

Research Notes

A CHRONOLOGICAL OVERVIEW OF THE CHANGES

By C White

(my suspicions from early 1986 proved correct – because of what I suspected, I kept a running log of the personnel and doctrinal changes. It pays to keep forever vigilant)

- Mr Herbert Armstrong dies on January 16 (6 Shebat) almost 19 years after his wife died (April 1967).
- Three new presenters are assigned to the World Tomorrow telecasts - David Hulme, David Albert and Richard Ames.
- A tribute World Tomorrow telecast is played in memory of Mr Armstrong offering Mystery of the Ages to the public. A phenomenal 89 000 people request copies of it. Previous telecast response high was 25 000. The *Plain Truth* magazine is going out to an incredible 8 million people each month.
- Dr Meredith transferred from Pasadena to Big Sandy.
- Larry Salyer appointed Director of Church Administration and Douglas Horchak appointed his assistant.
- Mr Tkach Jnr replaces Mr Horchak later on that year as Larry Salyer's assistant.
- In the *Worldwide News* of 25 August the church printed a fantastic article listing the 18 doctrinal truths God restored to the church through Mr Armstrong with Mr Tkach asking us to be thankful for them.
- Paul Kroll, who was disfellowshipped by Mr Armstrong for his ultra-liberal views, is brought back in to write articles for the literature.

1987

- The first major doctrinal change is introduced on **healing**. This would be the only major one for another 2 to 3 years and, as such, the Work continued making great progress.

The new healing booklet said we are no longer physically healed by Christ's stripes - only spiritually healed. There is next to no faith-encouraging examples and stories which Mr Armstrong's booklet was filled with and it destroys faith saying it is not always God's will to heal us. Some good new material showing Christ's sacrifice is not broken into two parts but is the united whole sacrifice as well as some useful information in having wisdom with dealing with the medical profession.

- William Dankenbring is disfellowshipped.

1988

- The World Tomorrow telecast continues to make incredible progress with telecasts averaging 40 000 responses compared to the pre-1986 high of 25 000. Best response apart from the 89 000 high from Mr Armstrong's tribute was 64 000 responses for one on the Book of Revelation. The telecast just goes from strength to strength during the first 3 years after Mr Armstrong's death (1986 to 1988) with the three new presenters David Hulme, David Albert and Richard Ames, later joined by Ron Kelly. A new newsroom-like style set, fantastic graphics, a meaty range of prophetic and social topics and record responses give the genuine impression that the Work is going to grow in incredible leaps and bounds and saturate the world with God's warning message.

- Mr Raymond McNair is transferred(shanghaied?) to New Zealand as Regional Director.

- A report was read in church stating top 5 reasons why 2nd generation christians stay in the church. The top 5 according to surveys were:-

- 1) Family
- 2) Friendships
- 3) SEP
- 4) Ambassador College
- 5) Romance

Notice that not one of the reasons come even close to God and His truths.

1989

- Many of Mr Armstrong's older booklets are phased out.

- It was announced that Pasadena A.C. would be moved to Big Sandy.

- Dr Meredith returns to Pasadena. Within a year he would not be allowed to preach for the next three years and be given only minor speaking duties in smaller outside Pasadena area church.

- **Birthday celebrations** allowed in July.

- October co-worker says Luke 21:36 does not refer to watching world events but watching our spiritual growth. One month later the Berlin Wall comes down and the Eastern European communist governments falling like dominoes giving way to democracy. The *Plain Truth* says **NOTHING** about these momentous events as prophecy has started to be de-emphasised by Pasadena as of this year. GTA comments he was excited to see what the *PT* would have to say when the wall came down and Mr Tkach wrote an article called "No Magic Words". GTA couldn't believe his eyes - "Open sesame!!!" He later commented soon after a minor earthquake in California that the earthquake was his father turning over in his grave.
 - Interesting enough, Robert Kuhn broke from GTA over some disagreements over doctrine. Others also left GTA and he subsequently began to re-emphasise some doctrines he had virtually stopped preaching (US/BC, pagan origins of certain customs, Mark of the Beast, the Ezekiel Message etc.).
 - Gerald Flurry is disfellowshipped and begins the Philadelphia Church of God.
-

1990

- In the May 7 *PGR* it was announced that **the end of the Sabbath was when it became dark**, not sunset.
 - In the same *PGR* as the above change the church announced its new teaching on **Passover** that the lamb was originally killed at the end of the 14th of Nisan, not at twilight at the beginning of that day as was eaten right into the 15th of Nisan placing the death angel's "Passover" not on the 14th but on the 15th and the march from Pi-Ramses later on that morning before sunrise.
 - Last ever real article on prophecy appears in the April *Plain Truth* on the great earthquake of Revelation.
 - In the *Worldwide News* May 21, Mr Tkach attacked our emphasis on prophecy in the past. He continues to **de-emphasise prophecy**. Says he won't trade the true gospel for a "ten nations/save your skin" gospel. Stated that *Mystery of the Ages* had too many errors to continue printing. *Mystery of the Ages* is officially discontinued/killed after being sent out to a phenomenal 3 million plus people over 3 to 4 years.
 - Virtually all of Mr Armstrong's booklets and books such as "The Incredible Human Potential", "The Wonderful World Tomorrow" and "Missing Dimension of Sex" are also killed.
 - It was announced that Ambassador College would seek accreditation.
 - The July 30 *Worldwide News* allows **interracial marriage**.
-

- In September it was announced that the wonderful magazine the "Good News" would be cancelled/killed for a more biblically oriented Plain Truth. The PT did become more biblical but never anywhere near the meatiness and standard of the Good News.
 - The *WWN* Personal of November 19 stated that "the Church of God does not have a commission to proclaim that 10 nations are rising in Europe...or that Germany is regaining power."
 - A Personal Correspondence letter is made available stating that "we believe in the full divinity of the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit."
 - "**The United States and Britain in Prophecy**" is withdrawn/killed. A supposed two-year review to be done on it to prove/review the doctrine.
-

1991

- **The Born Again change** is announced in the January 28 *Worldwide News*. Pasadena now believes we are born again when we are baptized and converted, not at the resurrection after a gestation period of growth in this life when we are only begotten.
 - The April 9 *PGR* states that **God's Kingdom is here now in the church**, not that the church is only the Kingdom of God in embryo.
 - In April the 32 Lesson Correspondence course is killed and will later on be replaced by a new 12 lesson one to reflect up coming changes. The Correspondence Course, as of today, has been reduced to 5 lessons which is fitting as it reflects how little truth that they now have.
 - It was announced around Passover that **the church no longer believed that it was possible for Christ to sin** and His victory was a foregone conclusion.
 - The *Worldwide News* of November 25 stated that prophecy has little to do with the gospel(p.1,3,6). Are not the second coming and future world-ruling Kingdom of God prophetic events?
 - The Personal of the same *WWN* states that God is not a Family and similar things have been said around this time that say we will not be God as God is God leaning towards the abolition of the God reproducing Himself teaching.
 - **The Mark of the Beast** no longer believed to be Sunday-keeping according to Michael Snyder in a radio interview. He also states the church believes in grace by faith alone.
-

1992

- In May Mr Raymond McNair is returned from New Zealand to be a local pastor in Miami. Again sent a long way from the action at headquarters.
- **The 7 000 year plan of God** is debunked in a Personal Correspondence letter which also stated that humans, not just pre-Adamic hominids were on earth long prior to 4 000 BC.
- Things go way beyond the pale with the publication of the God Is... booklet in August. It states that **God is NOT a family, only has one, God is not reproducing Himself, the Holy Spirit is a DISTINCT ENTITY from the Father and the Son and that God does not have a body!**
- In the *Reviews You Can Use* on page 45, it gives 30 or 33 A.D. as the dates for Christ's death and resurrection.
- The US/BC teaching, it is said by Mr Tkach Jnr at a ministerial conference, is based on myth, folklore and superstition.
- After not being allowed to preach, except for a Ladies Bible Study out of Pasadena, in 3 years Dr Meredith is disfellowshipped after being called in and asked/forced to resign. He didn't want to be sidelined and after told by Mr Tkach Jnr and Mike Feazell it was because he wasn't supportive of the changes, plainly discusses with Mr Tkach Snr for 2 and 1/4 hours how the church has veered dramatically off the track and how unbiblical the changes are.

1993

- Inaugural service for the Global Church of God held on 2nd January.
- Mr Raymond McNair officially withdraws fellowship with the WCG in March and joins Dr Meredith and the Global Church of God.
- In April **Divorce and Remarriage** is dramatically liberalised. Trial marriages are now allowed where you can get an annulment after the first few months if you regret your decision.
- **Church eras** now no longer to be taught.
- Dr Meredith begins radio broadcasting the World Ahead program in March.
- In the May 11 Worldwide News **crosses are allowed to be worn** in the church as the cross becomes the unofficial battlecry - "Remember the Cross"
- **Voting and marriage with unbelievers** is officially allowed.

- Dean Blackwell bashes prophecy in a sermon called "Prediction Addiction" in which he says 90% is NOT for our day.
 - The July-August *Reviews You Can Use* makes **Genesis 1 and 2 re-creation metaphorical** and that it is a decoded account that took place over millions of years.
 - The *World Ahead* magazine is launched by Global in September.
 - **The Trinity doctrine** becomes fully-blown! It is stated in personal correspondence letters that the church believes in "a form of the trinity" while three-part(trinity) of articles in WVN in August teach the Holy Spirit is a distinct entity "consciousness" from the Father and the Son who are all one being somehow. Personal pronouns now used for Holy Spirit.
 - Global has its first Feast with an attendance of 1500 around the world.
-

1994

- **The spirit in man** doctrine is officially killed.
 - The World Tomorrow telecast is officially killed.
 - Mr Tkach in his personals continues to make overtures that God could have many true christians in other Protestant organisations who may not have been brought to the truths that the WCG has.
 - The Sabbath according to WCG is no longer the sign between us and God.
 - Evangelist Larry Salyer joins Global.
 - In August Earl Williams gives three tapes unleashing the Protestant heresy of **grace by faith alone**. He plainly says that there are millions of true christians in other organisations, we are to follow Christ and not the law and Christ was only answering the rich ruler according to his folly when He told him to keep the commandments.
 - Global celebrates its second Feast with 3000 members around the world.
-

1995

- Mr Tkach announces a "new" understanding on the **old and new covenants** in which he announces that it is **O.K. to work on the Sabbath if your job is at risk** and that **first and second tithe and the Holy Days are all voluntary. Also he announces that eating unclean foods is no longer a sin.**
-

- In February Global begins producing the World Ahead telecast.
- In April evangelists Colin Adair and Dibar Apartian join Global.
- After confronting Mr Tkach and Messrs Tkach Jnr and Feazell a great number of WCG ministers are terminated and/or resign.
- The weekend of April 30 - May 2 sees the birth of the United Church of God at a conference in Indianapolis attended by 250 ministers, elders and their wives. It is started with a more participatory style of government with Mr David Hulme appointed as the chairman of the transitional board of directors. Several evangelists are amongst the dozens of ministers who have formed United including David Hulme, Gerald Waterhouse, Burk McNair and Dennis Luker.
- May 6 marks the first Sabbath service for the United Church of God with the incredible 'overnight' attendance of 6 000 around the world.
- A fortnight after the UCG's first Sabbath service they have grown to 8 000 on the Sabbath of May 20.
- On the weekend of May 28/29 the first Friends of the Sabbath conference 'Jubilee 95' involving speakers from a number of Sabbath-keeping groups including keynote speaker Dr Bacchiocchi is held at Dana Point in California and is a great success. Dr Merritt who organized the conference in haste had virtually miraculous luck in being able to book both the convention centre and Dr Bacchiocchi in the process among other things. Many fine scholarly lectures supporting the Sabbath were presented.
- After one month the UCG's attendance has climbed to 12 000 as of June 4.
- In mid July Leon Walker, regional director for the Spanish work and 1500 Spanish-speaking brethren join United.
- In mid August Paul Keiffer, regional director for the German work joins United with a great number of the German brethren.
- Evangelists Dr Don Ward and Les McCullough join United.
- In the September 20 PGR **the WCG says that is O.K. for members to keep Christmas if they choose to do so.**
- Mr Joseph Tkach Snr, WCG pastor-general dies on September 23 of cancer. His son, Joe Tkach Jnr replaces him as pastor-general.
- **The WCG keeps the renamed Feast of Tabernacles as the Feast of Faith.**
- United keeps its first Feast with an attendance of 17000 brethren. Global celebrates their third Feast with an attendance of 6000 brethren around the world.

- United produces the Feast preview edition of its beautiful, new 48-page, colour magazine the 'Good News'. The first full edition comes out in January 1996 with a circulation of 50000.
- Ron Dart resigns from the CGI to relieve stress on a heart problem and to help reach the 'lost sheep' as a non-aligned minister. Later on we find that it was also due to distancing himself from GTA over his sexual indiscretions which become public.
- In October Hank Hanegraaff of the Christian Research Institute, a cult-busting organization reveals that they played a pivotal role through closed-door meetings with WCG leaders in changing all the previous major doctrines of the WCG so they no longer would be considered a cult in the eyes of mainstream Christianity.
- In Cincinnati from December 3 to 6, 800 ministers, elders and their wives of the UCG meet for their first general conference. Mr Bob Dick is appointed leader as the chairman of the council of elders and Mr David Hulme as its President.
- In December at a time when the WCG has rejected the need for keeping the Holy Days, famous SDA scholar, Dr Samuele Bacchiocchi, at the invitation of Dr John Merritt, co-ordinator of Friends of the Sabbath, researches the question of the Holy Days and changes his belief about them stating that they are a requirement to be kept for the church today. He presents his findings for the benefit of Church of God brethren at the Lansing, Michigan Friends of the Sabbath conference a few months later in April 1996.
- The second Friends of the Sabbath conference is held in San Antonio, Texas from December 23 to 25.

1996

- In early March Richard Ames joins the Global Church of God. Global's attendance reaches 7 000 members. Its colour magazine '*The World Ahead*' reaches a circulation of 50 000.
- The pastor of the WCG congregation in Big Sandy keeps an Easter sunrise service with a Protestant church as **the church says that it is now O.K. to keep Easter if members feel that they want to.**
- On May 1 the UCG celebrates its first anniversary.
- In July 6 to 8 the first non-U.S. Friends of the Sabbath conference is held in Sydney, Australia with Dr Bacchiocchi as keynote speaker and is a spectacular success.
- On a radio interview Mr Tkach Jnr states that he feels assured **that when he dies he will go to heaven!**

History Research Projects

GPO Box 864, Sydney, Australia 2001

www.originofnations.org

No limitation is placed upon reproduction of this document except that it must be reproduced in its entirety without modification or deletions. The publisher's name and address, copyright notice and this message must be included. It may be freely distributed but must be distributed without charge to the recipient.