! What, then, did Jesus mean when He said, "Judge not, that you be not judged"?

Read Entire Passage

The way this passage of scripture has been misapplied is a good example of how most professing Bible students often *pervert* the intended meaning of God's word. Their principal trouble is that they *stop too soon*. They read just *part* of a passage of scripture, and then *they* interpret it.

This leads to *confusion* and *differing human ideas*. You should *let the Bible interpret the Bible*. Read **ALL** the passage in which a verse is contained, and then read the *other* places in the Bible which further explain the subject. This way you will get *God's* interpretation—not somebody's human opinion.

Using this "key" to unlock the meaning of scripture, we find that Jesus was referring primarily to people like the hypocritical Pharisees who were accusing others of the very things they themselves were doing (verses 3-5). Jesus said that such people should not "judge" or "condemn" others.

The Fenton translation renders this

phrase "condemn not" instead of "judge not."

In the Old Testament, God gave civil statutes to Israel and the judges had the authority to condemn evildoers to a death sentence. Later, God sent Christ to bring "grace and truth" (John 1:17). "Grace" is the free, unmerited pardon extended by God to sinners.

Jesus showed that instead of pronouncing sentence upon sinners, as Israel's judges had in the past, it was now the duty of God's representatives to teach them the *right* way and command them to repent of the *wrong* way.

In the case of the woman taken in adultery (John 8:3-10), Jesus showed the Pharisees that they were not fit to condemn anyone (verse 7). He was ushering in the dispensation when God's people would no longer be fleshly Israel, but Spirit-begotten sons who would be held accountable by God for obeying even the *spirit* of the law (Matt. 5:28).

Jesus did not "judge" or *pronounce sentence* upon the woman at that moment. But He commanded, "Go, and *sin no more*."

Human beings are not capable of reading another's mind and heart. But by first *overcoming* your own major faults, and acquiring spiritual wisdom and experience, you *can* become qualified to help others recognize and overcome their sins.

Speaking of one still laden with faults, Jesus said, "Thou hypocrite, *first* cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and *then* shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye" (Matt. 7:5).

First, overcome your own major faults and grow spiritually. *Then* you will be able to *rightly discern other people's sins* and *help cast them out*. Christ—the living Head of the true church (Col. 1:18)—expected His children to help each other *overcome sin*. When you read *all* of this passage where Jesus spoke about "judging," you get a far different meaning than those who just read and then *humanly interpret* the first verse.

The real meaning of this passage, then, is that Christians must first grow

in the character of God before they are qualified to discern the sins of others and help them to be overcomers as well. But mature Christians *should* help their weaker brethren overcome their *sins*. This will naturally involve *pointing out sins* in others and giving advice and help in overcoming them. Jesus *meant* what He said. But this must all be done God's way.

Old Testament Examples

If you study the subject of "judging" throughout the entire Bible, you will see clearly why Jesus said what He did on this subject.

Glancing back into the Old Testament, you will find that one of Moses' principal duties was to "judge" the children of Israel (Exodus 18:13-27). He became so over-burdened with this responsibility that he was forced to appoint other God-fearing men to judge the minor cases (verses 17-22).

After Moses died, Joshua acted as a judge in Israel. But later (Judges 2:10-17), a generation arose which rebelled against the judges God set over them. The result was the bloodshed and national suffering described all through the book of Judges. Twice God gives us the major *cause* of all this suffering: "In those days there was no king in Israel, but *every man did that which was right in his own sight*" (Judges 17:6; 22:21).

Since they *refused* to hearken to God's judges, Israel *suffered* because every man acted on human reason—doing what he thought was right. Relying on human reason instead of on God's chosen representatives always leads to *disaster*. "There is a way that seemeth *right* unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Prov. 16:25).

The congregation of Israel is a fleshly type of the spirit-begotten church of God today. The leaders in Israel *judged* the people, but *trouble* came when the people refused to hearken unto those whom God had set in authority. Speaking of the children of Israel, the apostle Paul was inspired to write, "Now all these things happened unto them for examples: and they are written for *our* admonition, upon whom the ends of

The Good News

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 scattered abroad, and
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 at Ambassador College*

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the world are come" (I Cor. 10:11).

A Look Ahead

Looking toward the future, you will find that the reward of the Christian is a position of *ruling and judging* the nations. In Rev. 2:26-27, Christ says that those who *overcome* will be given *rule* over the nations. The scene depicted in Rev. 20:4-6 shows that the resurrected saints will be given positions of *judgment and rule* under Christ during the millennium. This thousand year rule of Christ and the saints will take place *on the earth* (Rev. 20:10).

A brief glance at I Cor. 6:1-7 reveals that the saints will not only judge the world, but *we will even judge angels!* If this be so, "how much more things pertaining to this life?" wrote Paul.

Both the example of ancient Israel and the promises of our future reward clearly reveal that God's servants *in all times* are called on to "judge" and to direct those under their charge. Our whole Christian life is to prepare us to make wise decisions when we are called on to help *judge and rule* the world under Christ. Our willingness to accept God's judgments and directions in our personal lives—and, when called on, to render them wisely and justly—will be one of the deciding factors which will determine our position in the kingdom of God.

How does God's judgment work at this present time? How does it function in His church?

Church Discipline

Jesus said, "I will build **MY** church" (Matt. 16:18). Christ is the living, ac-

tive head of God's church (Col. 1:18). He rules the church through His called servants to whom He has committed the keys of the kingdom of heaven. He has given them authority to "bind" or forbid certain things, and to "loose" or permit certain things. This "binding" or "loosing" may also be applied to permitting or forbidding the admission of persons into the fellowship of the church.

Christ gave himself for the church and is cleansing it "that it should be holy and without blemish" (Eph. 5:25-27). Jesus is going to purge sin out of his church that it may be spotless before God.

How?

The answer reveals the process of judgment or discipline which God has instituted in His church.

Jesus taught the disciples how to keep sin out of the church in Matt. 18:15-20. Read these verses carefully.

Verse 15 contains an error in translation. (Please continue on page 6)

RADIO LOG

"The WORLD TOMORROW"

Herbert W. Armstrong analyzes today's news, with the prophecies of The WORLD TOMORROW!

TO ALL OF EUROPE:
 RADIO LUXEMBOURG—4:15 P.M.
 —Thursdays Luxembourg time.

TO THE NATION & CANADA:
 XELO—800 on dial, every night, 9:00 P.M. Central Standard time. (8:00 Mountain Standard time.)

XERF—1570 on dial (extreme top of dial) Sundays, 7:15 P.M. Central Standard time.

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And Now . . .

ABC NETWORK!

GOD NOW opens another door—a *very great door!*

Perhaps this is the greatest news we have ever had to announce! Beginning Sunday, October 25th, The WORLD TOMORROW goes on one of the great major radio networks, ABC, Transcontinental!

This means millions of new listeners every week. It means tremendous prestige. It means approximately 175 additional radio stations. THINK OF IT—175 additional radio stations—including the great basic 50,000-watt ABC stations in New York, Chicago, San Francisco, Kansas City, Buffalo, Toronto, and other major cities. As we go to press the exact number of stations which will release the program is not known.

We were allowed to select ABC stations in those cities we desired, and omit any we did not wish to cover. We selected all of the largest stations, omitting only a number of the smaller ones. Nearly 200 stations were approved by us. As we go to press we are awaiting word from the Hollywood offices of the network as to which of these stations are able to clear the time specified. It is expected that around 175 stations will carry the program, although it may drop somewhat below that.

Some of the greatest, most powerful, best-known stations in America will now broadcast The WORLD TOMORROW. The Hollywood office has indicated that they expect such great stations as WABC, New York, WLS, Chicago, and KGO, San Francisco, to carry it—and also in the 50,000-watt class, KEX, Portland, KING, Seattle, KGA, Spokane, beside 50,000-watt stations (most powerful allowed in the U.S.) in Kansas City, Tulsa, Waterloo, Iowa, Buffalo, and Toronto. Included will be strong stations in Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington D.C., Richmond, Atlanta, Birmingham, Louisville, Cleveland, Detroit, Cincinnati, Toledo, Indianapolis, St. Louis, Minneapolis-St. Paul, Omaha, Lincoln, Wichita, Oklahoma City, Little Rock, Dallas, Houston, Memphis, Nashville, Chattanooga, Denver—in fact, just about every major city in the U.S.A. There will be several stations in each of such states as Florida, North Carolina, Indiana, Ohio, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Wyoming, and others.

The TIME: Eastern Standard time, 11:35 to 12 noon on Sundays; Central Standard time, 11:05 to 11:30 A.M.; Mountain States, 12:05 noon to 12:30; Pacific Coast, 11:05 to 11:30 A.M. Tune in on your nearest ABC station.

Why Is Remarriage Wrong?

by Herman L. Hoeb

ON THE baptizing tour this past summer, we encountered a large number of divorce and remarriage problems.

It is the common conception that God would not be fair to condemn adultery. This reasoning is faulty, because people do not understand the purpose of human existence. Human beings were put on this earth not just to please the five senses only, but also to develop into members of the God family—to inherit the powers and prerogatives of God. Before anyone can ever be born into the God family, he must first possess the *character* of God. All the power in the universe would become a curse if it were in the hands of one who had not developed the *character* to control it.

So let's understand WHY adultery is contrary to the *character* of God.

Marriage is FOR LIFE

WHY does God forbid remarriage as long as there is still a living mate?

Also, WHY does GOD join together as *one flesh* a husband and wife FOR LIFE? God is actually reproducing Himself. He formed man in His image. But man was made of the dust of the ground—mortal—human flesh and blood. God is a Spirit, and man cannot become God until he is *born* of God. But, further, in order that there be millions and millions of humans who may be begotten and then *born* into the Kingdom of God, the Eternal wisely made HUMAN reproduction the exact type of divine reproduction, or salvation.

In order that humans might reproduce, as God proposes, and further in order that children might be *taught* from birth on through babyhood and childhood by loving parents, God's PLAN called for the institution of the human FAMILY—which itself is a type of the GOD-FAMILY, which is the Kingdom of God.

God's whole purpose and Plan, therefore, revolves around the divinely-ordained institution of MARRIAGE and the human FAMILY. Major points in God's Spiritual Law, such as "Honor thy father and thy mother," and "Thou shalt not commit adultery," are based on the immutability and integrity of the FAMILY. Therefore God, in His wisdom—because it is BEST for human happiness now, as well as our development into the very character of God—decreed that marriage is a BOND FOR LIFE.

God laid down the laws respecting the marriage union. No matter what your human reason may feel in respect to the circumstances of any particular divorce and remarriage case, GOD BOUND THE ORIGINAL HUSBAND AND WIFE UNTIL SEPARATED BY DEATH. Any separation, except by death, is unnatural and contrary to the very LAWS God set in motion. It does violence to the MARRIAGE INSTITUTION. It does violence to God's institution of the FAMILY—the very type of the Kingdom of God. It brings abomination, pollution, defilement, into human relationships and into the lives of those who are potential born children of GOD.

God made the family ties SO BINDING—and the marriage tie SO BINDING—that any unfaithfulness to it, ONCE BOUND BY GOD, is a MAJOR SIN. Sin is the transgression of God's spiritual Law. That law says "Thou shalt not commit adultery." God defines ANY unfaithfulness to a mate to whom HE had joined one for life as ADULTERY, and therefore sin. No matter how various circumstances may *appear* to human eyes and human reasoning, IT DOES VIOLENCE to God's purpose for human existence, introduces confusion and sin, and THE PENALTY IS DEATH—being permanently CUT OFF from salvation and the Kingdom of God and ETERNAL LIFE!

One who does violence to the human FAMILY relationship, which is a type of the Kingdom of God—one who does despite to the MARRIAGE tie, which is a type of our relationship to Christ—has done despite to the spirit of GRACE, and made a mockery of CHRIST AS SAVIOUR, and of THE KINGDOM OF GOD!

God had great divine PURPOSE, and eternally binding REASON for making it a SIN to violate the marriage union or the family relationship by remarriage to another—which in His sight is actually not remarriage at all, but PLAIN ADULTERY!

Sometimes children are born of these adulterous unions involving one or two divorced persons. People reason out that it is not fair to the children of this adulterous union to separate. BUT WHAT ABOUT THE INNOCENT CHILDREN THAT HAVE BEEN HARMED BY THESE DIVORCES OF PERSONS WHOM GOD BOUND FOR LIFE? That is where the greater harm has been caused. And it is in order to PROTECT those children that God has laid down a rule which men

are forbidden to alter: that a so-called "marriage" of or to any divorced person is ADULTERY, and the penalty is DEATH—and GOD is the final judge, not human reason. But WHY no exceptions?

Remember, the carnal mind never can see that God is right. It always seems that God is wrong.

First Lesson to Learn

Now, first, let us remember that the marriage covenant is a *vow*. The partners *promise Almighty God to remain faithful to one another till death*. Adultery is the breaking of this vow!

The question is not whether the other party proved faithless. What is important is that YOU *remain faithful to your part of the covenant with God*. He wants you to remain faithful to your vow even if you have to undergo suffering to perform it. Notice the words of David: "Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? . . . He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not" (Psalm 15:1,4).

God never backs down on His promises! You can always rely on what He says! The one reason that we KNOW God will answer you if you ask according to His will is that *God does not change*. "Jesus, the same yesterday, today, and forever" (Heb. 13:8). "For I am the Lord, I change not" (Mal. 3:6). This is God's character—*faithfulness*. And if you are to become God, you must develop that same character in yourself *now*. You must learn to keep your word.

Moses instructed the Israelites about this same matter: "This is the thing which the Lord hath commanded." Notice, it was not just Moses, but the Eternal who commanded: "If a man vow a vow unto the Eternal, or swear an oath to bind his soul with a bond; he shall *not* break his word, he shall do according to all that proceedeth out of his mouth" (Numbers 30:1-2). The same instruction is repeated in Ecclesiastes 5:4: "When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed."

Observe that it is the foolish who think they are getting by easily by not performing their vows.

If you are going to be God, then it is time to learn to be faithful to whatever you have vowed. The hardships that might sometimes result in being faithful to the marriage vow are not worthy to be compared to the lesson of faithful-

ness which develops in you the character of God (Rom. 8:18). No matter what the hardship or the temptation, "God is faithful who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way of escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (I Cor. 10:13). This is God's promise. He won't break it! Will you rely on it if yours is the problem of divorce and remarriage that seems so difficult to bear?

Lesson Number Two

Second, marriages ending in divorce result from the fact that marriage vows are often taken without counsel and advice from those who are older and more experienced. "Foolishness," said Solomon, "is bound in the heart of a child" (Prov. 22:15)—but sad to say, most of that foolishness is not removed today because parents do not correct their children as they ought to. It is little wonder that when young people imagine they have fallen in love their foolish ideas often lead them into trouble. "The way of a fool is right in his own eyes,"—young people too often think their infatuation is love—"but he that hearkeneth unto *counsel* is wise" (Prov. 12:15).

How many times the proverb is repeated: "For lack of counsel the people perish." Think of the number of ruined lives, all because human beings have not learned to take advice and counsel from those who are experienced. God wants us to realize the terrible mistakes that can result from failure to take advice. If God would permit remarriage, human beings would never learn the lesson. They would go on making snap decisions, which would bring ever-increasing retribution. How much wiser is God's plan, that we learn the lesson once and for all, so we won't have to continue living a life filled with mistakes and heartaches. The small amount of suffering that a few parents would have to endure by not remarriage would not compare to this fundamental lesson which every child needs to learn.

Let's understand divorce and remarriage clearly. God will never tolerate adultery because we would not learn these two fundamental lessons: *Seek counsel and obtain all the facts possible before making a decision: then once the right decision is made never deviate nor change.*

How plain it is that divorce and remarriage cheat us out of the *character* of God which we must have to inherit the POWERS of God.

Let's quit trying to use human reason to evade the laws of God because none who persist in living in adultery will ever enter the kingdom of God!

Judging and Discipline in God's Church

(Continued from page 4)

tion. Instead of "if thy brother shall trespass against thee," the verse should read "if your brother sins, go and tell him his fault . . ." Thorough investigation into the Greek text *proves* that the words "against thee" should be left out.

Jesus was simply teaching his disciples how to bring back a brother who was *sinning*—whether against them, or someone else, or God only. Notice the three steps Jesus said to take in such a case.

Jesus' Instructions

First, tell the other person his fault between you and him *alone*. *Don't* gossip or tell others. Don't become upset or bitter over your brother's sin. Just *go and tell him about it privately*. Don't pick at your brother or pester him about trivial matters. But if he *sins*, go and tell him about it with the attitude of *helping* him. If he hears you, you have gained your brother.

Secondly, if he will not hear you then take with you one or two other brethren and rehearse the matter again in their presence. Be sure they are mature Christians—men of understanding who will be able to make your sinning brother realize the seriousness of his mistake.

Thirdly, if he will not heed their warning to repent, then tell the matter to the church. Since there is order and government in God's true church, you should take the matter up with the pastor. He will carefully review the case, probably have a long talk with the party in error, and will then bring the matter before the entire congregation if he deems this wise.

If after all this the sinning party still refuses to repent, Christ said that you are to treat him as an unbeliever. Does this mean you are to hate him or to hold him in contempt. *It certainly does not*. It simply means that you are to treat him as an unconverted outsider and have *no fellowship* with him.

Naturally, you should continue to *love* your erring brother and *pray* that God will bring him to repentance. But you are *not* to talk to him about it or fellowship with him any more until he acknowledges his error and gives evidence that he has *repented*. If your brother finally does repent and turn from his error, we will find later that he may then be readmitted into church fellowship. So his expulsion from the congrega-

tion is simply to *wake him up* before it is too late.

Bound in Heaven

Notice that in this same passage about church discipline, Jesus said, "Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be *bound in heaven*: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Matt. 18:18). Jesus gave His called servants the *authority* to make binding decisions in such cases. But he went on to say, "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (verse 20).

Speaking of exercising church discipline, Jesus *promised* that He would *be with* His servants in carrying out this function. Christ himself will *inspire* and *direct* His chosen ministers in all such decisions. It is really Christ who is governing and judging God's church.

Even the judges in the Old Testament were promised divine guidance in rendering their decisions. In II Chronicles 19:1-7 is an account of how righteous King Jehosaphat appointed judges over the land. He was inspired to instruct them, "Take heed what ye do: for ye judge not for man, but for the Lord, *who is with you in the judgment.*" Seeing this example of how God directed his fleshly people, how much more will He *direct* and *inspire* His servants today in directing and judging matters within His Spirit-begotten church? Christ will certainly guide His ministers in judging His people today. He intends to present the church *holy* and *blameless* before God. The Bible form of church discipline is one of the means Christ is using to keep His church free from corruption. All such judgments by God's servants will be *bound in heaven*. Christ directs His ministers in governing His church. Then *He backs them up* with His divine authority and power.

Are there further instructions on exactly how this should be carried out?

Paul's Instructions

The apostle Paul was inspired to write further instructions about church discipline to the churches under his care. He instructed the Galatians. "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of *meekness*; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted" (Gal. 6:1).

Notice that Paul admonished them to be *meek* or *humble* when helping a brother to see and overcome a sin. We must never be overbearing or self-righteous in such a case, but should humbly try to help our brother correct his error—realizing that we ourselves

may be tempted in the same manner.

Paul gave inspired instructions to the Thessalonian Christians in his epistles. Knowing that some obstinate persons in the congregation might refuse to recognize his authority and instructions, he wrote, "if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and *have no company with him*, that he may be ashamed. Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother" (II Thess. 3:14-15).

If a person gets in a *wrong spirit* and refuses to heed the instructions of God's called servants, Paul showed that they are to be disfellowshipped *that they may be ashamed*.

Learning to obey the *government of God* is the very basis of true Christianity. People *must* be taught to respect and fear the authority God wields through His ministers. If a person refuses to obey God's government now, how can he be expected to obey it in the kingdom?

In Romans 16:17-18, Paul warned the saints: "Now I beseech you, brethren, *mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.*" Troublemakers and false teachers are to be marked, and, if they persist, to be *put out* of God's church and *avoided*. How much trouble and anguish can be avoided if God's people will *heed this warning!*

An Example

In the third and fourth chapters of I Corinthians, Paul was warning the saints against following any individual instead of Christ and pointing out some of the fruits of a true apostle. He warned them not to take his authority as God's servant lightly.

Paul had undoubtedly heard that some of them had become followers of men and were denying his apostolic authority. They were refusing to recognize God's government through him. So Paul wrote, "Now some are puffed up, as though I would not come to you. But I will come to you shortly, if the Lord will, and will know, not the speech of them which are puffed up, but the power. For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power. What will ye? Shall I come unto you with a rod, or in love, and in the spirit of meekness?" (I Cor. 4:18-21).

Do you see that Paul was calling attention to the fact that God grants *authority and power* to His true servants? Paul knew he had the authority to come "with a rod"—to chasten or *put out* stubborn sinners from their midst. The *POWER* of Almighty God would back him up in this! Any who resisted would be *struck dead* as Ana-

nias and Sapphira if necessary. God's government is with *divine power* and it is well for all of us to realize this!

Paul continued in his letter (I Cor. 5:1-7) to note that a kind of abominable fornication was being practiced among the Corinthians. He commanded them to *put out of their midst* the one who was committing this sin. He said they should "Deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus" (verse 5).

The clear implication of this passage is that once an obstinate sinner is put out of the church, God will permit Satan to afflict him until he repents—*if he will repent*. How *fearful* is the judgment of God on those who know the truth and then let themselves be led into *sin and rebellion* against God's government!

But strict discipline is *necessary* to *preserve the church*. Tolerating a small amount of sin will only lead to more. "Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?" (Verse 6).

Paul commanded, "*Purge out* therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump" (verse 7). Out and out *SIN must not* be tolerated within God's church! Our human reason might tell us otherwise, but *God knows best*.

Reinstatement

Some churches of this world have forms of "excommunication" whereby the object seems to be to hurt and defame the one who has been put out of church fellowship. This is *not* God's way.

As we have seen before, a sinning brother is to be disfellowshipped in order "that he may be ashamed" and come to repentance. The object is to *help* these people—to *wake them up*—not to hurt them.

In II Corinthians 2:1-11, we find that Paul asked the brethren at Corinth to accept the repentance of the fornicator he had commanded them to put out. "Sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many. So that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow" (verses 6-7).

These verses indicate that the man had now repented and was sorrowing greatly over his error. He had learned his lesson. So now he was to be brought back into the fellowship of the church and completely forgiven—just as God forgave him.

Paul said they must forgive him "lest Satan should get an advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices" (verse 11). If God's people continued

to shun this man, he might have committed suicide or perhaps yielded himself to a demon. In either case it would only work harm to the man and bring reproach on the work of God.

Here we have found in God's word a complete example of how church discipline should be carried out. It must be *strict* with persistent sinners or troublemakers, but mercy and complete forgiveness must be extended to those who learn their lesson and repent.

Purpose

The *purpose* of this form of church discipline is to *prevent* God's children from becoming careless and lukewarm about *SIN*—which God *hates*—and to *protect* God's church from becoming infiltrated with sinners or false teachers who will lead others into *sin*. The *object* of church discipline should be *LOVE*—the desire to protect any of God's children from being led astray.

Jesus—the living *Head* of God's Church—gave the over-all principles of church discipline to *protect* the church He was beginning to build. If God's ministers and people today love one another and the *truth*, they will want to carry out God's form of judgment in His church to mutually protect each other from falling into the snare of Satan.

No true Christian has anything to fear from this command of God. It is a procedure designed to protect God's children and keep them bound together in *truth and love*.

Scope

In I Corinthians 6:1-7, the apostle Paul commanded the saints *not* to go to law before unbelievers, but to bring any disputes before the saints for judgment. This would include disputes over material matters as well as the spiritual problems which we have already discussed. Paul wrote, "Know ye not that we shall judge angels? *how much more* things that pertain to this life" (verse 3).

Paul is *not* writing about cases involving outsiders who are unconverted. This chapter deals with converts only.

So when two converted brethren have a disagreement over some material matters—even converted people are still *human* you know—they should bring the matter before the leaders in God's church. Verse 4 of this passage is incorrectly translated and most modern translations show that it should be in the form of a question. Paul was asking them *why* they were bringing their disputes before those who were little esteemed by the church. He continues, "I speak to your shame." (Because they were doing this) "Is it so, that there is

not a *wise man* among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren?" verse 5).

It is the *wise men*, then, the ministers and elders in the church, to whom these problems should be brought. Instead of going before worldly courts, Christians should want to have their disputes settled God's way, according to the principles of God's righteous laws. They are commanded to bring all such disputes before the church for judgment.

God's judgment will ensure full justice for everyone concerned, and will save the church from bearing any reproach over such matters in the outside world.

The apostle Paul specifically states that Christian leaders should be best qualified to judge these matters because they are training to judge the *world*—to judge *angels*. Don't you see the great wisdom of God's government and judgment in His church? He is preparing us to *rule the world* by giving us practical *experience* in administering and obeying God's government now.

The scope of God's judgment includes physical as well as spiritual matters. It is designed to promote and preserve harmony and righteousness among God's people, and to prepare us by experience to become kings and priests in the kingdom of God.

The Reward

Up until recently most of us didn't fully understand the necessity of purging the evil out of God's church. We thought that perhaps God would take care of it without us doing anything.

And it *seemed* like it would be showing more love if we just tried to tolerate evildoers in our midst and hoped for the best.

But can we show more love than God? Are our ideas wiser than God's plan?

The answer is obviously "no."

In his early ministry among God's people, Mr. Armstrong found by hard experience that if sinners are not *put out* of God's church as Christ commanded, a little leaven does leaven the whole lump. Sin spreads like wildfire if it is tolerated. We *must obey* Jesus' command to disfellowship those who persist in an outright violation of God's law after they have been warned.

False teachers must be "marked" and refused further admittance and association in God's church. This is the command of Almighty God. People who rely on human reason may think this is a lack of love. But this is God's way—and God *is* love.

Each of you brethren will have a part in carrying out God's judgment and discipline in the church as He directs. You must be very careful to do it *God's way*. Be sure to follow all the steps Jesus gave when you warn a brother of a sin he is committing.

Church discipline must be exercised in LOVE. In any such matter, always try to *help* the other party—not injure him. Ask God to give you *wisdom* and to help you do everything His way.

Study carefully all the scriptures in this article. Realize that you have *no excuse* for continually criticizing or "picking at" anyone in God's church.

You are only to go to them in love and point out their mistake if they are literally and definitely *breaking God's law*.

In material disputes, you are to go directly to God's ministers instead of a worldly court. If you love God, this will always be to *your best interests* in the end. This is God's *way*—God's *command*.

In all cases, remember that the final *responsibility* for all decisions rests with God's ministers whom He has called. Christ has promised to "be with" and guide them in every judgment. The judgment is of *God*. It will be "bound" in heaven.

You may be tempted to criticize or disagree with some decision that God's ministers will bind. *Be very careful* lest you let this turn you against God. You may not understand all the facts. But God's called ministers probably do and they are responsible to Him—not some human—for their actions in directing His church.

It is human nature to disagree with God. When the children of Israel rejected Samuel as their judge and leader (I Sam. 8:1-9), God told Samuel, "They have not rejected thee, but *they have rejected ME*, that I should not reign over them." Be fearful lest you reject God by rebelling against His called servants.

God holds His ministers responsible for teaching you His word, and for directing His church and carrying out *church discipline*. By following *God's way* of church discipline and judgment, the church of God may go forward in peace and love—and will be purged of all sin to be presented "holy and without blemish" to Christ at His coming.

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