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THE AUTHORIZED BIOGRAPHY OF  
DAVID C. PACK

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VOLUME TWO

This book was prepared by the editorial staff of The Restored Church of God and others. Contributing writers, researchers, editors and graphic artists include:

Jeffrey R. Ambrose, Frank Cowl, Jennifer L. Denee,  
Kevin D. Denee, Charles E. Herzog, Darnitra D. Jackson,  
Robert W. Pack, Shirley M. Pack, Vernia I. Pack,  
William R. Pack, Justin T. Palm, Stacey L. Palm,  
Bruce A. Ritter, Paula C. Rondeau  
*and* David C. Pack

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David C. Pack has held a variety of leadership roles throughout his dynamic, event-filled life: author of more than 20 books, scores of booklets and a vast array of articles—Pastor General of The Restored Church of God—voice of *The World to Come* program—founder of Ambassador Center—and publisher/editor-in-chief of three magazines. *The Authorized Biography of David C. Pack* tells the life story of a man who was carefully prepared by God for a unique position.

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## *Spotlight on the Family*

**S**hirley Pack taught all of her children to play musical instruments, beginning with the accordion—because of her German and music roots—at the age of five instead of the usual several years older. Randy went on to play the trombone, Robby the trumpet and Jenny the flute. They all enjoyed their instruments.

But by now it is obvious that the extended Pack family has always been involved in sports of many kinds. This includes the three Pack children. Mrs. Pack would often jokingly comment how she tried to “counteract” the “athletic genes” in the family, but that the “music genes” were just not strong enough.

### **Family Basketball Opportunities**

Since the family had moved from New York, Mr. Pack’s sons continued to develop their athletic abilities in basketball. While Randy, the oldest son, stayed in the New York City area for six weeks to finish his senior basketball season, the Pack’s second son, Robert, his season over earlier, moved to Ohio with his family.

Quite a story developed!

After being pulled away in the middle of a school year late in his sophomore year, it was difficult for Robert to create a new identity in Wadsworth. But he had one thing that most other teenagers did not: height. At age 15, he was 6 feet 3 inches, and still growing.

Because of his height and the influence of his father, Robert was heavily involved in basketball and developed his skills as high school progressed. However, due to the Sabbath, he was unable to participate in many of the games during the season. Unlike the New York area, where most games were during the week because of so many Jewish children in the school (most schools also closed on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur), almost half the games in Ohio were on Friday nights after sundown.

Even though the Sabbath schedule did not permit much play during his junior year, Robert progressed enough that he was invited to Five Star Basketball Camp, an invitation-only weeklong camp to help budding teens develop their basketball skills under the watchful eyes of college scouts from around the country. After returning home, Robert's basketball skills took off, as did his height. By the time his senior year began, the now 6'7" senior was slated to start on the Wadsworth High School (Grizzlies) varsity team later that year.

As the season progressed, the team stretched its record to an undefeated 10-0. They began to be recognized statewide for their accomplishments, with Robert leading the team in scoring in many games, even though he was only playing in about half of them.

Through the winter, the Grizzlies advanced toward the State playoffs. As their streak continued to 18-0, they climbed in the state rankings, reaching as high as the top five. Subsequently, the local media began to pay even more attention to the team as the possibility of a state championship came into view. But there was another story that cap-

tured the attention of the Akron and Cleveland media: a starting player on this team refused to play on Friday nights!

By this time, several Division I colleges contacted Robert, interested in offering athletic scholarships.

### Media Focus

Once they learned that the boys state championship games were scheduled for Friday night and Saturday afternoon, media outlets buzzed about what would happen if the team advanced that far. Many in the community found it hard to believe that he would not play. *Certainly, if the team advanced, an exception could be made, right? His father, the church pastor, would surely grant him an exception, wouldn't he?*

It soon became clear there would be no compromise.

“All that occurred and followed during this time was wonderfully exciting for our family. This time we sat in a lot of bleachers and *did* watch the games.

“This whole period was made more interesting, and to some degree more possible, because an astonishing thing happened: the wife of the principal of the high school came into the Church, and was baptized. Her husband, a fine and very likable man, wanted to be with her and decided to attend services and activities with their children. He was very involved in and supportive of Robby's playing, and understood the Sabbath issue. Further, he only lived two houses away, and our daughter babysat for their children.

“Because I am their father, I am somewhat biased of course, but our sons were very good players. Robby would go on to be the MVP in the county all-star game. He also was a little more known because he could jump so far above the rim as a high school player. He

was invited to participate in the greater Akron slam dunk championship, but the Sabbath prohibited it. All of this created a little more interest for those watching events progress.

“But as the story develops with some detail, there is an interesting twist that appears at the end.”

### **Newspaper Articles Lead to Television Segment**

As interest in the story grew, the media contacted Robby. Although at first only smaller local newspapers called, television reporters and cameramen soon showed up at practice asking him a myriad of questions. Over the course of just a few months, he had gone from complete obscurity to being seen as an example of the Church’s beliefs in action.

“What started with something as simple as me keeping the Sabbath and having a great coach turned into something so much beyond that,” Robby recalled. “It was even an inspiration to kids. I didn’t grasp it at the time.”

Robert’s first interview was for an article in the *Medina County Gazette*. It was published with the headline “Religious Choice Forces Pack to Miss Games,” and featured a picture on the front page of the sports section. Shortly afterward, the *Akron Beacon Journal* featured a lengthy article titled “It’s Simply a Matter of Priorities.” The third newspaper article was published on the front page of the sports section of the Cleveland *Plain Dealer*, a newspaper with over 700,000 subscribers, with the title “Never on Friday.”

In each of the articles, writers expressed surprise that the young man would take such an unusual stance on the Sabbath.

The *Plain Dealer* quoted the young athlete’s reasons for his decision.

“Obviously, it’s tough sitting at home on Friday when the team is playing without me, because I want to be out

there with the guys, but as much as I love basketball, my religion...comes first," he said.

Media outlets were equally taken aback by Coach Dave Sladky's strong support.

"It's amazing, his dedication to his church," Coach Sladky said in an interview with the *Akron Beacon Journal*. "We're learning from it. Our style of play suits him because we use a lot of people, so he'll get his chance to play. I don't think it causes any problems for the team. We accept it just as if he was sick on Friday night."

The articles eventually culminated in a television interview in which Robby was featured as the player of the week in northeastern Ohio on a local news program airing at 11 o'clock.

In the segment, watched by hundreds of thousands because it coincidentally aired just minutes after Super Bowl coverage ended, the teenager declared his dedication to the Church above basketball. When asked what the decision to keep the Sabbath alone meant, Robby said firmly that his family supported him.

"Well, I don't think I'm standing alone," he said. "My family is always there. Even the guys on the team, they support me 100 percent. Even my coach...as much as I love basketball, he knows my religious obligations are always going to come first. A lot of people ask me, what would happen if the state championship was on a Friday night. Would you play? It's not even something that's in question. I would never play."

At the end of the segment, the interviewer asked Mr. Pack's son if he had future plans to play basketball.

"My goal is to play at my Church college, in Big Sandy, Texas. Ambassador College," he said. "They don't have any of their games on a Friday night, which is a plus. Basketball is not going to last forever...the way of life will!"

But there is much more to the story.

### Similar Dilemma

The team finished the season 21-2, after being knocked out of the state playoffs before reaching the critical championship game. Along the way were many memorable moments for Mr. and Mrs. Pack as they watched their son enjoy his season, even winning two games “at the buzzer,” with thousands in attendance.

However, there was another moment that is most poignant in Mr. Pack’s memory. Robby’s first playoff game of the year was scheduled for Saturday night at 6:00 p.m.—and sundown was at 6:07. As his team warmed up inside in preparation for the game, the Pack family arrived and sat outside in the car waiting for sundown minutes away, in their formal attire because they had just come from services!

At the end of the Sabbath, Robby rushed inside just as the entire crowd was taking their seats after finishing the national anthem. Upon seeing him charge across the floor toward where the team was, with his trench coat flying behind his uniform, over 2,000 Wadsworth fans jumped to their feet to give him a standing ovation.

Although it was difficult for Mr. Pack to watch his son sit at home for some of his games, it was also important to see him forced to face some of the same dilemmas he himself faced when he gave up his swimming career in Lima. Mr. Pack was happy to see his son stand up for his convictions.

Robby was not the only son who took a public stance for his beliefs. Mr. Pack’s oldest son, Randy, (recall he stayed in New York until the season ended) was known as the “Sundown Kid” in local newspapers. At 6’6” he had also been an accomplished basketball player and was known widely across the New York suburbs in which the Packs lived because he also refused to play on the Sabbath.

As Mr. Pack recalled, in one way or another, all three of his children battled the Sabbath issue. Since they all

actively participated in sports—even the youngest—they were forced to initially stand their ground with coaches who wanted them to play on the Sabbath. However, each of them gained their coaches' respect for standing on principle.

“Randy had some serious scholarship opportunities come his way, but he declined them in favor of Ambassador College. I'd been through it and I had to give up a sports career, so I was able to sit down with my sons, and later my daughter, and talk with them about it. Of course, their circumstances were different from mine because they had known the Sabbath all their lives and then were finally put to the test.

“It was difficult for a father to see his children go through it, but I was pleased to see both my sons face the same trial and make the right decision under real pressure.”

### **Congratulations from Pasadena**

After Robby's television interview aired in January 1992, Mr. Pack received a surprising phone call from Headquarters. It was Mr. Tkach! Unbeknownst to Mr. Pack, someone from the local Akron congregation had sent a videotaped copy of his son's interview. Mr. Tkach was calling to congratulate the young man for standing firm in his commitment to keep the Sabbath.

As Mr. Tkach spoke, he made it clear to Mr. Pack that he and a group of ministers listening in on the call had seen the video and were impressed with his son's decision. They had also seen the article featured in the *Cleveland Plain Dealer* in which Robby was quoted.

“This is what it's all about!” Mr. Tkach exclaimed to Mr. Pack. “I certainly appreciate Robert's commitment to the Sabbath.” His exact words.

Mr. Tkach decided to reprint the *Plain Dealer* article “Never on Friday” in its entirety on the front page of the Church’s international newspaper for members, *The Worldwide News*. It was also titled “A Matter of Priorities.” He wanted to share the article with the entire Church as an example of a young person in God’s Church unwilling to bend in his commitment.

“This phone call took on a whole new meaning when Joseph Tkach later threw out the Sabbath as God’s command. But it does show where his mind still was—or probably was—in the spring of 1992. It would soon be evident that others around him had plans for the Sabbath that Mr. Tkach probably did not yet even know about. That story would continue to unfold.

“But there was one other part of the story that should be told at this time. It is important. God had worked out a means of me receiving a certain favor in Pasadena that could last for a time. The Church was getting some acclaim for the truth, and that was good at least for a little while longer in their minds. So I benefited. Without a doubt, it bought me just enough time to finish certain set-up exercises, and leave right on God’s time.

“But one final unanticipated event was tied to Robby’s adventure.”

### **Delivering the Baccalaureate Address**

An unusual opportunity came from Robert’s high profile in northeastern Ohio. Mr. Pack was unexpectedly invited to speak at his baccalaureate ceremony just prior to graduation.

Mr. Pack has always assumed that he was asked to participate because he was an active supporter of his son’s basketball career, but also because he was a minister. His son had been given a citizenship award as a senior who had exhibited outstanding character.

It was an excellent way for Mr. Pack to build a relationship with the community. The opportunity was unlike any other he had encountered—and one that perhaps few other ministers had! He would be able to let the Church's light shine in the community at a public ceremony as a representative of the Worldwide Church of God, much as in Rochester, with the newspaper interview during the receivership. In effect, it was a chance to briefly introduce the community to the Church and God's Way. Mr. Pack was determined to make the most of it. He looked forward to delivering the message at the end of May 1992.

### **Jane Pack's Health Deteriorates**

In the background, Jane Pack's health had appeared to be on hold. She came to visit her son and daughter-in-law in October 1991. To Mr. Pack, it had seemed as though her condition was improving. Since his mother adamantly refused to talk about her illness, and would under no circumstances discuss any kind of medical intervention with anyone, Mr. Pack was left to believe that she was somewhat improved. Also, her physical appearance still looked quite good.

In November of 1991, the annual family tradition of gathering for Thanksgiving in Greensboro, North Carolina, resumed and Mr. Pack eagerly went to visit his parents. However, after both seeing again and talking with his mother, Mr. Pack realized that her condition was worsening. In a moment etched into his mind forever, as Mr. Pack sat and talked with his mother while piecing together a puzzle on Thanksgiving evening, he pleaded with her to consider seeing a specialist.

"Now David, I do not wish to talk about it," Jane Pack still maintained. "I have made my decision."

Mr. Pack was unrelenting. His mother's life was at stake!

“Please see a doctor to find out if there’s anything more that they can tell you about your condition.”

Again, his mother’s reply was brief. “I do not wish to talk about it.”

Given his mother’s persistence, there was no more to say.

Through the end of 1991 and the beginning of 1992, Jane Pack’s health declined rapidly. By March 1992, she asked her husband if she could visit their children and traveled to Ohio again to visit her eldest son’s family. By this time, the cancer had spread so far into her spine that she was unable to climb stairs at the Packs’ home. The couple had to stay at a motel, where she could walk in and out on a single level. Mr. Pack realized just how serious her condition was.

After his parents departed, Mr. Pack made a decision. He called his brother, sister and father and suggested the five Packs—without children or spouses—should get together at the end of April in Greensboro. All agreed.

The family had a wonderful visit. It was the last time the family—“Dad, Mom, Debbie, Dave and Bill”—would be together.

## *Descent into Apostasy*

It was May 1992. It was again time for a trip to Pasadena for the annual Ministerial Refresher. This was an opportunity to find out why the doctrinal and administrative changes were continuing to occur. The effect locally was nearing the point of intolerable. Mr. Pack yearned for the chance to look deeply inside what was happening at Headquarters. Now was the time.

Also, as had happened often in the past, plans were made to meet with the same college friend who had visited him 15 months earlier and who was on the inside of the Church's new course.

### **A Turning Point**

Once in Pasadena, the two men met for lunch, and continued talking afterward before taking their wives for dinner. Before, during and afterward, they spent almost 11 straight hours together. The discussion eventually settled on the state of the Church and Headquarters' "vision" for it. Eventually, after much tiptoeing, the host finally let the cat out of the bag.

The views of the new administration were made crystal clear. As Mr. Pack listened in disbelief, his friend spoke critically of Mr. Armstrong, opining that he was “a harsh dictator who misused Church government for personal gain,” “a marketing man turned hype-artist who exaggerated everything,” and “an autocrat who was lost in the 19th century.” Further, he called Mr. Armstrong what amounted to a skilled doctrinal thief—a “plagiarizer, with no original thoughts.”

“We believe Herbert Armstrong was a cult leader who built the Church on sand and filled it full of prophecy freaks,” he stated [the “we” referring to various key men in Pasadena]. “He never built on Jesus Christ. We are going to blow all the sand [the prophecy freaks] out of the Church, even if we lose half the members, and build on Jesus Christ for the first time.”

He grudgingly acknowledged that many of the senior evangelists and Headquarters administrators still seemed firmly entrenched in “Armstrongism.” He questioned whether these men could be rescued from this antiquated doctrinal thinking, and made it clear they would soon not be around if they could not open their minds to new understanding.

Mr. Pack could not believe what he was hearing. He was in shock!

“This was almost certainly the single most stunning conversation of my life to that point, and maybe ever after—and it lasted *11 hours!* I recognized that I was hearing things about a new view of Mr. Armstrong that no one could have foreseen or imagined. A man I knew—that we all knew—to be an apostle and the final Elijah was now seen as completely false. The world was on its head.

“There were times when the conversation grew tense, particularly at the end when I said I had heard

enough and it was time to take my wife and me home at what had become midnight.”

It had been less than six years since the WCG had reiterated what had come to be called the 18 fundamental truths restored to the Church through Mr. Armstrong. Nearly *all* of them were now being thrown out. Mr. Pack had wondered what considerations there were behind the new administration’s decision some years earlier to stop printing and distributing Mr. Armstrong’s book *Mystery of the Ages*. Clearly, they were *not* financial. Now it was plain they no longer agreed with *any* of its contents!

### **Not Fast Enough!**

To Mr. Pack’s surprise, his friend mentioned that Mr. Tkach was dragging his feet. “Mr. Tkach is the real problem,” he said. “Do you understand much about Mr. Tkach? We want to move things along faster than he is able to go.”

“He was being careful with his words, but the plain meaning was that Mr. Tkach just could not ‘get’ fast enough what those around him wanted him to see. The point being made was not that he was cleaving to old ideas, but rather that he was unable to mentally grasp all that needed to be changed. Willingness was not the problem. He was very willing. Of course, I already thought the destruction of the Church (and Work) was moving at breakneck speed. Another message impressed on me during that long discussion was that the conspirators actually wanted to move even faster.”

This was not the privately held opinion of an isolated lay member. These were the thoughts of a group of men in positions of great influence within the Worldwide Church of God. They had the ability to completely alter the doctrinal

course of the entire Church—and this *is* exactly what they planned.

This conversation occurred at the beginning of the Refresher. There were almost two full weeks to go. More would be learned that confirmed the worst elements of the conversation.

“A couple days later, my brother-in-law Carl McNair, who was on the same Refresher, told me of a document he saw lying open in the ‘refreshment room’ upstairs from the Refresher meeting hall. He told me he had seen certain personal notes, markings and underlinings in a particular article within a digest of articles by worldly theologians. It belonged to one of the five leaders around Mr. Tkach. I followed Mr. McNair upstairs and we together paged through and discovered this man had completely bought into the trinity. From that moment forward, we both knew this doctrine was coming.

“It meant the ‘game’ was over.

“I have never doubted looking back that God specifically put me in a position to fully understand as early as May 1992 what was in store for His Church. But knowledge brings responsibility.

“Whatever hope I had that the Church was going to recover was in that one evening *utterly destroyed*. Events would not turn around. I knew with complete certainty that God was going to raise up someone else to lead the Church from a point that would have to be outside the corporation. I determined to wait until He revealed who that person would be. I felt certain that it would be a senior minister of some weight and experience. I never spent one second examining the mirror for the answer.

“I was, however, determined to speak more clearly in private situations where I found entrance as a direct result of what I had learned on Refresher.

“Another point is worth noting. Over time, I had *already* come to believe the trinity was probably coming upon the Church. So, on January 4, 1992, I gave the clearest, most thorough sermon I could possibly give against the doctrine of the trinity. I explained that no true Christian would remotely consider following the triune god, no matter the form in which this ‘god’ was packaged.

“I was strong! In fact, I do not know how the message could have been stronger. I was relieved that I had done this and believed that my congregation had now been ‘inoculated.’ My thought was that the congregation would largely reject what I then strongly suspected was coming.”

### **Another Splinter**

It has been explained that the Oklahoma City-based splinter was never an option for a true minister. But another small group had also arisen at the very end of 1991 and it should at least be noted.

“Another minister, a former pastor, but then an associate pastor, had left the Worldwide Church of God in December of 1991, two years after PCG was born. The man leading it was certainly upset about the doctrinal changes, but he was also upset at Mr. Armstrong for having ‘led the Church so poorly’ that ‘apostasy could happen and so many would buy into it.’

“He was upset that Mr. Armstrong had overemphasized the Work. His thought was that doing the Work too much had been the problem. His solution was to claim that the Work was over. So he was never an option.

“I spoke with this man twice later, and he never moved from this position. As Mr. Armstrong warned,

such people *always* fall into false doctrine with the passing of time. Of course, he did later—and badly!”

### Keeping in Touch

After returning from Pasadena, Mr. Pack contacted his mother. He realized her health was rapidly deteriorating—and it was possible that she had only weeks to live.

A difficult decision lay before him. He had already committed to giving the baccalaureate address at his son’s graduation on May 31. In light of his mother’s condition, he also considered driving to North Carolina almost immediately after returning from Pasadena to be by her side during her final days.

But at the urging of his mother, Mr. Pack decided to give the address. As a faithful member, she encouraged him a month earlier to take the opportunity to speak to the local community. But by now her condition was grave. However, not wanting to worry her son, his mother still had not fully disclosed the gravity of her condition. It became even more serious on the Thursday before graduation.

Since she had fallen ill, Jane Pack had adamantly maintained that she wanted to stay at home to the end.

That Thursday, Mr. Pack’s father left briefly to go to the store, leaving Jane alone. While he was away, she decided to call her eldest son.

“I’m here alone and Daddy’s gone,” she said after he picked up the receiver. “I just got the mail and read my blood test, and honey it doesn’t look good. I just wanted to call somebody.”

After hearing the terrible news, Mr. Pack asked if she would like him to come immediately, meaning cancel the baccalaureate address. She again opposed the idea. Even with her health in the balance, she emphasized the importance of the speech and said to leave the next morning.

Her selfless input created an unexpected result.

### First Baccalaureate Address

Although preoccupied with his mother's condition, Mr. Pack asked God to help him remain focused on the task at hand.

The baccalaureate occurred in the gymnasium of Wadsworth Senior High School with an estimated 4,000 in attendance. Before opening with prayer, Mr. Pack scanned the audience and the students. Here was an opportunity to in effect preach the gospel by helping students, parents and local citizens understand broad spiritual principles.

Mr. Pack talked about achievement, success and the meaning of the word *commencement*. He told the students that graduation was not the end, but rather a beginning. Remembering Ambassador College's motto, he asked the audience, "Many of you students are going to college to learn how to earn a living, but who is going to teach you how to live?"

He also *boldly* explained to the students that there is a cause for every effect, and taught them that their lives would be defined by how many people they could help—essentially the law of give versus get. Years later came evidence some were listening.

In a poignant moment, as he spoke these truths, he realized they were no longer taught by the Worldwide Church of God. It was an absolutely stunning moment. It would be seen later as a first opportunity to continue preaching to an audience entirely of the world about things that were no longer taught by his own Church.

### Mrs. Jane Pack Finishes Her Course

Mr. Pack decided to sleep for a few hours before beginning the eight-hour drive to see his mother early the next morning. On the way to North Carolina, he reflected on the last

conversation he had with her. His mind raced. Would he see her again before she died?

The day before the baccalaureate, he had called to confirm his visit. "I'm sure looking forward to seeing you," Jane Pack said. Mr. Pack was equally eager. "Mom, I love you and will see you soon," he said.

This was the last time they would speak.

Although he had planned to bring his children, he decided to leave without them, given her fragile condition. Upon arrival, he learned that his mother was unconscious. She had not wanted life support, so Mr. Pack found her in the hospital where she remained alive for another two days, dying on June 3, 1992, at the still relatively young age of 70 and a half.

In addition to the deaths of his father-in-law and Mr. Armstrong, his mother was the third influential person in his life that he had lost. But she was the one to whom he was closest. She had shaped him as a person, and experiencing her death—the first of his parents to die—was extremely painful.

"I had missed speaking to my mother by about five hours.

"Every child thinks his parents are invincible. Mine were very rarely sick. Besides, in light of their love of natural food, they were extremely careful with nutrition. But my mother had run a shorter course than we had anticipated.

"I felt wonderful that we had spent so much quality time together in recent years, and that my children knew their grandmother well. My wife and I could clearly see her in all three of our children, though they did not look like her.

"In the truest sense, her life is summarized by the message she sent through our father just before losing consciousness: 'Tell the children I was brave.' My father struggled to pass on this statement. He understood it to be a message to himself as well as to us.

“The next month we sent our second child away to Ambassador College. With my Church collapsing, I remember it being a lonely summer.”

### **Return to New York City!**

In August of 1992, the teenagers of the Church took an excursion to New York City with their parents. Mr. Pack had promised the trip, but only if they understood and addressed the price. They worked hard to raise the funds for the bus rental and other costs.

“This was perhaps the most exciting trip I led as a church pastor. Everything we saw and did in New York was thrilling to the entire group—and it was truly a whirlwind trip, a tour of the first order. It had been very well planned in advance.

“From my time as a campus tour guide at Ambassador, I have loved to give tours. Every year at the Feast until last year I have led one at Niagara Falls. My first wife used to tell everyone that I worked for the Chamber of Commerce in every city we lived.

“Of course, the biggest thing I recall that would later grow in importance, on September 11, 2001, was that this was the second to last time I would take people to the top of the Twin Towers—and see 50 miles in all directions. There were so many tours through the years of the Twin Towers.”

Here is a brief statement from someone who took one of Mr. Pack’s Niagara Falls tours some years later.

“I had recently come into The Restored Church of God from a Protestant organization and was in Niagara Falls keeping my first Feast of Tabernacles. After services one day, those who had never been to the

Niagara area were invited to go on a tour with the Packs. Since it was my first time there, I decided to join the group.

“After finishing the tour, which lasted all afternoon, I remember being struck by the fact that Mr. and Mrs. Pack had taken the time to give us a tour of the area. I was 20 years old. Due to their schedule with traveling to all North American Feast sites, they were only in Canada for three days. Yet, they gave up an afternoon to give others a unique tour of the area. It made my first Feast that much more memorable.”

### **The Worldwide Church of *Another* God**

Mr. and Mrs. Pack gradually became accustomed to both of their sons being gone from home. It was at this time that a watershed event took place.

The proverbial straw that broke the camel’s back came in the form of the booklet released to the Worldwide Church of God in the fall of 1992, titled *God Is...*

Throughout the booklet it was clear that a false, pagan, manmade, 1,700-year-old “god” was being introduced to the Church in place of the true God. Like the trinity itself, the book presented the “nature of God” as a mystery—one that could not really be understood by human beings. This is blatantly contrary to Scripture, which makes plain that the “mysteries” of God *can* be known to His people (Mark 4:11; Rom. 11:25; Col. 1:26).

Further, the book stated that God was *not* a Family—negating the Church’s understanding of the purpose of human existence, as well as the fundamental truth that those in the Church will eventually be born into the God Family, as sons of God (John 1:12; 3:3-8; Rom. 8:19). Filled with garble and nonsense, it introduced a “god” who was a “being” composed of “three hypostases.”

In an instant, the leaders of the Worldwide Church of God had formally and officially disfellowshipped the true God from its assembly—and the WCG became ever after the *Worldwide Church of ANOTHER god!*

It was this defining moment that powerfully reinforced to Mr. Pack that there was no hope for a turnaround in the Worldwide Church of God. His greatest doctrinal fear had come true. This announcement was an undeniable “point of no return.”

This single event clarified the meaning of all the events that occurred during the past several years in the Church. The true God was no longer guiding the WCG, but rather it was being led by “another spirit,” called the “spirit of error” and the “spirit that *works* in the children of disobedience”—all different terms for the spirit of the “god of this world” (II Cor. 4:4).

“It was at this point that I understood I was no longer in God’s *corporation*. I would come to understand that I was still in the Body of Christ, but this was not in any sense any longer related to the Worldwide Church of God.

“I absolutely knew that a new organization would be raised up. I knew with equal certainty that following the blaspheming false prophet in Oklahoma was not remotely an option for one who wanted to worship God and not a man. I sought God fervently for what I should do.

“It was very disturbing that most ministers did not see the disfellowshipping of God from the corporate organization as the point of no return. They invariably seemed to conclude that this point was the Law, and primarily they had the Sabbath and Holy Days in mind. Almost all were too groggy or asleep to grasp what had happened. They seemed not to even know that a *different god* had been presented to them for worship—

and that they must *represent* this false god. What had happened would not have been any worse if the Hindu trinity—Shiva, Brahma and Vishnu—or the Egyptian trinity—Horus, Isis and Osiris—had been presented to God’s people as the true God. I wondered if people had to be offered Buddha or Allah as their new god to recognize what had happened.

“What I found ironic was that, in the end, so many could not see that any church now breaking the First and Second Commandments, and in such a blatant fashion, had already thrown out the Law.”

Sadly, however, most local members did not even flinch.

“Most astounding was that my sermon of nine months earlier against the trinity seemed to have been almost completely forgotten. The ‘inoculation’ had failed. I do not recall one single member approaching me after having received the *God Is...* booklet. This did not necessarily mean they had accepted the trinity. Rather, I knew it likely meant they were not reading what was coming from Pasadena anymore than they were reading their bibles.”

How had this happened? How could these men have gone so far in their thinking? What was the catalyst that started it all? And why were the Church’s ministers not willing to really dig inside this vile doctrine?

### **Meeting with Akron Leaders**

For the very first time, Mr. Pack prepared to publicly address the changes. Since all the local church elders in Akron were longtime members of the Church, Mr. Pack sat down with them as a group, along with all of the deacons, and all the wives, to gauge their opinions on the changes that had been

slowly disseminating from Headquarters. It was important to gain a sense of their personal reaction to the new direction of the Church.

Mr. Pack remembers most of the men being “pretty quiet,” but all of them acknowledged there had been some tangible changes. There was a consensus that a departure from the Church’s long-held beliefs was underway. Some felt the changes were for the better while others believed there would be negative consequences. No one suggested there was reason to leave the WCG.

The Church was careening toward mainstream Christianity—and Mr. Pack knew that he had to *leave* the corporation—“The Worldwide Church of God, Inc.”—in order to *stay* in the Church of God and Body of Christ. As difficult as this was, he had no choice. But he did not know exactly when, how or whom to follow. Where should he go? However, he never lost sight of God’s promise that the “gates of hell would never prevail” against His Church. Therefore, he knew that God would guide *someone* to lead. At the time, the only reasonable assumption seemed to be that it would be a senior minister—perhaps an evangelist—who would not compromise the teachings of Mr. Armstrong.

“The very last thing on my mind was that this ‘someone’ would be me. This notion simply never entered my thinking. It was hard enough to comprehend that God would start another organization—a new corporation in which the true Church of God would reside. Yet, obviously, someone *did* have to stand up to lead the reorganization of the Church after the *God Is...* booklet.

“Whoever I was going to follow would have to be rock solid on every point of doctrine. He would have to promise in advance that he would remain true to all that Mr. Armstrong had taught and the Church had proven.”

Until that point came, the question remained—what would Mr. Pack do?

Again, Mr. Pack was convinced that God would raise up a man who would hold fast to the *full* truth. And, because God is merciful, He would make where He was working abundantly clear to those who actively sought Him. Therefore, Mr. Pack determined to wait patiently until God identified the man who would hold to everything—meaning would “teach *all things* whatsoever I [Jesus] have *commanded* you” (Matt. 28:20)—*all truths* that He had given to the Church, without exception.

In the meantime, Mr. Pack decided to try to reach as many of those in his pastorate as possible. He continued to work directly with individual deacons and elders as they revealed their loyalty to the truth.

But betrayal was everywhere in the wind!

### **“Prediction Addiction”**

Soon, all Church pastors were ordered to play another sermon that ridiculed the importance of prophecy. Mr. Pack privately listened to the message in advance. Confirming the report of his Headquarters friend, the new administration *was* trying to rid the Church of all those perceived as “prophecy freaks.”

Mr. Pack could hardly contain his anger as he listened to the speaker, a man he had once highly respected, downplay prophecy and openly ridicule those who place a proper emphasis on this vast subject. Mrs. Pack was shocked because this was her childhood minister speaking. This approach flew in the face of Mr. Armstrong’s emphasis on watching world events, and practically dismissed the third of the Bible that is prophecy.

Mr. Pack decided not to play it.

But there was a certain value in letting the sermon be played. Headquarters would condemn itself with its own

mouth. After several leaders suggested this, two weeks later he played the message.

A few brethren were stunned after the message. It was another direct assault on what the Church had long taught. The conspirators were keeping their promise to destroy “Armstrongism.” But most listeners did not care.

The internal pressure to take action was mounting. It grew increasingly difficult not to stand up and offer rebuttals against what he was hearing. But Mr. Pack had taught in advance against certain heresies.

Would the brethren remember?

The question remained: What should he do about it? Mr. Pack had not knowingly compromised, he had simply continued teaching the truth. But, again, the fact that he was not actively and publicly *refuting* every false doctrine, individually, weighed on his mind. But there were too many—they had been coming so fast.

The greatest problem was which doctrine could he hone in on without being IMMEDIATELY FIRED, which would end any hope of helping one more person from a position *inside* the organization?

On the other hand, how much longer could he endure? Although he was preaching as strongly as he could, it was becoming an impossible situation as the chasm between the truth and what was emanating from Pasadena widened.

Mr. Pack knew any “holding pattern” was nearing an end.

“I wrestled and wrestled with how to address the problem from the pulpit. Frankly, I knew that a *long series* of sermons was necessary to completely turn around and save brethren who could be turned. I knew that I could attack and destroy one or two, or possibly even three, false doctrines relatively well in one conclusive sermon, but this would mean the end. I understood that I was watching Church history play

out before me and I wanted to be so very careful with when and how I let go my final ‘blast.’

“As of January 2, 1993, I learned there may now be a place to go. A senior evangelist whom I hoped would be faithful had just been disfellowshipped. I saw that his group could be my destination. *Everything* boiled down to how many spiritual lives I could preserve if I was to follow Christ’s instruction to ‘lay down my life for the sheep.’ There was also the concern about not fleeing in the face of wolves, as would a hireling, meaning a coward. There was no possible way a true minister of God could just quietly resign, as so many would do later, and leave the sheep to the grievous wolves who had entered the sheepfold.

“My duty was crystal clear. But I was to learn bitter lessons later about those who would profess to love the truth, and to be standing firm, but who would turn on a dime to blow the whistle.”

### **Led by a Figurehead**

Meanwhile, it was becoming increasingly evident that although Mr. Tkach was the physical leader of the Church, he was little more than a figurehead. Other men were orchestrating a plan that had gone far beyond a shift in the gospel or an inward focus. It appeared to the discerning eye that the new Pastor General was simply doing their bidding. Indeed, more than his sermons and articles were being written for him—his *doctrines* were being written for him!

This became even more obvious just months later when Mr. Pack visited his sons at the Ambassador College campus in Big Sandy, Texas. As he sat in Sabbath services, as referenced earlier, Mr. Tkach began his message by reaching for his notes on the lectern.

“Well,” he said, smiling as he picked them up. “Let’s see what they have for me today.”

Mr. Pack could not believe his ears! He already knew Joseph Tkach was not preparing his own sermons. The Pastor General had been reduced to a puppet—a marionette controlled by hidden strings and hands. He did not even have the capacity to hide this. The new administration's audacity was breathtaking. Yet, again, few seemed to care.

As he listened, the hypocrisy of Mr. Tkach's praising his son Robert for keeping the Sabbath also came to mind because by now Mr. Pack knew the Sabbath and God's Law would eventually succumb to rejection and dismissal. Although the Pastor General had commented how wonderful it was that a young person was unwilling to compromise, he was more than willing to do so.

### **Seeking Protestant Approval**

After the closing of Ambassador College's Pasadena campus two years earlier and consolidation to one large campus in Big Sandy, there was an immediate focus on pursuing accreditation, and turning Ambassador College into Ambassador University.

This seemingly small administrative change—pursuing academic accreditation—had a profound effect on the Church and on the college's administrators. To be more accepted by the mainstream professing Christian world, a related step that the new administrators had taken was to pursue post-secondary education in a variety of *religious* fields at outside institutions.

The group of men who were the leading architects of all the new doctrines were pursuing degrees from Azusa Pacific University—a school founded by the Methodist and Brethren churches. These would range from doctorates of ministry to masters of arts in biblical studies. These schools indoctrinated these deceived thinkers with standard Protestant theology. In turn, they injected this thinking into the Worldwide Church of God.

The pursuit of higher education in itself was not wrong. The problem was the pursuit of *religious* degrees from institutions that endorse teachings contrary to the Bible.

These men chose to be trained by Methodists, and were in fact slowly becoming what could be called Evangelical Methodists. Mr. Pack was sure of this after seeing that the Church began to teach the classic Methodist doctrine of *assurance*.

“To me it was plain—and simple. The top ministers had purposefully decided to suckle on the milk of one of the Revelation 17 whore’s harlot daughters, and God’s Church and ministry were in turn doing the same with these leaders. If one merely saw *where* they were being ‘educated,’ there would be no doubt how far they planned to go. Yet, few took note.

“I recommitted to staying out front of them, so I could counteract what would come next.”

### Visiting a Methodist Church

With the motive behind these academic pursuits clear, Mr. Pack decided to conduct some personal research. He walked into a Methodist church during the week a few miles from his home in Wadsworth. This was mid-January.

Mr. Pack had not done anything like this since high school, before he left the Presbyterian church. This time he did so, of course, for a different reason. If the men who were making the changes were sitting at the feet of supposed experts in Protestant seminaries, the changes still ahead would be predictable.

Just reading a basic pamphlet detailing Methodist doctrine was enough for Mr. Pack to realize that he was holding the blueprint for what was to come. For instance, it was easy to see that the acceptance of the pagan symbol of the cross would soon follow—as would Christmas and Easter celebration—and Sunday worship!

“After so long, it was strange entering a Protestant church. But my purpose was good. I very carefully selected a stack of pamphlets that were offered in the front foyer. This literature covered all of the Methodist basics. This began a special project that would help many people leave the apostasy later. I thoroughly marked them up, and matched their terms with articles in the *Pastor General’s Report (PGR)*. It was easy—anyone else could have done what I did, had they cared.

“I systematically assembled a box of literature that I carried with me in my car. With doctrine after doctrine, I contrasted *The Worldwide News* or *PGR* or *Plain Truth* articles with stuff lifted straight from Methodism. It was the ability to show *proof* of what was happening that ultimately saved many in Akron, and other places later.

“The box was jammed, but organized. The proof presented was unmistakably clear. Many were the times I entered homes carrying the box. I spread documents, passed them around, made key points, regathered and reorganized it, before leaving for the next house to restart the sequence. I felt it was my duty to bring *facts*, and I continued with this box well beyond my final time in the WCG. The box is still in my basement, and this volume of the biography offers an example of the Methodist doctrine of ‘assurance’ with my underlinings as they appeared.

“Of course, some who requested me to come to their homes would later say that I came ‘trying to recruit’ them.”

### **The 1990s—Not the Liberal 1970s**

Ultimately, desire for approval by those outside the Church was the catalyst for the apostasy—the falling away, or de-

fection from truth (II Thes. 2:3)—that struck the Worldwide Church of God.

The liberals of the 1970s introduced certain doctrines because they wanted *acceptance* by mainstream Christian organizations, and similar ideas had now been resurrected. But the leaders in the 1990s were “the real McCoy.” They were *actively* seeking a false god, as opposed to passively allowing the devil’s influence to affect them slowly, over time. They wanted more than acceptance—they wanted to be *part of* the mainstream Christian world!

Observing from the outside, many Protestant leaders were incredulous—and very pleased—that what they had considered a misguided, fundamentalist organization outside real Christianity could be so radically changed, and in such a short time.

Mr. Pack was aghast that so many were willing to sit idly by, either seduced by or oblivious to blatant Protestant beliefs. He reasoned that most feared being accused of unwillingness to “grow in love,” even though their bibles should have been reminding them what the true love of God is (I John 5:3; Rom. 13:10).

This is an important factor in the Church’s fast track toward abandoning everything it once held dear.

## *Startling Developments*

After the review of Methodist literature and coming to fully comprehend the extent of the changes to be introduced to the Church, Mr. Pack also did what he had always done in times of uncertainty: pick up his Bible. He had often observed that in times of crisis in the Church most people pick up their telephones, not their bibles.

Mr. Pack dove into the Word of God for answers, and searched through what Mr. Armstrong had written in his literature—literature the brethren were literally being told by their ministers to throw away. It was obvious that this was going to be the best source to help successfully navigate others through this terribly confusing time.

### **The First List of Doctrinal Changes**

Although Mr. Pack knew that he had to leave the organization, there was much work to do before that would be possible. He decided to carefully analyze each change, using his Bible to prove each one invalid—just as he had done in 1966 and 1967. He would continue to work with people privately, and preach for as long as possible.

This type of intensive personal Bible study, coupled with copying scriptures by hand, had served Mr. Pack well over the years. It had been an effective way to understand various trials experienced, and to best evaluate situations, meaning in a *spiritual* light, not a human, corporate or psychological one. Of course, in the 1960s, Mr. Pack had written out Correspondence Course Lessons.

It was now time to do this again. But this time there was much more at stake than just personal conviction. Yet, being *reconvicted* was also most important.

“In December 1992, I sat down in a restaurant with a notepad and a cup of coffee. I had decided to make a list of every doctrinal change I could think of that had occurred in the Worldwide Church of God to that point. Working from simple recall, my very first list exceeded 30 in number. Over the next 10 weeks, the list slowly grew to 75.”

### **Two Incredible Phone Calls**

While working on this project, Mr. Pack phoned a friend in Pasadena, a relative through marriage and a senior evangelist.

In a one-hour conversation, Mr. Pack strongly exhorted the man to take action. This man’s brother-in-law (also an evangelist) had just been fired the month before.

“You know this stuff is wrong!” Mr. Pack stated emphatically. “Something has to be done.”

At first the response was passive.

“Dave, I just feel that Mr. Tkach is focusing more on love, and we probably *need* to do that right now in the Church,” he replied. “You just aren’t seeing that yet.”

Mr. Pack was unrelenting.

“You are right,” he said, pressing even further. “This is not what I see. But, let’s just set that aside for a moment.

There are over 60 *fundamental* changes that have occurred: they are saying the kingdom of God is here now, the gospel is about Christ, we're born again in this life, women can wear make-up, it's fine to marry outside the Church, the definition of the Church is anyone with the Holy Spirit in any organization, and God is a trinity!"

As he listed the 60-plus doctrinal changes documented thus far, the evangelist was taken aback.

In utter disbelief, the man finally replied slowly, "That's eye-popping what you're telling me. That's amazing!" He then repeated, "That's eye-popping."

Still, he ended the conversation by encouraging Mr. Pack to be patient.

"I just think we're focusing more on love right now," he reiterated.

"I had known this man as family for over 20 years. My children called him 'Uncle ——.' I was flabbergasted that an evangelist *at Headquarters*, one of the three *World Tomorrow* presenters, did not know what was going on mere feet from his office.

"This was truly a watershed moment. Giants, meaning men I *thought* were giants, were not even seeing the problem, never mind addressing it.

"There is a famous saying, 'Some people make things happen. Other people watch things happen. Some people don't know anything is happening.' I had just talked to an evangelist who did not know anything was happening. It would be three full years before this man left the WCG to join his brother-in-law."

Mr. Pack next called one of the oldest evangelists to get his opinion. It was reported that this man was well aware of what was happening. He was among the first four students to attend Ambassador College in 1947.

In a two-hour conversation, the men ranged across the same list of doctrines.

The renowned “doctor” completely agreed that if Mr. Armstrong had still been alive, the current Pastor General would have been disfellowshipped from the Church. “The synagogue of Satan is in charge out here,” he said, alluding to Revelation 3:9.

But he urged Mr. Pack to be patient until, as he put it, “an electrifying change occurs—one that will galvanize the whole Church—and we will all walk out of the organization dry-shod, together.” This was the exact statement. He was resolute that there would come a time “we would all have to leave.” He would not think of taking action yet, however. Mr. Pack followed the call with a detailed letter shortly afterward, imploring him to reconsider. (This man died still in the Worldwide Church of God in late 2004.)

Mr. Pack was somewhat relieved that there were experienced men who also saw, to some degree, that the Church’s doctrinal foundation was being destroyed. Yet, at the same time, he was frustrated that no one yet seemed willing to speak out. It was always “too early”—“we must be patient.”

“This was another, albeit different, watershed moment for me. A second evangelist *at Headquarters* recognized *everything*, or most of it, that was happening. Yet, a man who knew that the *synagogue of Satan had captured the Church* was no different from the other man! Neither was about to DO anything.”

### **Horrible Policy Change— Brethren Turn in Ministers**

One other change in the Church directly applies at this point. It was a devastating policy change that could only be de-

scribed as one of the most evil things the apostates had perpetrated on God's ministry.

Some background is helpful. Starting with the rebellion in the early 1970s, Mr. Armstrong realized the importance of setting up a mechanism to protect the Church from disloyal or doctrinally unsound ministers. At that time, it had proved effective in identifying men who were introducing new ideas or making decisions that defied instruction from Headquarters.

During that time, the Church Administration Department made it clear that any member with concerns about the loyalty or teachings of their local minister was duty-bound to contact Headquarters. Of course, this policy was implemented because the Church had been set back on track, and they wanted to ensure that brethren notified them if a minister was not back on track or at any point going forward was departing from the truth. This was an effective safeguard to help shield the brethren from any rogue holdovers in the ministry, or from new ones.

However, the Tkach administration turned the entire system on its head. This policy was now being used to identify ministers who were holding to the truth. It turned local members into informants against *faithful* ministers!

Up was down and black became white in the WCG.

As ministers across the country struggled to understand and began to teach new doctrines, the policy of brethren being required to "inform" Pasadena of non-compliant ministers fed a huge problem in local congregations.

If anyone in a congregation thought their minister did not completely embrace the new ideas, they reported the "disloyalty" to Church Administration. This created an especially difficult situation for those ministers who were adjacent to congregations in which the pastor and most of the membership welcomed the changes. If they did not preach the new doctrines immediately, they knew they would be turned in in short order.

Taking a broader view, the new administration encouraged each member of the Church to “grow a voice,” turning the government of God upside down. They embraced a mainstay in traditional Christianity in which the congregation largely determines what they want to hear from the preacher. Given a chance, parishioners will typically trade in their pastor for someone who tells them what they *want* to hear, rather than what they *need* to hear.

Since Mr. Armstrong’s death, the dominant spirit of the last era of the Church, the Laodicean era described in Revelation 3:14-21, had settled over the WCG. The word *Laodicea* literally means “the people rule, judge and decide.” Many lay members came to tacitly believe that they were at least partly in charge of the Church, rather than Jesus Christ, and that they could personally decide which of the Church’s policies, traditions and doctrines to accept and reject.

However, people did not just grow a voice regarding doctrine and policy. As many realized an open door existed to complain and circumvent their local pastor if they had *any* issues, ministers around the world were also “turned in” for almost any injustice, real or imagined.

There was no doubt that it was not just the Akron congregation that had entered the Laodicean age—it was the Worldwide Church of God as a whole, and the cooling had begun almost immediately after the death of Mr. Armstrong.

“At a point in time, Mr. Armstrong learned that ‘government is everything,’ as he often put it. After the rebellion of 1974, he instituted a policy that brethren should report ministers to Pasadena who taught error or spoke against Headquarters. Liberal ministers were trying to take people into other doctrines. Members were instructed to notify what was at the time a faithful, on-track Headquarters about what could be an unfaithful local minister. Mr. Armstrong said in effect,

‘You not only can, but you *must* notify us about such ministers.’

“Although on its face this could seem terrible, it was designed to safeguard the Church. And it did. A few members did try to take advantage and spin things against their minister, but this was always discovered in the end. The policy was a good and necessary one—and everyone understood it.

“Here is what Mr. Armstrong’s successor did. Somewhere around 1990, this man terribly perverted this *protective* mechanism into a *destructive* one. He took a policy made for good and turned it to pure evil. He told brethren to once again notify Pasadena if their pastor was not teaching what Headquarters was teaching. Of course, members thought, ‘This is what Mr. Armstrong said to do, and we’re just doing the same thing.’ But this was a very different situation.

“In the new policy, brethren were being instructed to turn in faithful pastors to an unfaithful Headquarters. It was brilliantly wicked. Literally, brethren sitting in a congregation believed that they were following what *Mr. Armstrong* told them to do by turning in pastors, who were in fact teaching what *Mr. Armstrong* taught, to a Headquarters that would no longer do the same. And the undiscerning, the shallow-minded, the carnal or the plain negligent who just did not care, went right ahead and turned in faithful ministers, eventually by the hundreds. Tragically, they cowed a lot of men, while believing they were doing what Mr. Armstrong said.

“This was one of the most evil things I saw that came after his time—and this policy was awaiting me in Akron from day one.

“I would sometimes later look out at my congregation, knowing I was teaching the truth, but recognizing there was a risk someone would turn me

in—believing they were doing ‘what Mr. Armstrong said.’ Worse, these ‘incriminating’ letters were permitted to be anonymous. Ministers could not know when, whether or who was writing in on them, never mind what was being said.

“Ironically, and this would be natural, some field pastors could do no wrong. Members writing in on them could get nowhere with Headquarters, no matter the offense. Not me however, I was never in that category. I would have to watch and be careful in every occasion.

“Such were the times—and ‘atmospheric conditions’—that lay around me in my final Worldwide Church of God years and, as time passed, it grew worse, not better.

“Try to imagine the difficulty for a true minister of God under such circumstances. It really made it difficult to teach the truth near the end—and be able to stay long enough to help very many. At a certain point, of course, it became impossible to teach the truth in the Worldwide Church of God. You either sold out, or you had to go out.”

Mr. Pack’s brother wrote a letter to Pasadena during this period that articulated the problem very well. He offered it for inclusion here as helpful corroboration of what Mr. Pack has already written. Strangely, Pasadena at this time invited pastors to write *anonymously* as part of a survey of questions it wanted field ministers to answer. This was so that their feelings could be honestly expressed without fear of reprisal. Answer 39 is included to demonstrate another major, related problem felt in the field having to do with what hypocrisy at the very top was doing to the Church. William Pack wrote in early 1991:

“The remainder of what I wish to say will be my answers to questions 37-39 of the survey.

“37. The policy of allowing members to indiscriminately write in to Church Administration and inform on their Pastor is a self-destructive policy, if not unscriptural. The members are placed in a position from which they know they can dictate to their Pastor—the ‘tail wags the dog.’ But much worse than that, this policy emasculates the ministry. It is a constant ‘gun to their head,’ which is not creating shepherds as much as it is hirelings. Love cannot be perfected in an atmosphere of fear. A ‘kinder and gentler’ ministry is gaining ground in the field, but not so much because of a greater amount of love, but because of an ever greater amount of fear. Through this policy the very way in which Church Administration would not have the brethren feel toward the ministry—fearful, intimidated—is the very way in which the ministry feels toward Church Administration. Please discover another way, a Biblical one, in which to perfect the ministry. We all need to become ever kinder and gentler—because we are inspired to—not because we fear not to!”

“39. I would like to describe the perception that I have of a procedural and administrative style of our Pastor General, which I feel is hurting his effectiveness and credibility, and hindering the wholehearted support of the field ministry. I wish to illustrate this perception by likening the passing of the baton from Mr. Armstrong to Mr. Tkach to the transfer of a pastorate from one pastor to another.

“We pastors have been given valuable instructions in our *Ministerial Manual* concerning ‘Pastoral Transfers’ (2.2.1). First of all, we are informed that a change is good and healthy for the congregation... we pastors are counseled to avoid certain breaches of ethics which will hurt us and the congregation. We have been given four factors to consider (pp. 1-3), which I

would like to respectfully submit to Mr. Tkach, Sr. for his very careful and prayerful consideration. For if he will but follow his own good advice—‘walk the walk and not just talk the talk’—with respect to pastoral transfers, I believe he will have far less need to be so defensive, as he often is.

“In addition, when a new pastor comes into a congregation, it is a mistake to give the impression to the existing leadership—deacons, elders, and others—that they are not really qualified for their responsibilities, but must be tolerated. For over five years Mr. Tkach has continued to give the impression that he feels the field ministry (‘existing leadership’) is largely unqualified and unfit to serve effectively, rather than the dedicated, faithful, and loyal shepherds that they are for the most part. We have been put down far more times than we have been built up, so much so that the morale is beginning to suffer. For this reason, the ministry is becoming more of a grinding job rather than a calling.

“A pastor must not be perceived as administering via cronyism, but sad to say, from day one Mr. Tkach has unabashedly done this. All the congregation must feel close to their pastor, not just a privileged clique.”

### **Laodicean Attitude Rears Its Head**

One of the best examples of the fruits of the “people rule” attitude occurred in December of 1992. It would go on to be a story of huge proportion—one that would reappear and threaten Mr. Pack’s ministry two months later.

With several hundred visitors scheduled to arrive in Akron for a regional singles weekend, Mr. Pack wanted to make the time as special as possible. Therefore, he requested that Headquarters send a senior guest speaker. Church Administration thought this was a good idea and sent an evangelist.

As an added element of the weekend, Mr. Pack asked his wife to coordinate and organize a choir performance, accompanied by skilled instrumentalists from the local congregation.

When the occasion arrived, Mr. Pack was pleased and the congregation was excited that more than 400 singles had come to town (plus nearby brethren who wanted to hear the guest speaker), meaning there were nearly 1,000 in attendance. As the choir and accompanying ensemble made their final preparation 30 minutes before the start of services, a frantic local church elder approached Mr. Pack and informed him that they might have to cancel special music.

“Cancel special music...why?” Mr. Pack asked.

As he approached the stage, the problem became evident. A 20-year-old unbaptized girl, a flute player with a crucial solo part in the performance, was offended because the choir director did not give her a more prominent, visible place on the stage. She explained that she wanted to be seen, as well as heard—and that she should be placed in front of the piano on stage, as opposed to next to and slightly behind it. With hundreds of visitors in town and an evangelist sitting in the front row, this was her chance to be seen!

The size of the choir and ensemble was thwarting her purpose.

When told no, she dug in her heels, knowing the absence of her critical soloist part jeopardized the performance. She bluntly threatened to boycott if not moved more to “center stage” where she could be “featured.”

Mr. Pack could not believe his ears—such incredible, vain, unbending, disruptive selfishness, and just minutes before services. Worse, the girl’s father agreed with her!

There was a clear choice: yield, or call her bluff and inform her she was not needed. God’s Church is never held hostage to such “people rule” demands. Also, the girl’s ridiculous behavior would set a terrible precedent.

“The last thing I needed was a crisis of this sort. I knew the devil had stirred this young girl more as a personal challenge to me than anyone else. But there was no possible way she could be permitted to get away with such appalling conduct.

“I had to do what was right, yet be mindful of the importance of not letting the outrageous conduct of one young adult brat destroy all that I was trying to do in my last WCG hours.

“We actually had a better option, and one that could move on a moment’s notice. My wife was an accomplished flautist of nearly 40 years. A flute was found, not hers, and she calmly stepped into a back room, practiced a few minutes, and proceeded to perform the part flawlessly.”

The next weekend, Mr. Pack stood up and, without mentioning any names, used the example to admonish the congregation about human nature. Many had witnessed or were aware of the tantrum, and it had to be addressed. “We cannot have people refusing to participate like this and putting themselves so blatantly before the needs of the congregation,” he said. “There is no place for this kind of ‘me-first’ attitude in the Church of God. It is an honor to do special music before God and His people. We are not gracing both with our presence.”

Instead of being embarrassed, the young girl sat in the crowd, miffed—with her offended father and sympathetic family at her side.

It would soon be learned that this story was not over.

Events were continuing to build. The Packs were almost out of time.

About six weeks to two months later, Mr. Pack and his wife headed south on a scheduled trip to Ambassador College in Big Sandy, Texas, where both of their sons were now students. His eldest son, Randy, was a junior, and his young-

er son, Robert, a freshman. In addition, Mr. Gary Antion and his wife Barbara (Mrs. Pack's sister) lived on campus.

Since there was a big basketball game scheduled for the weekend of February 16, 1993, and both of their sons played on the intercollegiate basketball team, the Packs used the occasion as a chance to again visit Ambassador College and to see old friends and other ministers.

### **“You Are Being a Sheriff”**

After arriving on campus, Mr. Pack was almost immediately notified that the Assistant Director of the U.S. field ministry wanted to meet with him. This was the “Headquarters friend” whom Mr. Pack had contacted regularly with needs and situations occurring in Akron. The purpose of the meeting quickly became evident. To Mr. Pack's surprise, the administrator relayed the story about his supposedly “harsh” and “unloving” treatment in managing the special music threatened boycott of a few weeks earlier.

Instead of being instructed by the incident, the girl's father had quietly rushed a copy of Mr. Pack's Sabbath comments to Headquarters.

Amazingly, instead of backing up a fellow minister and chastising the girl's father for his presumptuousness, the Assistant Director sided with the disgruntled parent and said that Mr. Pack had a history of being “too harsh.” Mr. Pack would be dealt with accordingly, no investigation was necessary.

Mr. Pack was not surprised that certain men would listen to these naysayers, as he had seen this happen repeatedly throughout his ministry. The vocal minority was at it again, and Church Administration was more than willing to listen. By now nothing really shocked Mr. Pack about the injustice of the false leaders at Headquarters, this man now having become one of them.

The Assistant Director told Mr. Pack that Church Administration was probably going to demote him *again* to the

position of Associate Pastor. The stated reason? The discontent of an unbaptized 20-year-old!

“We are considering demoting you because of how you dealt with the recent situation,” he said. “We are thinking of transferring you to St. Louis, where you will be working for [a liberal, highly political, field evangelist].”

At this point, it was likely that the U.S. Field Director agreed with this assessment, but the man appeared to act as though the matter was his call. Both men knew perfectly well that Mr. Pack had a tumultuous past with the St. Louis North pastor. It was painfully obvious they *hoped* he would quit rather than accept the demotion. Either way, their plan would work: Mr. Pack would be relegated to a position where he was completely impotent. It must be remembered that no one had yet stood up in a clear and powerful way—not one minister in the world—and publicly declared the solution to all that was happening.

“I was sitting in my brother- and sister-in-law’s home with my wife, my longtime ‘friend’ and his new wife. My brother-in-law was living on campus and was the Dean of Students. My other brother-in-law, Carl McNair, was also present. He represented another connection to my friend, having been a man who played a large role in training him.

“I requested that my wife and I be left alone with the minister and his wife so we could talk privately. Everyone vacated the home for what would become perhaps one of the most dramatic conversations of my life.”

### **The Conversation Turns**

After his experience in the New York City area and his knowledge of the intentions of the current Church Administration, Mr. Pack rose from his chair and looked the man straight in the eye.

“Do not even think about demoting me,” he said. “I will not accept the assignment under any circumstances. The Church is in apostasy, and there is no way I will sit idly by while the Tkachs and their cohorts destroy the Church and slaughter God’s people.”

“It was high drama. I had drawn a line in the sand—and I knew it. So did he. There was no possible way that I could survive much longer. I made a long impassioned plea to this man to wake up to the full extent of what was happening. I knew in advance of the discussion that he was upset by the changes because his best friend was the Pasadena evangelist ‘doctor’ who had just as plainly told him about the synagogue of Satan present there.”

Mr. Pack then recounted all of the details that he had been aware of since May 1992, and in stages before that, concerning the final doctrinal direction—and goal!—of the leadership. He plainly stated that he knew how far the new architects were planning to go toward mainstream Christianity. Mr. Pack detailed the long list of changes that he had been documenting, along with a summary of at least some of the other ministers that he knew were upset, but would likely do nothing until it was too late to have an effect.

This was a four-hour, high-intensity discussion.

Finally, in a stunning turn, the other man suddenly softened, completely pulled away from the idea of a demotion, and asked, “What can I do to support you?”

“I wanted to say something impossible to misunderstand, and easy to remember at the same time. I was ready.

“I responded with a simple request. ‘Buy me time. I need *time* to warn as many people as I possibly can.

I want to remind as many brethren as time permits of the vital importance of God's truth. Buy me time! What I want is time. Shield me. Buy me as much time to blow the loudest trumpet I can blow for the longest possible period.' He listened respectfully."

At that moment, the man's wife, a pleasant lady who was visibly moved by what she was hearing, turned to her husband and said, "Now [first name] you are going to teach the truth, too, aren't you?"

The man gave no response. She repeated her question, this time *pointedly* stating his name to begin: "...you are also going to teach the truth, right? Aren't you going to stand up for God's truth too?" she asked.

Still not receiving an answer, and unwilling to let the conversation continue until she did, she asked a third time, "I'm asking you again [name], you are going to hold to the truth, and teach it like Dave is, right?"

"Yes," her husband quietly mumbled, looking down.

"I had to choose the path of what would shame him in front of his wife, because I had no choice. I would do it again.

"After this exchange, my 'friend' explained that he would buy me as much time as he possibly could. He gave me his word of honor before both of our wives. The man had known my wife before me, and had even dated her in college."

At this moment, Mr. Pack realized two other realities. First, no one seemed to be really interested in *defending* the truth. Paul declared he was "set for the defense of the gospel" (Phil. 1:17). Usually, Mr. Pack had to drag statements of recognition of events and changes from leading ministers. Second, he now knew he was on the thinnest ice. Whatever happened, however long the man's promise bought

him—three weeks would not be much different from eight weeks—his time in the Worldwide Church of God was almost over.

Driving back to Ohio, he and his wife acknowledged they were on borrowed time. He hoped to have one more month to warn the brethren.

“We had every reason to believe the assurance given. I thought that I might have about a month to go. If circumstances permitted a little more, that would be a bonus.”

### Priorities in Focus

At the end of 1992, Mr. Pack did not have any grand designs or firm plans. He simply saw himself as a servant of God, pastoring his local congregation, not willing to bend in regard to the truth. Starting his own organization was the farthest thing from his mind.

Mr. Pack feels strongly that this idea did not enter his mind because God had a very different path in store for him. God kept the idea from ever passing through his mind at even the most fleeting level. It is clear in retrospect that the timing would have been completely wrong. There were many lessons that God wanted him to learn and experience that He wanted him to gain.

This may trouble a few who think that Mr. Pack should have made this move earlier. But from the perspective of God’s purpose, it simply was not the right time.

“The fact that I would be the first minister in the entire world to stand up in the way that I did was still not good enough for a few brethren who had left over the last three or four years without concern for where God wanted them to *go*, but rather had been only concerned with where they were *coming from*.

“Shepherds are not permitted such liberties. They are responsible for more lives than their own. In fact, in the end, this would be the greatest single problem I saw with hundreds of ministers, many of whom I thought I knew. They seemed to entirely miss this most central point defining a shepherd.

“I *had* partly acquiesced on one doctrine, coming to believe that being born again was possibly a dual event—it was a change that occurs at the Resurrection, but also possibly one in this life, because of a misapplication of a couple verses. But this error would be quickly rectified. This is actually background for why the booklet I would write later about the truth of when one is born again would be so extensive, would offer so much proof—and make it much longer than Mr. Armstrong’s booklet.”

In any case, Mr. Pack was certain that God would reveal a “way to escape” for him (I Cor. 10:13). He determined to never compromise and teach any of the false doctrines he had now so clearly identified in his ever-growing list of changes.

Prayerfully, and carefully, he decided his primary responsibility during this tumultuous time was to the roughly 500 brethren in his local congregation. It was these to whom he was most responsible before God. These must get his greatest attention.

## *Truth—and Consequences*

From a point beginning a few weeks earlier, Mr. Pack had begun to analyze an event that happened less than two months before.

### **God Reveals a “Way of Escape”**

In late December 1992, a “senior evangelist” was fired from the Worldwide Church of God. On the Sabbath of January 2, 1993, he started the Global Church of God.

During the weeks after this man’s firing, all of the experiences that Mr. Pack had endured with the man immediately began flooding back into his mind. He had laid Mr. Pack off for self-motivated reasons in 1972. And there had been numerous other occasions when the man had been difficult to work with on day-to-day matters. He had also been harsh to others, including Mr. Pack’s brother on more than one occasion.

And then there was his disfellowshipment (some 12 years earlier for a period of over eight months) by Mr. Armstrong for having sown division. Mr. Armstrong had written the following (in March 1980) to him during that period:

“You lack the charisma to lead God’s Work...You REPEL people... You are a harsh taskmaster over those under you... You have a will to lead, but not the qualifications.”

Now that two months had elapsed and he could see the handwriting on the wall after his trip to Texas, Mr. Pack thought there had to be a solution. *The Global Church of God must be the ‘way of escape’ I have been waiting for. Mr. ——— has always seemed to be doctrinally sound, but there are so many other issues with him. Is it possible that God has chosen him to gather and lead the remnant of the Philadelphia era in the aftermath of the apostasy? He has no brotherly love, or even a concept of it.*

“I revisited my conversation with Mr. Armstrong of over 13 years earlier. I knew that he felt this man was not remotely converted, but I also saw that God had necessarily blinded Mr. Armstrong to Mr. Tkach’s true character for His own great purpose—to try His Church at the end of the age in a way that had never happened before. I *naturally* wondered then if God had also *necessarily* been forced to blind Mr. Armstrong to this leader’s true character—and that he actually was loyal, and a man of God.

“A tremendous amount was at stake. Not one of my friends thought I should remotely consider this path. To say that my wife and I were conflicted would be a great understatement.”

Mr. Pack has long acknowledged that he desperately wanted to believe that the man’s apparent devotion to the truth in years past was enough to trump his shortcomings. He had to get out of the Worldwide Church of God. Encouragement came from the leader’s strong verbal commitment and promise to him to “preach the full truth” as restored to Mr. Armstrong, with 1986 being Global’s doctrinal starting point. So said its founding bylaws.

Then there was his stated enthusiasm to “restart the Work.”

In addition, another senior evangelist, the Global leader’s longtime brother-in-law, spoke privately to Mr. Pack many times over the first two months of 1993 about his intention to follow the new leader’s effort to rebuild God’s Work—to participate in preaching the true gospel again. This senior man was a close friend (and extended family) to Mr. Pack—one he had always respected because he had been doctrinally sound. This seemed to support the idea that the man was in fact God’s choice.

Again, prayerfully and carefully, Mr. Pack considered the decision before him.

### **Long Personal History**

Mr. Pack had a detailed personal history with this man that was negative in so many regards. But Jesus’ words about forgiveness loomed large. He instructed Peter, in Matthew 18:21-22, to forgive time and again—“seventy times seven”—if necessary.

Over the years, the Global leader had been demoted and exiled—then promoted in 1986 by Mr. Tkach, only to be demoted again three years later in 1989 for things that appeared to be justified. Had this man changed? Was Mr. Pack willing to reject someone who appeared to be standing for the truth merely because of character flaws? Yet, whatever the answer, no matter how uncomfortable he might be, there were no other options.

Doctrine alone told him he had to leave *now*.

In addition, this man was family (an in-law through marriage) to Mr. Pack and, despite painful episodes, they had been friends for more than 20 years. After speaking with the Global leader on the phone for hours—and multiple times—about what his intentions were and whether he agreed with any of the changes, Mr. Pack slowly concluded

that God was sending him a signal to join the Global Church of God.

“I called my brother-in-law, who was also the new leader’s brother-in-law, for perspective, and because I knew he was also very upset about doctrine. He was not encouraging—to say the least. He did all that he could to restrain me from going with this man. He made it clear in early 1993 that he would likely never choose this path.

“All that had happened to me over my almost 27 years in God’s Way at that point had ingrained in me a willingness to forgive. I had to do this a great many times or I would have eaten up my stomach with bitterness and resentment. Whereas some would look for reasons not to forgive and hold a grudge, sometimes over small matters, I decided that I had to take a different approach early on in my life and ministry. Good health was at stake.

“My wife and I talked long and hard about what we were getting into. She had known this man much longer than I. She had been family to him since 1963—for 30 years. He had baptized her, and performed our marriage.

“I swallowed hard, knowing that I could soon be ‘in for it’ with this man, that I could soon be deeply unhappy under him once again. I was at the same time at peace because there were no other options.

“It was strange.”

### **Time for Action**

In the wake of being reported for the special music incident, it was evident to Mr. Pack that he was being carefully monitored. He felt as if his every move was known to Pasadena.

Armed with this knowledge—that the eyes of Headquarters were on him—it was time to take action.

With this course in mind, Mr. Pack made preparations for a termination that appeared imminent. He privately issued stronger and stronger warnings about the state of the Church to various friends and local brethren. He spoke through the week after he was in Texas to as many more as possible about every matter of doctrine he could discuss in a short visit.

“I was certainly not sitting on my thumbs through this period. I was talking to people I thought to be spiritual. Eventually, it settled out that all three of the local church elders were saying they were with me—that they were in agreement with Mr. Armstrong. At least three other deacons were saying the same thing. So were all of their wives.

“The thought in my mind was that it was crucial to have the leadership solid. I met many times with these people over the first two months of 1993. Sometimes I took one of them with me on a visit. We would try to carefully bring the subject around to changes in the Church with a person or couple. As soon as people would say that they were ‘disturbed’ or ‘troubled’ or ‘disagreeing’ or even ‘confused,’ it was my signal to open up. Each time that I did I understood that I could possibly be betrayed and never get to give my final sermon. But I had to take that risk.

“The reason I was willing to do this is that my strategy of getting people to verbally commit during the discussion, through use of questions, largely did commit them. That there was a deacon or elder with me on visits was also reassuring to them. Of course, I never—under any circumstances!—trusted even one other person with the timing of what could become my last sermon until just before the moment I would give it.

“Two other factors were at play in this time—and both were of huge importance to me personally in terms of a ‘grace period.’ Pasadena was loathe to fire any ‘non-compliant’ ministers before they had carried out their agenda. They did not want unnecessary attention too early. A termination would have raised a big, ugly—and premature!—stink.

“Also helping me was the fact that I was a high profile field pastor, at least partly because of the family I was in. My wife was also well-known, and for decades. Within this was a sub-factor that helped me—my name was linked directly to Mr. Armstrong in the minds of many. Mine was a name that Pasadena would be very interested in seeing go away quietly. The ‘put him in St. Louis’ idea flowed from this worry.

“All these things had probably quietly bought me precious time.”

### Termination Looms

Against this, some of the local leaders believed that Mr. Pack had virtually no more time. He had to give his most crucial sermon *first* so that if he suddenly had no further opportunity to speak, at least he would have said the most important things possible.

Mr. Pack now earnestly prepared for what would turn out to be his final sermon in the Worldwide Church of God.

“I spent a number of weeks trying to decide, and working toward, what was likely to be my final sermon to the 500 brethren I served in Akron, Ohio. This process had begun well before my trip to Texas.

“What should I cover?

“I finally settled on a plan to cover the single word ‘truth,’ as it is found throughout the Bible, from

Genesis to Revelation. I decided to cover dozens of scriptures, hitting this one word—“truth”—from every possible angle that God revealed to me a different usage for it within its context. The end result would be that I never used more verses in one sermon.

“The process of deciding when to give this sermon had taken some time—over two months—but the actual decision to deliver it when I did was in part because of urging by leaders who felt we could not stay any longer. It was a somewhat sudden decision.

“A curious thing had happened. Some people were so worked up by what I had told them, they wanted out ‘right now’! This was the flip side of those who did not care. There were some who were unnecessarily impatient, not seeing that others needed to be helped as they had been.

“Listening so much to these people would become a point of lesson learning.”

Mr. Pack wanted to deliver a message powerful enough that it would stun—and at least get the attention of, if not awaken—every sleeper in the congregation.

The magnitude of the departure from the basic tenets held by the Worldwide Church of God cannot be overstated. Looking back, Mr. Pack has often used an analogy to describe the Church’s departure from the truth.

“It was as if the pope would have announced to over a billion Catholics around the world that they were now Mormons, or as if the head of the Southern Baptist convention declared that all Baptists were now Jews. No one would have accepted this in those churches. But members of the Worldwide Church of God—people with *the truth*—would only too gladly change to be Methodists. Incredible. But this is not new with Israel. Read Jeremiah 2:11.”

### Solemn Responsibility

Mr. Pack tried to envision what Mr. Armstrong would do if faced with the same situation. He had often said at conferences, beginning in the 1960s, “If you men were ever able to get rid of me, Loma and I would just walk across the street and start over.” In fact, this is exactly what he did in 1933 when he left all Sardis organizations to rekindle the Work.

Mr. Pack remembered the commitment that Mr. Armstrong had personally asked for while in his home in Tucson, Arizona, in the aftermath of the receivership in 1979. “Dave, you will never teach anything but the truth, will you? You will never teach these things—will you?” he asked. “If false leaders ever take control of the Church, I hope you won’t teach their false ideas.”

Now here it was!

In *Mystery of the Ages*, on page 262, Mr. Armstrong wrote, “It is the duty of Christ’s TRUE ministers (and *how scarce today*) to PROTECT the begotten but yet unborn saints from false doctrines, from false ministers.”

There was no choice.

One task of a true minister is to carry out Titus 1:9-11, a qualification for ordination. He must “hold fast the faithful word *as he has been taught*, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to [convict] the gainsayers.”

In much the same way a person “counts the cost” before baptism, God’s ministers must also “count the cost” of “holding fast” to the truth during the tough times. This is easy during good times.

Mr. Pack faced a harsh reality. *I must be willing to give up all of my friendships if necessary—many of which I have built for decades since I left my previous life behind in Lima. I must also be willing to give up forever the comfort of staying with a large organization and the job security that comes with it. Any such “security” was illusory, anyway.*

### Special Sermon

Mr. Pack decided to give the special, powerful sermon on the subject of “truth” on the Sabbath of February 27, 1993. The topic was simple. It was a way of building an umbrella under which all other topics fall. In effect, it covered every doctrine in one sermon—while focusing on no one doctrine.

In the last two days before its delivery, Mr. Pack spoke with several close minister friends about the impasse he had reached. He spoke with the pastor of the Indianapolis congregation, a man who considered Mr. Pack to be “one of the three men I would call for counsel.” He had another conversation with a friend in the adjacent Cleveland pastorate. On Thursday evening, he called the previous Akron pastor who also readily poured out how unhappy he was with Pasadena. On Friday evening, an evangelist and family member in the field, called for a quick question. The conversation went almost two hours. He was yet *another* evangelist who seemed only vaguely aware of the severity of what was happening. He requested Mr. Pack’s entire box of material.

Minister after minister acknowledged the depth of their own trouble with what was happening. Many of these conversations lasted for hours. The crossroads that each man faced in his own ministry was undeniable.

Mr. Pack’s hope built that others intended to stand up. *Maybe there are more ministers out there who see through the false leaders*, he thought.

The Sabbath when he would deliver the message on truth finally arrived. Since Akron was hosting a local activity that evening, guests had arrived from Canton, Cleveland, Youngstown, and other surrounding congregations.

Following a straightforward sermonette by a deacon that stated emphatically how the kingdom of God was *not* yet here, directly disagreeing with Pasadena’s position, Mr. Pack approached the lectern. With bold confidence—and

clarity—he delivered what was the most important sermon of his life to that point. The following are a few excerpts from the sermon:

“I don’t know if a minister could give a more important sermon or cover a more important topic than the one we’re going to cover today. I suppose one could make a case for the importance of many, many things in the Scriptures that would put it at the top, but I think that ultimately this is probably the most important subject. And the subject is...what the Bible has to say about the truth...”

“Take a look at what God inspired the apostle of love [John]...to record...‘I wrote unto the Church, but Diotrephes, who loves to have the preeminence among them, receives us not...’ Diotrephes must have been a pretty powerful man...somebody who could get away with speaking against an elderly apostle. ‘Neither does he himself receive the brethren, and forbids them that would, and puts true brethren out of the Church.’ ...Here are people who are actually put out of the Church. Now what would happen if there were true servants [put out]?...God could not leave us without understanding as to what happens to those people...Let’s let the same apostle John answer that question...”

“Turn to John 10:26. What does God say? What happens if somebody gets put out of the Church improperly because they love the truth, because they teach the truth?...‘My sheep hear My voice and I know them, and they follow Me...and neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand.’ A person can be put out of the church unjustly, but they cannot be plucked from the hand of God...He repeats it again for emphasis, ‘And no man is able to pluck them out of My Father’s hand’ (vs. 28). If someone is teaching the truth they cannot be removed from God’s hand. Impossible!

They can be put out of the church, but they CANNOT be taken out of God's hand."

Mr. Pack later wished he had used the word "corporation" instead of "church," but what he meant was clear. He understood that one can get kicked out of a church corporation, but not the true Church, Body of Christ or Temple of the Lord. Near the end of the message, he announced the next week's sermon topic, and then concluded:

"Next week I'm going to cover the vital truths about who and what God is. And what we are called to defend..."

"I will keep you from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth...Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which you have'...There's the same thing, hold it fast, 'that no man take your crown [Rev 3:10-11].' What do you hold on to? You hold on to the truth. What sets you free? The truth. What sanctifies you? The truth. What do you have to love? The truth. What can even get you kicked out of the Church [corporation]? The truth."

### **Firestorm!**

Immediately after the sermon concluded, a firestorm erupted. The message stunned brethren. Yet, even though it was shocking to many who had not heard the plain truth of God in some time, it was actually quite ordinary. It was a tapestry of scriptures taken straight from the Bible addressing verses long taught in the Church, but never assembled as they were on this occasion.

Those in attendance were divided. Over 200 people came up to Mr. Pack after services during a period lasting for three hours. Some were aloof and distant, but many oth-

ers were emotional and thankful that someone had finally taken a stand against the false doctrines entering the Church.

A number of brethren expressed excitement that he had spoken up, but many wondered aloud what was going to happen next. Quite a few connected the dots, realizing that this would almost certainly lead to the termination of their pastor.

Mr. Pack's response was simple. "I don't know exactly what I'm going to do," he said. "I'm just not going to compromise."

(There is a prevalent belief that Mr. Pack was secretly planning all along to quit. But this is not true. Note that in his "Truth" sermon, he announced the topic he was going to cover in the sermon the following week.)

He would later discover that, after hearing the sermon, many visiting from other areas raced back and told their local pastors about the controversial material they had just heard. After these visiting brethren explained to their pastors what had happened, one adjacent pastor called Headquarters and turned in Mr. Pack.

It surfaced later that one local man even sent a copy of the message to Pasadena by express mail.

"I was calm and yet geared to the hilt. There was strong reason to suspect I would not survive as a WCG minister, but I made a point of speaking as though I would be back the next week. I would have never resigned—under any circumstances.

"The reaction to the sermon was beyond what anyone could have anticipated. It is no exaggeration to say that people almost literally stormed my position at the back of the hall. There were tears and long hugs and gratitude from *everyone* who approached me. So many thanked me for having a courage they had never seen. I told them I was neither hero nor villain, but just

someone who was keeping a vow I made at baptism—that I was doing something all of us were supposed to do.

“There were also many questions about what would happen next. Many brethren stated openly that they feared for me. I told them this concern was not necessary, but rather they should focus on the truth being lost to thousands—and to fear for their own crowns.

“I could also see the many others who were *not* coming up to speak. These were a mixture of two kinds of people: (1) those who did not seem to understand ‘anything was happening’ and (2) those who were very unhappy about a pastor they believed to be disloyal, rather than one trying to faithfully protect them.

“Upon getting home, I pulled out the address list and counted the faces that had approached me after the sermon. There were 207. My phone rang all evening.

“I would learn later that one man was said to have actually run from the hall with the sermon tape to mail it to Pasadena. He had not heard his name mentioned aloud from the pulpit for over three years, and now had come a chance for recognition.”

As Mr. Pack left services that night, he was encouraged by the response of many brethren. But he still had a feeling that he would not make it through the week ahead as a minister in the Worldwide Church of God.

### **The Day After**

The next day was a scheduled basketball tournament, hosted in Indianapolis by one of Mr. Pack’s dear friends in the ministry. In fact, he was scheduled to speak in Indianapolis in just six more weeks. The two men had been neighboring pastors when Mr. Pack was in Buffalo and he in Toronto.

Just a few days earlier, this man had been privately commiserating with him about the new Worldwide Church of God administration. He had called to say, "I was looking at my speaking schedule, and it has your name on it." A date was set for Mr. Pack to return to Indianapolis, and to speak, for the first time in almost 21 years. He was delighted to accept and looked forward to the trip.

Soon after arrival, another minister approached. His father- and mother-in-law were longstanding members of the Akron congregation and had phoned him after hearing Mr. Pack's "Truth" sermon the day before.

Visibly agitated, the man confronted Mr. Pack.

"You really upset my wife's parents yesterday," he said. "I think you were way out of line. I want to talk about it!" (His mother-in-law had long run the Akron church kitchen.)

Unappreciative of the man's tone, Mr. Pack responded, "Calm down and we'll talk about it," he said.

"Well, I'm upset," the man continued.

Mr. Pack replied, "Well, get un-upset—and if you have something to say to me, you can say it. But calm down first. Pounding your hand on the table and pointing at me will not work."

As the two men talked, things became clearer. On the doctrinal side of things, the minister completely agreed that the new administration was way off course. Finally, the man explained that he thought Mr. Pack chose the wrong tone in his sermon, and should not have said anything about what was occurring.

Mr. Pack made his position clear to him. "Well, I *do* think I should have done something about it, and a lot *more* people ought to do something about it, and, since you are also upset, maybe *you* ought to say something, too."

By the end of the conversation, the man closed by saying, "Well, I agree, there's a lot of wrong teaching...but I just don't think you should have said anything about it... and I feel that I need to call Headquarters tomorrow."

This attitude would represent the approach of many ministers who agreed with Mr. Pack, but refused to do anything—or worse, beyond mere inaction, chose to be “company men” and report Mr. Pack for teaching the truth.

“This confrontation was unexpected, but probably should have been expected, considering the connection between the man and his in-laws. The last three-fourths of the conversation were completely calm and there was agreement. The man (one of my brother’s friends in the ministry) did leave to join another splinter some two years later.

“What was incredible was that the man was visibly worried about what WOLVES thought about his ministry. He was literally sweating fear. He knew I was right—and said so—and yet told me that he was going to report me to those he knew to be WOLVES. This tells its own story.”

### **The “Friend”**

Just before leaving, Mr. Pack located his friend, the Indianapolis pastor. This was just four days after the invitation to speak in his area. Explaining his plan, Mr. Pack stepped toward the friend—and the man took a corresponding step backward, refusing even to touch him, let alone shake his hand. His final words were that he would be calling Pasadena the next morning. Now two men would do this.

“It was as though I was suddenly a leper, almost literally. I had given a sermon on the word ‘truth,’ with verses found all through the Bible. I did not mention any names, and had attacked no one. Of course, the sermon is still available exactly as I gave it. Yet that message made me a kind of spiritual leper to almost all at the time.

“This man had a descriptive phrase that he used to picture what all ministers in the Church should be doing during this time. He repeated it over and over to all who would listen. ‘Dig a foxhole, get in it, and pull the brush back over your head.’ This description perhaps best represented what so many ministers would do for the next over two years.”

### Another “Friend”

When Mr. Pack returned home that night, another “dear friend” had called, the Cleveland East pastor. He had already grilled Mrs. Pack about the sermon, because some in his congregation were present. Mr. Pack called him back.

“Here was a man with whom I had been good friends for over 18 years. We had served in Cincinnati together, followed by upstate New York, where I had requested he be sent to replace the pastor in Albany that I had dealt with almost 15 years earlier, and now we were in northeastern Ohio together.

“He was angry that I had taken action. His extreme coldness—after 18 years—was truly shocking to witness. He grilled me like a prosecuting attorney about things we had discussed time and again, things about which he was in complete agreement with me. It was as though he wanted to be able to say that he had questioned me about issues and my intent, even though he knew them well, so he could report them to Pasadena as though he had just learned them. He concluded by saying he would be calling Pasadena in the morning.

“This was the third man who told me in a 12-hour period that he was going to turn me in to Pasadena. Yet all these men would move on to *senior positions* in the coming largest splinter, which would form just two years later.

“Pastors on all sides, and from around the country, who had been agreeing with me, telling me that they were upset and in complete disagreement with the false teachings, changed their minds and sold out. Worse, they absolutely betrayed me. Men who had bitterly complained to me privately began to deny that they had ever done anything but support Headquarters.

“But I must say that I am deeply thankful to this day for the treatment I received. It galvanized and focused my thinking about what had been 2,000 years of Church history more than anything that has ever happened to me.

“Think. I was given the opportunity to understand perhaps just a little of what Christ felt at the hands of Judas. I could understand why the apostle Paul rejoiced in Philippians to experience ‘the fellowship of Christ’s suffering.’

“What value would you place on lessons such as these? While incredibly painful, they are priceless.”

### **Some Leaders Flip**

More was happening on the day after than met the eye. Not just surrounding ministers had a sudden change of heart. Some local deacons and elders, who had been more than willing to express to Mr. Pack their concerns—and support for taking action—turned against him almost immediately. Of course, this was terribly disheartening. Family after family pulled back who had just a day before conveyed outrage over the apostasy! By Monday, certain leaders would not even talk to Mr. Pack. Two of these had on Friday pushed the hardest for him to, “Act now—we can’t wait any longer!”

“Ministerial friends and local deacons and elders were not the only ones who either betrayed me or

flipped. A great many brethren turned on a dime and showed a sudden venom toward the very mention of my name sufficient to have made the devil blush. It was an incredible experience to see people call me one day thanking me with tears in their eyes and a trembling voice, only to watch them turn in an instant to display a viciousness I had *never* previously experienced—and I have experienced a great many difficult things in my life and ministry.”

The only positive news during this time seemed to be that a number of Akron brethren were thrilled that Mr. Pack had chosen to swim against the current. During the 48 hours following the sermon, aside from 12 hours in Indianapolis, his phone rang constantly. News that something “big” happened on the Sabbath in Akron spread like wildfire.

Surrounding congregations also called for explanations from their pastors. This put pastors on the spot—they had to choose loyalty. To a man, they protected themselves, not those they served. This would repeat itself over coming days in a few other parts of the country—until Pasadena could reinvent history regarding what had happened in Akron.

Mr. Pack spent one of the longest and most gratifying days of his ministry visiting brethren all day on Monday. This was March 1, 1993.

“I took the box in and out of the car all day. Most people that I would actually get to talk to that day and the next would remain firm. Each next day, in fact for a long time, it would be the same thing. In and out of the car, repeating the same answers to the same questions.”

Arriving home late in the evening, his brother called explaining that circumstances had put him in a difficult position. He reported that he had just received a call from Joe Tkach Jr. Here is Bill Pack’s account:

“The call ostensibly was, ‘Your brother is doing this up in Akron. Are you aware of it?’ I knew what he was really wanting to ask, ‘Are you and your brother in agreement somehow, doctrinally or otherwise?’ I had not really talked recently to my brother about this. Essentially, I knew Joe Jr. was feeling me out more than he was really calling to feel out my brother. I was pretty much noncommittal. I was able to tell him the truth that we were not in collusion or discussions over anything. These weren’t my words, but essentially I said, ‘He is doing his own thing. That’s him and I’m me.’ He seemed satisfied.

“He was fishing for, ‘Can you tell me anything about what your brother’s strategy is?’ but also, ‘Where do *you* stand? Do I have to worry about you?’—without saying it.”

Mr. Pack responded to his brother that he had not heard from Church Administration. He explained that he had heard a rumor from one of three elders (whose brother was a former Akron pastor) that he had been terminated. Also, his email account had been cut off by Pasadena.

What Mr. Pack did not know yet was that his sermon had been sent to Headquarters. The actions taken against him had been based on four ministers who had reported on him (this included the man he had just met 13 days earlier in Big Sandy), as well as the verbal account of one deacon in Akron who falsely described Mr. Pack’s sermon in a note mailed with it.

### **Confrontation**

On Tuesday evening, March 2, after another marathon day of visiting local brethren, the phone rang.

It was the U.S. Field Director. Finally, Mr. Pack would get to speak to him directly.

The conversation began, “We have reports that you called my dad a false prophet, that you attacked Headquarters and that you announced your resignation [there was a fourth charge mentioned]...”

Mr. Pack replied, “I did not mention your father. I did not say *anything* about Headquarters or the current administration, and I did not announce my resignation. But I did announce my topic for next week’s sermon. I expected to be speaking next Sabbath. But you already know that because you listened to the sermon...correct?”

After a silence, Mr. Pack asked again, “Have you listened to the sermon?”

Forced to acknowledge that he had still not heard the message, the man informed Mr. Pack that he was fired.

The official reason? The content of Mr. Pack’s sermon would prove him guilty of “cognitive dissonance.”

The man explained that Dr. —, the evangelist who described the synagogue of Satan at work, had rushed into his office that day and given Mr. Pack’s letter to him.

“Dr. — even told us that he feels you should be disfellowshipped,” he continued.

Mr. Pack was incredulous at the duplicity and betrayal of the evangelist. “I see. Did he also tell you that he believes you are part of the synagogue of Satan? Please help me on this. Did he remember to tell you that?”

Next came a sound akin to stammering and choking.

Mr. Pack continued, “Will you do me a favor? You’re firing me for four reasons that are all fiction. They’re fiction! Do me a favor. Listen to the sermon, and call me back tomorrow night. Can I expect your call?”

The official promised to call.

“I went to bed that night with the strangest feeling in my life. Part of me could not believe I had been disfellowshipped. It was much more than a shocking feeling, and it was intense. That part of me was numb.

That it had occurred for teaching the truth is what made this so. The feeling lasted for about two hours until I fell asleep.

“The next morning was entirely different. I was raring to go. I had never felt so empowered and excited by events. I understood that something much bigger than I was playing out. I *knew* God was with me.”

Not surprisingly, Joe Tkach Jr. did not call back. So Mr. Pack called him, asking, “Did you hear the sermon?”

“Yes,” he replied.

“But you did not call me back?” Mr. Pack questioned. “Well...am I guilty of any of the reasons for which you fired me last night? Did I say any of those things in my sermon?”

Forced to admit the facts, he said, “No, you didn’t.”

“But I’m still fired, right?” Mr. Pack asked.

“You’re still fired, because you are guilty of ‘cognitive dissonance,’” he repeated, explaining this was a term roughly equivalent to appealing to old feelings and emotions in people through a discordant message.

Despite the theological mumbo-jumbo, Mr. Pack was satisfied. “Fair enough. But I have some things to say. You know you hold your position because of nepotism, not experience or skill. Your daddy picked you. You have never been a field minister. Yet you lead hundreds of ministers. You probably understand that you are not remotely qualified. Frankly, not one minister I know thinks you are qualified for anything. And your doctrinal training is now Methodist.”

All this was true. Finally, there was nothing left to say. They hung up.

“By now all feeling of ‘termination shock’ was long gone. I had one chance to express things that needed to be said—that I thought I was responsible for saying—and I said them. The man tried to justify

himself and list his supposed qualifications, but all of us knew such things were laughable. It was pitiful. At a point, you do not dignify such people.

“He would go on to tell people that I had been perfectly happy in the Church until Global’s leader was fired and convinced me to go with him.”

After over 25 years of faithful service, Mr. Pack was no longer employed by the Worldwide Church of God.

The Pastor General made a point of personally marking Mr. Pack on the next Sabbath of March 6, 1993 on a church visit to Tampa, Florida. The service was filmed, and played in all churches the next week.

Such marking would not be done publicly with any other pastor.

## *The Global Church of God*

**E**ven if it was not clear *why* circumstances were unfolding as they were, or *why* God allowed the WCG to veer so far off course, one thing was certain—Jesus Christ was still the Head of His Church and Body. Being able to fully comprehend all elements of the path ahead was inconsequential for the moment. There was one central question, however.

### **Where Is God's Truth and Work?**

During the final days before termination, Mr. Pack faced more closely his most immediate decision. Where would he continue as Christ's minister? In a sense, it was simple. He would go where he believed the truth of God was located and where the Work was being done. It never entered his mind to choose a group that would make him most personally comfortable with the most secure paycheck or the highest position. Nor did he entertain starting another organization.

By this time, the Oklahoma-based Philadelphia Church of God was growing larger. Yet, it had long been clear that

its leader was doctrinally unsound. In just three short years, his bizarre interpretations of Scripture had confirmed that he was a false prophet, but was also a raging accuser, and now even outright blasphemous in light of certain *divine* titles he was taking to himself. (Later these would exceed more than a dozen in number.) And though the leader had wrapped himself in the flag of Mr. Armstrong's memory, he and his group had already significantly departed from certain fundamental beliefs that Mr. Armstrong had restored to the Church.

It remained that this group was no option.

Since the Global Church of God (GCG), based in San Dimas, California, had formed just two months earlier, the *timing* of its appearance seemed its own statement. Mr. Pack had continued to speak with Global's leader (its presiding evangelist) by phone. He wanted to be sure he was a different man from the one of decades past.

During these conversations, the man showed a much more contrite and humble attitude than had previously been seen. This was reflected by his ardent assertion that he had not sought to start his own organization. He said the idea had been forced upon him only after he was fired. In fact, he told Mr. Pack he had no intentions of starting his own group until deciding to do this after he was fired. (This will be evidenced later as having been untrue.) At the time, it was this senior evangelist's apparent reluctance to set himself up as a leader that pointed toward the possibility that he really had changed.

“Global's leader made plain to me, and to all who would listen, the following story of his termination: He was called in and told that he was being retired from the ministry, and removed from all ministerial duties and even from office. He requested to remain *in the WCG* as a local church elder, explaining that he would permit himself to be reduced in rank (three

levels of office) and retired—if he were not completely removed from the ministry. This was his position, and it was well-known.

“The conspirators said, ‘No, holding *any* office was out of the question.’ In a sense, they shot themselves in the foot because the man could be had for a small price. He was willing to stay in-house and be quiet about all the false teachings—and to give up the office of evangelist that he presumably once believed Jesus Christ gave him. (Read Ephesians 4:11-12.) Incredible! But they pushed him out.

“It would only be later that I saw this story for what it was—that the man was perfectly willing to *remain in the Worldwide Church of God*, with all its false teachings, as only an elder, and if the false leaders would continue to salary him. He had not shown faith at all in starting his organization, and, attempting to prove that he had not sought a position of leadership for himself. The man repeated this story time and again to all who would listen. He had not shown courage of conviction to give his life for the sheep. In a sense, I eventually came to realize that *the conspirators* started the Global Church of God, in essence, by their foolish termination of a man willing to stay. That man backed into the GCG leadership.

“The man cannot deny the account, having told it so many times in sermons and conferences.

“I went through a period of several years being upset with myself that I did not see the man’s actions for what they were at the time of his termination, and for having always retold the story just as he did. This book recounts my mistakes, and this is certainly among them. Yet God did allow me to go there because, as I found myself saying so many times through the years, there was so much experience I yet needed to obtain during my ‘Global years.’

“But it will be seen that I functioned in Global somewhat independently—very differently from the average minister—much as Mr. Armstrong did with Sardis, even though he drew a salary from them.”

The Global Church of God increasingly appeared to be the only choice for those who wanted to adhere to true doctrine and continue the Work of God.

By the first week of March 1993, it seemed obvious that this was the way of escape God promised he would provide. Mr. Pack overlooked his personal experiences with Global’s leader, knowing that the particular personality overseeing the Church should be of little importance. Jesus made it clear that God could “raise up stones” if necessary to accomplish His Work.

In choosing the Global Church of God, he paid little attention to the size of the Church or its lack of ministers at the time. He knew this was in Christ’s hands, and that He had called His Church a “little flock.”

Instead, Mr. Pack focused on the initial bylaws of the corporation, which, again, stated clearly that its doctrinal position would be identical to that of the Worldwide Church of God at the death of Mr. Armstrong in January 1986. These bylaws also stated that the new organization and its leaders were not going to examine the changes made in the WCG for any possible validity. It was in effect deleting the entirety of its “doctrinal memory” over the last seven years, refusing to acknowledge *any* of the changes made under the new administration.

So Mr. Pack forged ahead in faith—just as he had following his demotion in New York City—and began to mentally prepare for the inevitable tumult to come upon all brethren around the world. The rest of the first week after his firing was a whirl of phone calls (from local brethren and ministers far away) coupled with nonstop visits until late at night.

### First GCG Sabbath in Akron

Mr. Pack spent his first Sabbath morning with the Global Church of God's new Akron congregation on March 6, 1993. A group of 58 people attended in a small hall in Copley, Ohio. Some were motivated by curiosity rather than commitment. Nevertheless, their presence was encouraging. The room was full. Its size—quite small—was important because there was a rumor that Mr. Pack had plotted treachery by deceitfully arranging to have the *whole congregation* meet with him—by diverting *everyone* to a different hall as though it was just a location change for the same congregation.

The long week had produced a special problem—and at the worst possible time. Mr. Pack had developed a severe case of laryngitis. After greeting everyone briefly, and making a few announcements, all that he could do was play a video sermon by Global's leader. The one elder who had come with GCG had selected from a choice of three available sermons, because Mr. Pack had been too busy to review and select one.

There was much excitement. Members viewed themselves as fellow survivors of a catastrophe—of a shipwreck from which they had all escaped in a lifeboat. There was indescribable joy. The realization that they were no longer held hostage by wolves in sheep's clothing in Pasadena was liberating, and empowering. It was thrilling to stand up for the truth. People could not swap war stories often or long enough.

Members sought direction on how to warn others and inform them that God's Work was regrouping and preparing to push ahead once again. The anticipation for rekindling the Work was palpable.

However, services held by the Akron Worldwide Church of God were another matter.

### **Meanwhile, Across Town...**

Those wrestling with uncertainty in the WCG found no solace in the firing of their local pastor. After morning services in Copley, some did dart back across town to the WCG services, trying to make sense of the confusion. Others were just curious what would be said. It was learned that one “loyal” WCG supporter had carefully scanned the parking lot in Copley, recording license plate numbers, and makes and models of cars, in order to report to the WCG’s leaders of those who had “defected.” These would be especially targeted for “enlightening” assistance by phone.

For this first Sabbath after Mr. Pack’s termination, WCG Headquarters sent two ministers to Akron for damage control. These were the pastor who was stationed in Akron prior to Mr. Pack, and the evangelist who would stay in town to seize all of Mr. Pack’s church-related belongings.

“All of the previous pastors in Akron who were still in the WCG were brought into the area and put in the same hotel. An evangelist came in from Pasadena to join them. Surrounding pastors also came. Two of the three local church elders who were going to come with Global flipped and joined them, giving up as many names as they could to ingratiate themselves back into the good graces of those seeking to discredit and destroy the man they were with so shortly before.

“All of these men set up a phone bank—literally—for the purpose of dialing the phone numbers of 500 people over and over again. Their goal was simple: scare them into staying with the WCG through stories about me. If one voice after another could make awful accusations against my character in a similar way, reinforcing each other’s falsehoods, hearts and minds might be turned. It worked for many. Those who were

not frightened later reported the tactics used. My character, not doctrine, was the *entire* focus. (Of course, it still is today.)

“Sadly, most were *easily* frightened away. The importance of truth vanished in the night in their minds. The original 207 people I had counted from a week ago had dropped to only 58 present by the first Sabbath, with the next week dropping to 37, before it slowly began climbing again.”

The pastor preceding Mr. Pack in Akron began the sermonette with a leading question: “What happened since I left?” Rewriting history, he went on to portray the supposedly wonderful state of the congregation at his departure, implying that Mr. Pack had torpedoed existing unity, enthusiasm, warmth and loyalty to Headquarters among the brethren.

The speaker then proceeded to the thrust of his sermonette, which was intended to offer guidance on how to react to the difficult times in the Church. He made it perfectly clear how he believed members should decide who to follow.

He set forth a hypothetical situation. Beginning with an analogy, he set the stage by telling a story.

“Envision for a moment a teenage boy who was coming to understand the Fourth Commandment in Exodus chapter 20,” he said. “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shall you labor, and do all your work. But while coming to the new understanding that he was not allowed to work on the Sabbath, imagine that at the same time the young man’s father confronted him by *ordering* him to cut the grass that Saturday afternoon.

“Now, conflicted in his mind, the young boy was unsure of what to do because he also understood the Fifth Commandment—honor your father and mother. What is the boy to do in this seemingly irresolvable dilemma—this spiritual ‘catch-22?’”

His answer to the seemingly irreconcilable situation was that the boy should follow the instructions of his physical father—and break the Sabbath. He then went on to parallel Mr. Tkach to the father in his analogy, instructing the local brethren that when they were in doubt spiritually, or if certain changes seemed not to make sense, they should just do what Headquarters and Mr. Tkach had instructed—even if this meant disobeying God!

The point of this twisted analogy was that everyone should just trust the new administration, and it would all work out in the end. The former pastor blatantly ignored instruction in the book of Acts that Christians “obey God rather than man” (5:29) when there is a conflict of this sort. He had also forgotten that the first and greatest Commandment is to love God, followed by love for neighbor as the *second*.

Upon hearing about the sermonette from a member some days later, Mr. Pack could not help but think of his father “ordering” him to eat pork hot dogs when he was first learning the truth, and of his refusal on principle. Even at 17 years old, he understood that he had to obey God first.

This terribly misleading message encouraged brethren to, in effect, anesthetize themselves to the confusing new doctrinal “understanding” flowing from Pasadena.

“This was another ‘friend’ who went on to be a pastor three years later in the big, new splinter.

“The example that he used—pitting one Commandment against another—is terribly flawed. Honoring parents is not always synonymous with *obeying* them, and that is why God uses the word ‘honor’ instead of ‘obey’ in the Fifth Commandment. For young children, of course, this becomes one and the same. Why was none of this reasoning included?

“While it was not easy listening to the man describe the Akron congregation as supposedly left in good order, it was easy to consider the source. What else was

he going to say? I understood that this was his chance to denigrate the improvements that made his administration look bad. The only alternative was to admit to the mess he left behind, and that was not going to happen.

“The reasoning in his sermonette was very typical of so many messages given around the world by ministers unable to confront reality in a way that protected the sheep. The man who had said ministers should get in a foxhole and protect *themselves* forgot to explain what was happening to the sheep who were unable to enter the foxhole with him. Shielding God’s people from loss of eternal life was not on their minds. It had given way to shielding themselves from loss of a job. I understood that the previous pastor was simply protecting himself financially.

“Messages of that period were so weak, so confusing, so self-protecting, so hypocritical, so deceitful, so filled with vile, hollow, unscriptural analogies that did not ring of God—and they were so common. The truth is that thousands of such messages were given over a period that would last several years.”

The sermon that followed was even more outrageous, but mostly because of what the speaker said the day after the sermon.

When the minister from Pasadena took the lectern, his purpose became clear: deny that anything out of the ordinary had occurred in Pasadena under the new administration. “Changes? Changes? *What* changes?” he asked in mocking fashion. He offered that Mr. Pack was “leading people over Niagara Falls in a peanut shell for protection.”

### **But Then Commiserates...**

The man’s duplicity would become evident—and would be breathtaking.

The next morning, he came to pick up Mr. Pack's (the family's only) car, his church-owned computer and all church-related files. His charge was to leave nothing behind. Ironically, Pasadena had sent the man who had been Mrs. Pack's minister when she began to attend services in Milwaukee in 1959. He was the same man who had so glowingly described the happiness and unity in the Buffalo congregation, and proclaimed that if he were ever a field minister again, he would want to pastor a congregation like that one.

And here he was—the agent that Headquarters chose to formalize and complete Mr. Pack's termination.

As the man walked in the door, he handed Mrs. Pack a bouquet of flowers—while he simultaneously burst into tears! He *immediately* began to agree that the Church was engulfed by outright apostasy.

“You're right about all the doctrinal changes,” he said. “But I can't leave now because there is nobody who can write like Mr. Armstrong and it's too late to start the Work over again. Even if it is way off track, this is the only place that anything can be done at this point.”

He was very troubled, even admitting that he was considering leaving the WCG. Mr. Pack listened in disbelief as the man named two organizations that he was considering joining if the current WCG administration made many more changes. The group he indicated that he was leaning toward was the Church of God, Seventh-Day—a Sardis organization.

This manner of extreme two-faced behavior exemplified those who recognized doctrinal error, but were perfectly willing to lie to brethren to protect themselves—to secure their paychecks!

“I could scarcely believe my ears. Yet another evangelist who was well aware of all that was happening. He was known as one of the most doctrinally sound

ministers. But here he was remaining in the WCG in the face of bald heresy. Having ordained Mr. Tkach in 1963, and still close to him, he was on the inside.

“My wife was visibly emotional, although not in a tearful sense. She was quite composed, and quickly detailed a list of false doctrines because she knew the issues. She pointed out what he had just said, and how he acknowledged that what was happening was wrong. She reminded him of what he had taught her as a teenager. She asked the man how he could live with himself—‘How can you come so far and go along with this?’

“I also had a series of pointed questions that I brought. This was perhaps among the five most memorable conversations of my life.

“The man never did leave the WCG. He died in 2003 in the saddest of circumstances, remarking, ‘I lost my wife (too early), my job and my Church—I do not want to live.’ He very soon after got his wish.

“These stories are helpful to include in the biography because they show that life is cause and effect. In the very greatest regard, it is (doctrinal) truth—or consequences.

“The biggest part of the problem was that many men had bought into *some*, but not *all*, of the changes. They wanted to pick and choose. It was as though they believed ‘bitter and sweet water’ or ‘salt and freshwater’ *can* come from the ‘same fountain’ (Jms. 3:11-12), and that one *could* eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, as long as he knew how to discern one from the other.

“Of course, this view leads to spiritual suicide. It is so plainly unscriptural. Unlike Mr. Armstrong, these men could not see that ‘a little leaven leavens the whole lump’ (Gal. 5:9), meaning that it eventually *fills* its host—and that heresy ‘eats as does a canker’ (II Tim.

2:17), meaning that it always spreads (margin: ‘gangrene’) until it *kills* its host. They were not willing to eat completely unleavened doctrine, or to cut away dead, gangrenous doctrinal tissue before it could take their life.

“There would be no convincing such ministers they were wrong—that they were holding to an impossible position. I have tried to do this more times than could be recounted. In fact, seemingly having learned nothing over the years, most of them hold the same ‘tree of the knowledge of good and evil’ view today.”

Mr. Pack watched as the man pulled away from his driveway, accompanied by the Canton, Ohio, pastor who had come to drive the vehicle they arrived in. He was the man who had inherited the Canton church from Mr. Pack 18 months earlier. They had known each other in college. This newly hired pastor (he had held a job in the world for many years until just before this time) had said not one word—but he had heard the evangelist’s comments. He too would join the largest splinter in 1995.

### **No Transportation**

It was March 7, 1993. For the first time since 1972, Mr. Pack was unemployed—only this time the family was also without a vehicle! The Packs could not afford and never had a second car. He also had no computer to communicate through email.

The Worldwide Church of God gave him only two weeks severance pay for his over two decades of service in the ministry, plus a few days of any unused vacation that all terminated ministers received by policy. The small severance was because the Packs had officially declared that they were going with another organization. This made them, also by policy, “opponents” of the WCG. Virtually all other ministers,

most of whom that would leave would do so two years later, would receive *one week of pay for every year* that they were in the ministry—because they did not immediately declare their new allegiance. These waited until the larger check had cleared the bank. This was made possible by high-ranking sympathizers in Pasadena carefully coaching them step by step regarding exactly what (and what not) to do, and when.

Mr. Pack took a deep breath and resolved to move forward—regardless of giant obstacles ahead.

But what about a car? The Packs had insufficient money to buy one.

Since the Global Church of God had been in existence for just two months, there were only about 275 members worldwide. There were a handful of deacons and local church elders to help, but no full-time ministers had yet been hired into the field. Mr. Pack was the first. The fledgling organization had limited resources. The tithe-paying base was small. The headquarters could not afford to advance a down payment for a car.

Understanding the crucial juncture facing God's people, Mr. Pack could not let days, let alone weeks, go by. There was work to do!

His very first action as a yet unpaid minister was to go obtain a \$4,000 cash advance on a personal credit card. He then sent these funds to the Global Church Headquarters so they could purchase a car in the Church's name with this money. The promise was that they would try to repay the principal amount when and as they could.

Thrilled to get back into the field and to visit brethren, Mr. Pack charged into this unique, new assignment with gusto.

“Someone was kind enough to loan us a car until we could get a new one. We were most grateful. It allowed us to run errands and buy groceries for about 10 days.

“We had faced obstacles in the past where the only path was that of faith. This decision was easy. But what choice did we have? We needed a car, and the Church could not afford to buy one. So I offered to act as an agent to purchase the vehicle on their behalf. There was a Ford dealer nearby and we got a brand new Aerostar exactly like the one that had just been driven from our garage.

“It would look better for Global if *it* had purchased the vehicle, rather than I having done so on my own behalf, or even on their behalf. The goal was to have other ministers be able to see that Global was a legitimate organization—that all manner of familiar procedure, activity and support was present. We were happy that no other Global ministers had to do as we did. I would certainly do it again.

“I would only learn later about how the many scores of ministers went with the new splinter in 1995 with a tremendous amount of money—sometimes tens of thousands of dollars—simply because they did not declare their affiliation until the larger ‘severance’ check had been cut for them.

“These men would wait in the back of the hall for one Sabbath, officially ‘undeclared’ in terms of organizational destination. Of course, everyone knew exactly where they were going in a couple of days, and could not understand why they were delaying the changeover. There were always salaries, cars and expense accounts waiting from the start for these faithless, hypocritical appeasers because large numbers of tithepayers followed them out the door to the same new organization.

“There was a very early surprise, however, in all of this. Instead of a thank-you for buying the car from my (borrowed) funds, the Global leader was disappointed that I had only brought an initial group of 38 people

with me. It was absolutely stunning. I was not bringing enough human ‘booty’ right out of the gate to suit him.

“This biography could not contain all the unexpected difficulties experienced and painful lessons learned of those early days and weeks in Global.”

### **The New Akron Worldwide Pastor**

Pasadena’s most crucial problem in the wake of Mr. Pack’s termination was the appointment of a new pastor for the Akron area. The decision was very important because whoever filled the role had to be able to stem a potential tide of people from the congregation, which could lead to rumors that the WCG was in greater trouble than its leaders had anticipated. More brethren might “move.”

*Who* was selected was all-important. He must be carefully handpicked for the task. Above all else, he had to be a man who had demonstrated an absolute commitment to the changes underway—he must be a skilled cheerleader on Pasadena’s behalf, and one able to comfortably articulate the changes. He also had to be a smooth personality so he could make Mr. Pack’s administrative style seem more authoritarian. Above all, his loyalty to Pasadena must be unquestioned.

The Scranton, Pennsylvania pastor had the perfect resumé.

The man quickly arrived in the area. He raced to visit as many of the “lost sheep” as would see him. Several were interested to hear what he said. Above all, he stood for the changes, and said so.

“Naturally, I was curious about who would be my replacement. The selection showed Pasadena knew what they were doing. The man chosen *did* have a smooth personality, and *was* a cheerleader for every

change made. Some of his sermon tapes were funneled to me, and he clearly came into the area with skirts twirling and pom-poms waving. He had the cheers down pat. Origen could not have given a better sermon ‘supporting’ the trinity than this man. I have his tape. This history will momentarily become more important.

“But other statements told the tale. He was shown my list of doctrine and policy changes, at the time somewhere about 100 in length, and proudly announced that he ‘agreed with every one of them.’ He stated this openly to person after person.

“Ironically, Joe Tkach Sr. was still denying in June 1993 the very changes that this man was actively agreeing with and teaching. I am including what Joe Tkach said in Columbus, Ohio, on June 12 in a sermon that was sent to be played in all churches, because by that point my list had reached him and was at 154 changes:

“Now I’m being accused of dismantling everything Mr. Armstrong had established. That I’ve done away with the Law and that the Ten Commandments are no longer required to be kept or observed. In II Corinthians 2:11 the Apostle Paul said lest we be deceived we should not be ignorant of Satan’s devices, and that he is working through human beings who are just rumormongers and going around falsely accusing and making up lies that this is what Tkach is now doing or purported to be doing.”

“They’re spreading ugly rumors around and unfortunately some of our more gullible people will swallow hook, line and sinker when people are spreading around rumors and lies that, well, you see next year we’re going to be keeping Christmas and

we're going to be keeping Easter. We're going to do away with the Sabbath. We're going to do away with the Holy Days. We're going to do away with unclean meats. We're going to do away with this and that."

"And I purportedly have made 154 changes. You know, someone has had to be eating poison mushrooms! You know what poison mushrooms, the effect it has—they're toxic. It affects the brain—you begin to hallucinate. You get feverish, you know, you begin to act irrationally and everything else. That's what happens, whereas the Spirit of God is of sound mind."

"Another thing that I'm being accused of—that I no longer believe this is the true Church of God. I believe it with my whole heart. You are my witnesses."

"The denial presented in this quote was a big element of dealing with the problem of what was happening. Each minister handled the problem in his own way for his own area, with seemingly no two saying the same thing. Some were so asleep that they were buying 'hook, line and sinker' statements like the one above, and denied to their congregations that anything was changing. Others knew that new doctrines were being presented, and they may or may not have agreed with them, but they denied the facts to keep their flocks in place.

"But Joseph Tkach's statement demonstrates that I had anticipated most of the false teachings that would come, and Worldwide *did* make the changes that he so vehemently denied in Columbus and elsewhere. It was humorous, while also tragic, that my replacement was actively teaching new doctrines that supposedly 'had not yet been presented by the WCG Headquarters.'

“Such was the deceit of the time—deceit attributed to me and others by those who were the real deceivers. And I include in this both the type of deceit from the Pastor General above and the type offered by my replacement who taught false (deceitful) doctrines. I wondered why my replacement never felt shot in the back by the Headquarters for whom he was so ardently cheerleading.

“My replacement would 26 months later ‘stand up for the truth,’ and leave the WCG to enter the largest splinter with over 200 drowsy Akron brethren happily following him. Incredibly—and this is its own statement about his new organization—he became its president in 2005!

“Let’s summarize. The friend I spoke with in Big Sandy would become the initial leader of the ministry in the largest splinter in 1995, and is still on its Council of Elders, and is still a regional pastor.

“The Indianapolis friend, having left his foxhole, would soon become this man’s replacement in the Cincinnati-based group, and would lead for many years the over 450 ministers that would join that organization.

“The Cleveland East friend would become the regional pastor of its headquarters region (one-tenth of the United States).

“The upset son-in-law minister who confronted me in Indianapolis about his in-laws’ concern, would go on to anchor the television program for the new splinter.

“And my replacement would quickly be a regional pastor, before going on to become president over the entire church of 20,000 attendants.

“No story of my life is complete without such facts. Of course, that these men ‘rallied in understanding’ and ‘found their voice,’ and ‘courage,’

at the last minute would only be known later. If this sounds like mocking, it is because it is. Remember Elijah with the prophets of Baal. And then remember how strong was Mr. Armstrong—and the apostle Paul—in describing grievous wolves coming among God’s flock.

“I have more respect for those who sold out completely and stayed in the Worldwide Church of God, openly accepting the changes, than for those who left professing to stand for the truth, while secretly holding to a host of false doctrines, as do their organizations.

“Oh that God’s people would look more closely at those whom they follow! But Adolf Hitler’s rule of leadership again presents itself, ‘What luck for rulers that men do not think.’”

### **Endless Calls—From the Beginning**

After the excitement of the first Sabbath in Global, Mr. Pack wasted no time. The first order of business was to gather, organize and serve in practical fashion those who were fleeing the apostasy—the calls came from every corner of the world.

Growing numbers of brethren who had seemed to be in a trance, resigned to blindly follow Headquarters’ dictates, were jolted into action. Increasing hundreds began to ask questions more openly. Many with whom Mr. Pack spoke would hang up and immediately tell friends and family that they could call him.

Members of WCG from far and wide found there was a minister who thought and worked differently from their local ministers. A lady from Pennsylvania summarized it this way: “The other ministers *talked*. Mr. Pack *taught*.”

The more he repeated the explanation of the changes, the more it snowballed into increased responses.

Although unsure of the long-term effect of his firing on the Church, Mr. Pack was certain of one thing: The false doctrines that led to it could not remain still largely unrecognized for much longer.

To that point in his ministry, Mr. Pack had worked with or pastored over 8,000 people, and he knew that some would want to know the reasons for his termination.

It is important to note that Mr. Pack did not *initiate* contact with *anyone* after the Worldwide Church of God fired him, which gave him the moral high ground. Despite accusations to the contrary, he did not call or write the reported “lots of people” who did not *first* contact him. He did not attempt to “pick people off” after he was fired. In fact, it was not until four months after the fact that he wrote his entire congregation about the reasons for his departure from the WCG.

Even if he had wanted to do these things, he would not have had time! The first weeks after Mr. Pack gave his “Truth” sermon were followed by a frenzy of activity, as scores of people called wanting to understand the circumstances of his departure. For days on end, he had virtually no time to eat, drink or sleep.

During the first few days, *local* members jammed the phone line. Then brethren and a few ministers from across the country also began to call.

### Same Two Questions

Nearly everyone asked variations of the same two questions: “What are the changes?” and “What should I do about them?”

Members were in a state of shock and needed answers. Receiving these calls caused Mr. Pack to realize that these questions had become central to the thinking of many now facing the painful reality that false leaders had captured the visible, corporate sheepfold—the Worldwide Church of

God. Therefore, he spent a staggering number of hours answering the same two questions.

“I was overwhelmed with inquiries from the moment that I was fired from the WCG. There was such excitement.

“Soon after I would arise in the morning my phone would ring—and I learned that a phone *can* almost ring ‘off the wall.’ Often I was not yet out of my pajamas. I also did not always get to eat breakfast before the calls began. Sometimes lunch was also missed, and a couple times even dinner. I had to be careful of drinking water because I did not have time to excuse myself from the phone.

“Many were the times I spent entire days like this, and I did lose some weight from missed meals. I actually learned the ‘art’ of eating between responses—and sometimes this meant knowing the person I was talking to, or better stated, listening to, so I could chew some food. Some talked more than others, and I was happy for this. There were also the many people who would call me for ‘news of the Work.’ My day would end late at night, when I just could not talk further. Naturally, my wife would then want an end-of-the-day report.

“Eventually my neck began to hurt, and of course my ears felt like cauliflower virtually every day. After about 10 months, I went to RadioShack and bought a headset phone so I could walk and get dressed and hold a conversation, hands-free. When the battery went dead, my wife would have another phone recharged and waiting for me. We knew which phones would last which amount of times.

“I refer to the spring of 1993 as ‘the lost spring’—and this really included the summer. Because the apostasy developed for over two more years, and

because my book (to be introduced momentarily) and tapes circulated more and more widely, this type of schedule would last for the greater part of two years.”

But all would not be well for long. Soon old patterns would come with new faces.

## *Growth and Priorities*

From the beginning, the Global Church of God gave the impression that it would hold—at all costs—to the truth as taught by Mr. Armstrong. Remember the confirmation in the bylaws. Early sermons by Global’s leader, and others at its headquarters congregation, also reflected this focus.

At first, the organization did not have a magazine designed to reach the public, or a television program. There was simply the *Global Church News*, a basic publication for the members, and a growing number of congregations.

This was not in any way an indication that doing the Work was not important at the group’s beginning, but rather it reflected the reality that the organization first had to spend at least several months mobilizing. Basic structure takes time to establish. For the first few months of 1993, the immediate focus in Mr. Pack’s mind was on the re-gathering of a scattered flock. Only then could the Global Church of God move forward in a bigger way.

To produce a telecast or “reach the world in a big way” at the beginning, with only a handful of full-time ministers would have been ridiculous—or more accurately, *impossible*. Brethren were spiritually “dying where they sat” in the

Worldwide Church of God. Thousands recognized the changes, but did not know what to do about them. These people needed much attention from the start.

This early mobilization period can be best described by the analogy that Mr. Armstrong used time and again—that of cocking a gun before a bullet is fired. (But, within six weeks, the leader was on one radio station with his then-named *The World Ahead* program.)

Mr. Pack would face this same reality again some years later, and the same practical sequence of steps in rebuilding the Work would once again be necessary.

### **Visiting and Starting Smaller Congregations**

After some of the details of Mr. Pack’s termination became known, his reputation grew among troubled brethren—and ministers as well—as the person to talk to about the specifics of false doctrine. The countless hours on the phone were paying dividends. Small numbers of brethren in more pockets across the country were opening their eyes to the crisis at hand.

The result was predictable. Not only did people want to talk to Mr. Pack on the phone, afterward they also wanted to be visited.

Within weeks, Mr. Pack began to visit brethren across the Midwest. Meeting with individuals and small groups, he spread the truth—and word circulated. The requests continued.

“When can you come down here for a Bible Study?”

“Can you meet with our group?”

Such invitations began to mount as Mr. Pack acted largely on his own. With the Global Church of God’s office located in Southern California, he was given relatively free rein to meet with and “gather” as many brethren as possible.

Overjoyed, Mr. Pack forged ahead relentlessly.

One of the first places he visited was a little group in Toledo. By the end of April 1993, he had already driven across Michigan, meeting with individuals and tiny groups. He visited a small group in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and then another in Columbus, Ohio. Next it was “When can you come to West Virginia?” “Can you visit us in Cincinnati?” The trips went on and on, including several to Greensboro and Charlotte, North Carolina. Also to Washington, D.C. He traveled to New Jersey and started a small group there. The same with Rochester and New York City and other places that came a little later.

Mr. Pack remembers the time vividly:

“Talk about on fire! I could appreciate the apostle Paul’s travels described throughout the book of Acts. At times the hours for both myself and my wife were grueling and it seemed like there was no possibility I would ever return phone calls from every person who requested counsel. I did not have a cellphone—very few did yet—and would return home from trips with my answering machine having shut off from so many messages left.

“But seeing little enclaves of people gathering in their homes early on waiting to talk to me, or for Sabbath services, reminded me of the steadfastness and zeal that brethren exhibited in the first-century Church. There was the ‘church that met in Philemon’s house,’ and another in ‘Archippus’ house,’ with also the Corinthian congregation meeting in the home of ‘Aquila and Priscilla.’ In Laodicea they met in Nymphas’ house.

“I counted up at one point that I had established 43 separate congregations in GCG, ranging from Maine to North Carolina to Milwaukee. But there were also some that I organized internationally by phone. There was the lesson that you do not need to have 500

people, or 700, or even 100, to have a congregation. You could meet in a house just as they did in the first century.

“I had never seen that before!

“Yet there was always the little jab that would come from the leader at the wrong time. I would get home from a trip where I had met with many and started several groups, increasing the size and income of GCG, and the presiding evangelist would be waiting to pounce because I had ‘spent too much money.’ In time I learned not to turn in some of my expenses. The ingratitude was too much to bear after the effort, so I just ate certain costs in order not to have to hear it.”

To experience times similar to the first century was amazing and motivating beyond what can be described. It provided Mr. and Mrs. Pack the fuel to keep going. Mr. Pack recalls, “The biblical account of Archippus was seared into my head as an example.”

The first two to three months were unbelievably busy as the Packs traveled across the Midwest meeting with those who shared the love of the truth.

This was a special time for everyone involved. Members who had been in the Church for many years—some for decades—began to feel their “first love” for God’s Way rekindled.

### **Nearly a Whole Generation Lost**

One of the most tragic aspects of the apostasy was that teenagers and young adults, especially “second generation kids”—those who had grown up in the Church—departed from the truth in even greater percentages than did adults. Ultimately, roughly 75 percent of adults walked away from all that they had believed. Among those age 25 or younger, the figure is probably closer to 90 or 95 percent.

Many parents in the WCG, even during the years when the Church was on track doctrinally, had been lax in child-rearing, with many viewing programs such as Youth Education Services (Y.E.S.) and Youth Opportunities United (Y.O.U.) as little more than babysitting services. Their children were now reaping what they had sown—or more accurately had failed to sow.

Another factor that badly disillusioned many young adults was that standards of conduct at Ambassador College had terribly deteriorated alongside the doctrinal slide. Those who arrived in Big Sandy or, before it was closed down, Pasadena, expecting to find an oasis, instead faced a harsh reality: there was now little difference between students at AC and those attending an average college or university.

Of all the young people in the WCG at the time, Mr. Pack's sons may have been in the most trying, and sometimes surreal, circumstances. Robert Pack recalls,

“The fact that Randy and I were sort of held up as ‘badges of honor’ for the church was an interesting subplot of sorts. After my father was disfellowshipped, all of the administrators instantly turned to us to see if we were going to follow him, and when we didn’t, it was used as ammunition against him. It was portrayed that even his two sons thought he was ‘eating poison mushrooms,’ as Mr. Tkach once said from the pulpit in reference to my father’s list of doctrinal changes.

“The irony here is that my father realized that both of his sons were now adults, and they had to examine the situation for themselves, and ultimately, make their own decisions. I remember my father very directly telling us, ‘You’re both men and have to examine the issues, prove all things, and work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. But I’ll be here for counsel when you need me.’

“I have a lot of respect for my father for handling the situation this way when at the time the fact that we stayed behind in the WCG did publicly give him a black eye.”

### **Still Documenting Changes**

While traveling and counseling personally, Mr. Pack continued his progress in documenting the changes underway in the Worldwide Church of God. His personal Bible study and efforts to document the changes were about to have a more dramatic impact than he or anyone could have imagined.

Begun in December 1992, the reader saw that the list Mr. Pack had written for his own edification had grown into a box of paperwork that documented the changes in meticulous fashion. As a result, the assertion that the new administration was not making changes was becoming completely indefensible.

Many brethren in the Akron area remember when they asked “What changes?” and Mr. Pack arrived at their home with a box of files and clippings—proof of the changes—in his arms. Now the numbers asking, and the changes made, were mounting. There had been no slowdown.

One of the most deceptive elements of the changes is that the WCG was incredibly subtle in announcing them. New doctrine was rarely—if ever—announced plainly by the Pastor General from the pulpit. Bringing hard documentation was key.

The standard practice was to make passing comments in sermons or briefly allude to them in one of multiple church publications, such as the *Worldwide News*, or the *Pastor General’s Report*, which was read only by ministers. As a result, many changes went largely unnoticed. Even the careful listener and reader could not always discern what was being said. Each new doctrine had to be

carefully spelled out, with contrasting quotes—old versus new.

This made the task of properly identifying and documenting false doctrines a time-consuming undertaking. Still, in just one short month after his termination, Mr. Pack identified well over 100 distinct doctrinal errors, as well as policies and changes in tradition, that had been introduced. Often brethren who heard this figure were stunned, and then skeptical that so many changes had really occurred. Weary of trying to convince others that the defection from truth had progressed this far, Mr. Pack renewed his zeal to organize all of his work.

“Within a month after my termination, I had discovered well over 100 changes in teaching. By early May, I had created a somewhat more formal list, which I typed out for distribution to anyone who asked for it. Somehow this still-early list found its way to Joseph Tkach.

“Later, a story was told about Mr. Tkach’s reaction to my book, now no longer just a list. Apparently, someone sent him a copy that was probably around its sixth or seventh edition. I think someone had actually ordered one for him under a different name. When he received it, several were present. It was by then already a very large document.

“It was reported to me by an eye-witness that Mr. Tkach paged through it, got angry because it was costing the WCG a lot of money and members, and in anger picked it up and threw it all the way across his office.

“I often wondered after this point if he ever came to understand himself all that he had overthrown of God’s Way. There are those who believe that he never really understood himself what those around him had wrought.”

Mr. Pack tried not to write this initial document in a spirit of attack or hostility toward the men who personally made the changes. He had no interest in attacking personalities. True ministers are *for* the truth, not *against* individuals.

Although Mr. Pack was not bitter, he knew it was vitally important to clinically—and accurately—inform Church members about the changes. This provided the tools necessary to make a well-informed decision about their course of action. They would have facts.

The best way to describe his feelings at the time is “righteous indignation.” As Mr. Pack knew from so many hours of studying, such feelings are not wrong. Examples are found throughout the Scriptures, and even God Himself shows this kind of anger.

The Bible contains a long list of God’s servants who had to point out error even though it brought persecution from their detractors. In identifying the errors of the Worldwide Church of God, Mr. Pack considered himself neither a villain nor a hero. He understood that the truth is the “pearl of great price,” and he was determined to keep it “full, round and smooth—allowing none to be chipped away.” His duty as a minister, and his training by Mr. Armstrong, required him to help as many sheep as possible do the same.

Simply put, he was just unwilling to compromise.

“I knew that I was being vilified in the worst possible way, and in nearly every corner of the world. It taught me the real meaning of Matthew 5:11-12— ‘Blessed are you when all men revile you and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My [Jesus’] namesake...for great is your reward in heaven.’

“The value of such nonstop slander would only later be known for its true worth. There would come a time when the organization I had helped build, spearheaded by its leader, would falsely accuse me in

ways that made what the WCG did seem like a child's story.”

***Except There Come a Falling Away—  
and the “30 Reasons” Sermons***

With much clerical help from others, the early typed list morphed into a more formal document, at first titled “What Are the Changes?” This list held 154 doctrines by early May, and Mr. Pack made it available for any who asked. He eventually renamed it *Except There Come a Falling Away*, based on II Thessalonians 2:3, which warns of an apostasy in the end-time, and only at that time did greatly expand to become the first edition of a looseleaf notebook.

Now that the simple list was answering the first question on everyone's mind, “What are the changes?”, it was soon realized that even though thousands now recognized what the changes were, they did not know how to proceed.

At first, Mr. Pack duplicated the list on standard 8.5” x 11” paper in small quantities at a local copy center. But as time progressed, the document underwent a metamorphosis. It eventually became the book *There Came a Falling Away*. This is because Mr. Pack concluded that the apostasy had largely become complete, and a title in the past tense better reflected this. Of course, it is understood that the splinters are still going off into wrong doctrines of every stripe and color. But the bigger point was made.

“Jesus Christ is in charge,” many said. “Let's just wait and let Him solve it.”

Mr. Pack's response was straightforward and unwavering: “No, we must *follow* the truth. Where it goes, we must go.” It appeared that brethren needed to be explicitly shown what they must do. Remember, Joseph Tkach was still largely denying the changes to the brethren, as evidenced by his June Columbus, Ohio sermon. It was this sermon

that became the catalyst for the first of 13 editions of *Except There Come a Falling Away*.

### **“30 Reasons” Sermons**

It was this realization—that many could now clearly see and understand the changes, but were confused about what to do next—that prompted Mr. Pack to prepare a series of special sermons. This series complemented the book. Each sermon had a slightly different title—“30 Reasons to Follow the Truth,” “Another 30 Reasons to Follow the Truth” and “30 Final Reasons to Follow the Truth”—with 90 documented scriptural points and principles in total.

These messages explained that recognizing the changes was only the first step in a two-step process. In the first part of the series, Mr. Pack presented a biblical perspective of what was seen to be a very large doctrine never taught in the Church in a coherent way. This teaching is summarized best by the question, “What does God (not men) say to do in an apostasy—during a time when false leaders have captured the corporate ‘Church’?”

It has been estimated that as many as 10,000 to 15,000 people heard those tapes and left the WCG for one of several major “splinter” groups. Some of the top officials in GCG acknowledged that perhaps 5,000 of these came with Global. Many more than this hold various editions of the book.

Why was this series necessary? Although Mr. Armstrong had been forced to address different elements of false ministers finding their way into the Church, neither he nor anyone else expected a full-blown apostasy in this age.

Since Jesus Christ was the Head of the Church, it was assumed that false leaders could never capture the corporation. Accordingly, since He was in charge, He would certainly make sure the Church was “put back on track” at a

point, just as had occurred in the 1970s—one simply needed to be patient until God did this.

To leave what was thought to be “God’s government in the Worldwide Church of God” was inconceivable—incomprehensible—for most people. For many, cracking or altering this equation was completely out of the question. It still is for some who have remained there all these years. This forced Mr. Pack to carefully research God’s instructions to Christians if these circumstances did arise—and he was amazed at how much the Bible had to say on the subject. God’s Church had been infiltrated by false leaders time after time through its history, beginning in the first century.

This series presented the straightforward scriptures and biblical principles, with corresponding proof and necessary quotes at times from other material, of why Christians should always pursue the truth—the Word of God—and never follow human leaders who have departed from it.

The first sermon began the process of answering the second of the two questions—“What do we DO about the changes?”

Mr. Pack gave Part One of the series on May 15, 1993. News of it spread quickly, and did so around the world. It was helpful to have the changes listed in one convenient document, and now there was also a sermon available. The response was phenomenal. Those who had been aware of the changes—but uncertain of how to respond—began to take action immediately.

“Shortly after my termination, I began to realize that the Bible had much to say about the supremely important responsibility that every true servant of God has to follow THE TRUTH no matter what! During this time, when I saw so few brethren and ministers willing to take a stand in the face of the holocaust engulfing the Church, I knew that I was missing something in God’s Word—perhaps something that had never before been

taught to the Church—that we as God’s people did not yet understand.

“I soon discovered what it was.

“Reflect for a moment. All of God’s people and ministry once believed the very thought that false leaders could capture the visible corporate sheepfold was incomprehensible—it was literally inconceivable. Strangely, despite the well-known pattern of Church history, this was something the Church had come to believe simply could not happen, and was actually thought to be *impossible*! Of course, we learned otherwise. But here was the problem. Prior to this, because we thought such capture impossible, no one had ever taken the time to examine the Bible, let alone *teach*, what God’s people should do in such an awful crisis. It was as though we thought that God tells His people what to do in every *other*—and LESSER—kind of spiritual problem and difficulty, but that His Word was devoid of instruction for what to do when the *worst* kind of trial possible strikes the whole Church collectively.

“Believing that God could not have ignored such a titanic understanding in His Word, I set out to discover what He expects His people to do in the event that enemies have seized His organizational structure.

“Over the next 20 months, through October 1994, I learned that the Bible is actually full of instruction, exhortation and DIRECT COMMANDS about what to do in the face of false leaders and/or false doctrine. In the strongest possible terms, God explains that the person who loves and has proven the truth must follow it no matter the price. (I also discovered that Mr. Armstrong had said more about this than I thought.) Each time my study reached 30 more points—‘reasons’—I delivered another sermon in the series.”

### Global Leader Visits Ohio

In June 1993, the presiding evangelist of GCG came to Ohio to meet with the brethren. Services were in Columbus, and about 200 brethren came from all around for the meeting.

“This was the first time that the leader of Global came to Ohio. He stayed in our home, and the visit was pleasant. His purpose was to meet the brethren from all over Ohio and other areas for services, with a follow-up Bible Study so that any questions could be answered. He wanted to travel and meet people on a regular basis, so this was good. I had started a little group in Columbus, and another in Cincinnati, and both were also there. There had been another group started in Michigan, and perhaps other places, and all within range were there.

“Before and after the Sabbath we discussed plans for the first conference that would occur the next month in San Dimas. He told me that he wanted me to do as much writing as possible for the church’s publications. We spent some time covering ideas for articles. He placed no limits on the subjects I could cover, so that was encouraging.

“Certain ideas about the structuring of the church were also discussed, as were the names of some men who were contemplating coming with GCG.

“Not many problems had yet arisen in Global, so doctrine was not much in our discussion, except for the fact that the leader made evident that he was not ‘moving away from what we had all believed.’ It would remain unclear what this meant.

“Of all things, Joe Tkach Jr. happened to be on the same flight with him, bound for another destination. He reported that they did *not* take time to ‘catch up.’”

### **New York Trip with Presiding Evangelist**

Ten months later, Mr. Pack was asked to meet the Global leader again, this time rendezvousing in New York City. It was now the spring of 1994. Mr. Pack's role as designated tour guide was being called upon. And it was a chance to meet the brethren in New York for the Passover. The story is covered here because it contrasts with the visit of the previous June.

“The visit was again a generally pleasant visit. I took the Global leader to all the most interesting parts of New York City, including tours of the Federal Reserve Bank, a walk through Central Park, and a journey to the top of the Twin Towers.

“I will never forget the discussion that occurred on the way up the escalator to the elevator that took us to the top. It continued through the line to the ticket counter. The leader had changed the ‘designated successor’ from the senior evangelist who had come with him the previous April to my brother-in-law, that man's younger brother.

“The older brother was the soundest doctrinal mind in the church—by far—and had been ordained an evangelist in 1952. He had come with Global about a month after I did. We had stayed closely in touch during the preceding year to this point.

“While this man was not a natural leader, by any means, he was the most senior evangelist in the church (dating to the same period as the presiding evangelist), and he was again the most doctrinally sound, including the presiding evangelist. For instance, this man knew that Mr. Armstrong was the Elijah, the truth about interracial marriage, and that of marriages between baptized and unbaptized people. He also had a few

other points that were correct, where GCG and other groups would go wrong.

“Another point is important. Mr. Armstrong had also told him ‘six to 12 times,’ as this man reported, that the Global leader was never converted. Yet, like me, he was willing to put this warning aside in the belief that the man would ‘hold fast.’ (Later, this man would come full circle back to this position.)

“This account is related here because readers must understand why none of us were yet willing to leave GCG. This man and I talked constantly through the years. We and others were watching closely. We wanted to be sure before God of every position that we took.

“Now he was no longer the designated successor. My brother-in-law was. Both were men of great integrity in my opinion, but the older brother had far and away the stronger doctrinal mind.”

### **Early Global Members**

It has been explained how Mr. Armstrong never permitted an open-door policy in the WCG. An early question arose regarding how to examine from a central Headquarters the sincerity of faraway people coming with the Global Church of God, and to do so when there was not yet much literature to prove what the Church believed.

No one had experience with receiving what turned out to be the many different kinds of “brethren” who surface during an apostasy. It became easy to let people in whose only comment was that they were “upset with the changes.”

“In the early days of Global, many people entered who were no more converted than stumps. But it would take time to see this. Many of them brought doctrines and theories that represented a host of ideas and kinds

of thinking that were no less wrong or even crazy than the apostates. I used to often say that there were ‘no end of rebels, rogues, rascals, renegades, reckless thinkers, ax-grinders, politicians, flatterers, heretics, troublemakers, tares, mega-tares and other assorted oddballs and kooks that had come into GCG.

“It eventually became evident to me that a lot of people who came to GCG were little more than people who had ‘messed in their nest,’ and needed a new, cleaner one in which to start over. They were not ‘fleeing to the truth,’ they were ‘escaping a mess’ they had made.

“Sadly, and this soon exacerbated the problem of who was permitted in the door, these kinds of people were also well represented in the early *ministry* that came over from the WCG. A lot of these men never should have been ministers in the first place, and were no less goofy in their thinking than some of the brethren just described. The net effect was that wild ideas grew up everywhere. It was as though every minister in the WCG had been secretly holding to doctrines that they could not wait to deliver. Ironically, a church now in complete apostasy had not permitted them an audience. They had to ‘stand up for the truth’ in order to teach their falsehoods.

“What was most troubling, and I saw this early on in a big way, was that the leadership in California did not care. It was as though they learned nothing from the apostasy. Other groups were as bad or worse. The presiding evangelist constantly stressed that we needed to ‘have love’ and ‘be understanding’ because ‘people were wounded,’ and that we need to give them a place to go. There was no talking him out of this.

“At first I could not understand how he could think this way, why he could let such unsound ministers and brethren come among us—and you would see

them at the Feast in great numbers. Even when they caused problems, some of them no end of problems, they were permitted to remain. Eventually I learned the ugly truth—it was ‘about the money,’ but also it was about bragging rights over numbers attending. It became clear during the apostasy that there were tens of thousands of carnal minds and outright tares throughout the Worldwide Church of God—but it was just as clear that the unconverted generally pay tithes like everybody else.

“The presiding evangelist wanted tithes—and wanted the people numbers that brought bragging rights. There was no mystery to the money angle because he said so time and time again. This would later lead to my very greatest confrontation with the man—but this would be several years after Global began. All I could think was, *Where is the faith that GOD will provide for His Church if we do not compromise His standards—if we please Him?*

“Early on, it was hard to recognize that many wrong kinds of people were entering GCG. There were people and ministers not at all of God. The apostasy would teach, if nothing else, that many *ministers* never understood *anything*. An irony of some of the ministers that came early on is that they were known as some of the oddest ministers who had ever been in the ministry. The more balanced ministers in the WCG, converted or not, saw this. The goofies were dealt with there. But the apostasy gave them a chance to start over—and to do so as a HERO. What could be better?

“Another obstacle that often permitted the wrong kind of people to get in is that you were barely able to know people well when working with them only by phone, and from so far away at that.

“I absolutely would not throw open the door in my own congregations—and this brought some criticism

of being harsh from the presiding evangelist. Coming from a man who had a long history of requiring people and ministers to make bricks without straw made this difficult—but necessary—to take!

“This element of the Global Church of God and apostasy make-up was valuable training for me. I was working with many hundreds of people around the world in the Laodicean age. This would help prepare me to write vitally important things later.

“It was not long before I realized that all who ‘glitter,’ meaning who appeared to be brethren escaping the apostasy, were not gold. In fact, over time, I came to realize that the *worst* tares in the WCG departed with the wheat for the splinters that were forming. I came to understand that, after a point, the devil could better use them in the splinters and slivers, the places where all of God’s people had gone.

“The WCG had gone over a cliff and washed out to sea. Think! What would be the value in the devil keeping his best agents in what had become a church of the world.”

But there would be many other problems in the Global Church of God. The years ahead would reveal them.

### **Reproving the Truth**

From the start of the Global Church of God, Mr. Pack urged everyone who contacted him from the WCG to use the written materials and sermons as resources to help them find the right direction. The task of analyzing and documenting all the changes that had occurred was far more than just a personal exercise. Again, it had an enormous impact on thousands of brethren around the world!

But the experience taught him a lesson that he has continued to remind others to take to heart.

“Unless truths are personally proven on a very deep level,” Mr. Pack has said, “they are not your own convictions—and they will not last. You only have what could be called borrowed information.”

He continually stressed that a Church member could not coast on another’s personal conviction. He knew that individuals would have to prove the truth again *for themselves*.

For this reason, Mr. Pack made his list of doctrinal changes available in increasing numbers. The intention was that the list would be a complete roadmap for brethren to navigate the tangled path that lay ahead of them as the Worldwide Church of God continued to derail, toward a total unraveling.

There was the vital need for all of God’s people to reprove old truths to make them new again in the mind.

### **Global Grows**

During the first three to six months after Mr. Pack’s termination, the demand for the list was very high. Many wanted to learn of the changes firsthand.

Throughout this process, Mr. Pack followed Jesus’ command in Matthew 10:8: “Freely you have received, freely give.” When necessary, he personally funded the distribution of the book, so that any who asked could receive it.

“The Global Church of God headquarters would not fund one dime of my efforts with the book for the first year, and very little after that—and then only did it because my brother-in-law, in charge of Church Administration and aware of the facts, would sneak me a check now and then. Headquarters also would not help with any of the ‘30 Reasons’ sermon tape costs until the presiding evangelist decided that one should be sent directly from California. He certainly did want to receive the tithes from brethren who came

as a result of the book, but I had to either count on donations from those who wanted to help offset the huge costs of distributing such a large document, or pay for them myself.

“In this sense, I worked largely alone inside the Global Church of God. I will certainly admit that mine was a somewhat separate ministry within the general GCG ministry. Exactly as Mr. Armstrong had cooperated with Sardis, he was even willing to take a salary from them until the conflict of conscience was too great, while not personally knowingly compromising the truth, I did the exact same with Laodicea. Of course, also like Mr. Armstrong, there would come a point where the relationship could not continue.

“That others might see my actions as ‘serving his own interests,’ or ‘acting independently,’ when they would never themselves have put in the time or the money, let alone both, to do the same—on top of having been fearful of leaving Worldwide ‘too early’—carries little weight with thinking people.”

The reach of this material was truly “global” in nature. A South African member related his experience:

“We started realizing that things were not right in the Church when the ministers started coming back from Pasadena from a Refresher. They started bringing little things out in sermons that didn’t sound quite right. We asked them about it and nobody would really say anything. A friend of mine and I were both concerned about what was happening in the church in Cape Town and, of course, throughout South Africa as we were in contact with members in the north as well. My friend came to me and said, ‘Look what I found.’ It was a manuscript by Mr. Pack. I think there was a list of 100 or 120 changes that were occurring.

“We phoned friends in Johannesburg and a couple of them had also received this manuscript. We had no idea where it came from. It just sort of got passed around. My friend and I tried to find Mr. Pack by asking the ministers. They were so secretive and protective that nobody would say anything.

“So we made copies and distributed it around to as many people as wanted it. We were warned not to distribute literature that would cause division in the Church. We tried to ask how it could cause division, when these were the teachings that had brought me into God’s Church in 1966.

“I asked the pastor at dinner one night, ‘How can you say that all this that Mr. Armstrong brought us for the past 50-odd years was wrong and these changes are right?’

“The answer he gave then became part of a sermon. He said to the brethren, ‘I’ve just come back from Pasadena...just give yourself two years and you’ll understand these changes.’ When we spoke to him after services, we asked, ‘How can you tell us two years? When God called us we understood the truth as we learned and proved it. We never waited two years. We studied the *Correspondence Course*, read articles in the *Plain Truth*—we understood. Our minds were opened up to the truth.’

“That manuscript certainly helped us. It affected a number of people in South Africa. That was like a lifeline that people were hanging on to, and it was distributed throughout the country. It was faxed to my friend from someone in New York.”

Mr. Pack’s phone went on to ring at an unprecedented rate as word spread that this information was available free of charge. Many, understanding the importance of what they were receiving, offered to help cover duplication and post-

age expenses so the books and tapes could be printed and distributed in greater quantities.

As the summer of 1993 became fall, it was encouraging to see the Global Church of God growing in numbers. During this period, several additional full-time ministers were hired. This directly aided Mr. Pack—a great deal. Prior to this time, the entire East Coast had been solely his responsibility.

Brethren from around the country, and small numbers internationally, began to stream into the Church. Further, after studying the list and speaking with Mr. Pack, more ministers began to respond as well.

“A story was told that became well-known. One member in Montana, a state with only a few hundred in attendance, distributed *There Came a Falling Away* (I later slightly altered the title) to every household, or virtually every one, in the state. Almost immediately 20 percent in attendance left the WCG for GCG.”

It must be stated that the first sermon on “30 Reasons” created a miniature worldwide firestorm. But Mr. Pack did not stop studying the subject simply because he had reached a round number of biblical principles explaining what people should do in the apostasy. He continued through the summer and fall of 1993 and delivered a second sermon on December 15.

### **Resentment Surfaces**

Despite the growth during this period, the presiding evangelist was displeased. He felt that the success of Mr. Pack’s writing and preaching deflected some of the light that he thought should shine wherever he stood.

Although hundreds were streaming into Global, the leader began to denigrate Mr. Pack’s efforts, reducing it to “driving all over the East Coast spending money.”

This was partially correct. Mr. Pack *did* drive up and down the East Coast for the first year of his ministry in the Global Church of God—but he did so on available time within his ministerial schedule, and, again, in part at his own expense. (It should be remembered that his own congregation had become quite small. There was not much local work to do.)

Moreover, as brethren steadily flowed into Global, he realized it was bearing fruit.

The leader's motivations quickly became clear. To a degree, Mr. Pack's materials *had* become the "face and voice" of the Global Church of God to many individuals, especially on the East Coast of the United States. But this was not by design. It was a natural result of the books and sermons being a catalyst for action for many.

Because of this, the leader privately told some at Headquarters, "Dave Pack is doing his own thing."

In a sense, this was also true. At the very beginning, there had been no administrative structure in the Global Church of God. Since Mr. Pack was the first field minister hired, he pastored all of the East Coast by himself. This is why he had been hired—to reach as many people as possible and help them open their eyes!

Nevertheless, Mr. Pack's goal had never actually been to run an independent ministry or to divert the focus away from Headquarters. He understood that God's government is always led by one man—and that it functions from the top down. He viewed himself as a field minister whom circumstances had compelled to produce tools to help suffering brethren. But it seemed that Global's leader viewed him in a competitive light.

### **Third "30 Reasons"**

In his third "30 Reasons" sermon, Mr. Pack urgently stated, "They're going to throw everything out. They've already

thrown out 90 percent of the truth and the rest will follow shortly,” referring to the WCG’s apostate leadership.

By October of 1994, Mr. Pack had learned still more about what God says to do when false leaders capture the visible organization. He was also positive that the Worldwide Church of God had to *soon* throw out God’s Law, His Sabbath, the annual Holy Days, tithing, and probably other things, including the truth about unclean meats. This was partly because these were about the only things left to dismiss, but it was also because “leaven *always* leavens the whole lump.”

But more was happening behind the scenes.

“Word of another church forming was growing. It was everywhere on the wind. But greater numbers were also pouring with Global. This was producing internal pressure within the disaffected WCG contingent to ‘do something sooner.’

“I wanted to preempt them.

“A quote from Mr. Armstrong spurred what would be a third ‘30 Reasons’ sermon. In a sermon he had once said, ‘If I am ever not honest with God’s Word, you reject me as God’s apostle.’ This was the 90th and final reason in the series, and it may have had more effect than any other 10 reasons put together.

“I am still grateful to those who so generously gave their time in researching things that ultimately, I am convinced, saved a great many people who would have been devoured by the wolves leading the WCG.”

Condescendingly dismissing Mr. Pack’s warning, Global’s leader told him, “They have not thrown everything out, and they are not going to. You are exaggerating what is happening!”

Using this as a premise, Global’s leader refused to send out the audio tape to be played in all congregations as he had

done with Mr. Pack's first "30 Reasons" sermon—even though several senior men at Global Headquarters urged the presiding evangelist to do so. These senior leaders recognized them as the most effective tools the Church had for reaching those trying to make sense of the confusion. Yet the leader refused.

Soon afterward, word reached Mr. Pack that this evangelist was saying, "They should be talking about *my* sermon tapes...Instead they are talking about Dave Pack's books and tapes. Brethren should be mentioning *my* name more. I'm the leader of this Church."

"I got calls from Global's Headquarters that I should tread softly. There were many private supporters out there who wanted to hear my sermons, and who were reading the mail, which constantly reflected people saying they were coming with Global because of my first book and my '30 Reasons' tapes."

Even as late as 1997, lay members could still sense this dynamic. A longtime member of the Church from Ohio, a man who had attended another splinter before joining Global that year, and who is an elder, recalls,

"I remember talking to the leader of Global at the Feast, and since we were new to that group, he asked, 'What prompted you to come to Global?' I said, 'Largely it was the two books that Mr. Pack wrote (*Falling Away* as well as a later work titled *Except the Lord Build the House*.)' That brought a cool reception. I wondered why, because the books were mostly quotes from Mr. Armstrong and others."

Others in the Global office in San Diego understood the situation, and conveyed to Mr. Pack their appreciation of his sermons.

Downplaying the rumblings of resentment, Mr. Pack pressed forward with the simple understanding that he was helping people. He strove to avoid the petty disputes brewing three time zones away.

“It took two and a half months for Global’s leader to agree to send out my tapes. But he only then did it because Mr. Tkach formally threw out the Law, Sabbath, Holy Days, tithing and the truth about unclean meats in a sermon given on December 31, 1994. When news of this horrific sermon got out, he was all ahead full. The moment he was able to connect the final ‘30’ sermon to enhanced revenue, the tape was literally mailed to all GCG brethren as fast as they could make sufficient copies.

“What surprised me was that he could not see that the conspirators would throw out the last remaining truths—or that they had already thrown away 90 percent of the truth before that time. Yet, because he resented my book, like Mr. Tkach himself, Global’s leader never read it, or at best may have read only a small portion in order to say that he had.

“Tragically, he never himself understood the scope of the apostasy—meaning all that was at stake in God’s great trial upon His people. Resentment blocked this understanding, and it still does.”

This part of the story leads to other early events and elements of the Global Church of God. There would be serious cracks in its foundation from the beginning.

## *Deeper in Global*

Almost from the outset, issues began to arise in the new AGCG organization. Some were serious. Outwardly, the Church's leadership *appeared* to be upholding the truth, and *appeared* to be upholding who and what was Herbert W. Armstrong. But in private discussions behind the scenes, another story was unfolding.

### **The First False Doctrine**

It is obvious by now that maintaining pure doctrine was ever-present in Mr. Pack's mind. At the same time, learning the *privately held* beliefs of Global's leader was a process.

In a phone conversation with Mr. Pack, the leading man said emphatically, contrary to what the Church had long believed, that "the Church is not our Mother." He had also written this in a publication. (The analogy of God's Church as the spiritual Mother of its members is made plain by a number of scriptures. The subject was not in doubt under Mr. Armstrong—it was never challenged to anyone's knowledge.)

Mr. Pack was perplexed, thinking the other man may have simply expressed himself in an unclear manner. Re-

minding him that Mr. Armstrong had long taught this, he asked, “You mean that the Church is not our Mother when leaders begin teaching false doctrine...right?”

The presiding evangelist replied that he believed this doctrine as taught by Mr. Armstrong was incorrect. Mr. Pack could not believe what he was hearing. Incredulous, he repeated, “Do you mean that the Church is not our Mother when the organization goes into an apostasy and throws out the truth?”

“No. The Church is not our Mother. That teaching is wrong.”

“This was the first subject that I recall discussing with the church’s leader during which I found we were not in agreement with what Mr. Armstrong and the Church had always taught. I certainly did not yet think, ‘Here we go again,’ but I was very surprised that something so basic had been lost to the leader’s understanding. I was also surprised that he would have actively formulated such a belief on something that so obviously should have been left alone. I thought it to be a particularly foolish heresy. In fact, I believed that time would bring him around. I thought he would see it.

“But this would not be the only early ‘investigative’ conversation in which I received troubling answers.”

### **A Different Gospel**

Some short time later, the leader then mentioned in a sermon that he felt Jesus Christ was part of the gospel—that this message was not solely about the kingdom of God. Again, Mr. Pack tried to understand what he was saying. “You mean He was ‘part of the gospel’ in the sense that He was the Messenger that brought it, right?” he asked.

“No, He’s part of the gospel.” No real explanation followed. Mr. Pack recalled this:

“This discussion had an unusual beginning. The man was looking for help in writing the necessary basic booklets to get the Work restarted. I offered to start by writing a gospel booklet, plus others, and he agreed. I told him that I would be covering the kingdom of God in some detail. He was fine with that.

“I decided to write the booklet in two parts, so that it could do ‘double duty’ by first appearing in the *Global Church News* magazine. I sent in part one and waited to see the first article. Some months passed before, to my surprise, the leader suddenly came out with a full gospel booklet of his own. He had not told me that he had decided to write it himself. Most troubling was that he had Christ as part of the gospel—he was mixing the Messenger with the message. I referred to his gospel as a hybrid of true and false.

“This was a more serious error. All error is serious, of course, but the gospel of the kingdom of God is not just the absolute centerpiece of the entire New Testament, but also of the whole Bible. If one did not understand the true gospel, or taught something different from the kingdom of God, curses kicked into place. Read Galatians 1:6-9. I had emphasized this in my part one article.

“I called the leader to discuss the matter, first reminding him that he had designated me to write the booklet, and asking why he had not told me that he was writing it instead. I could have saved time. He simply said, ‘I should write this booklet.’ It was obvious that he disagreed with what I wrote, but was not courteous enough to tell me to stop writing.

“I related that the apostates had started down the same trail, eventually ending with the position that Jesus *is* the gospel. He was insistent that Mr. Armstrong always privately believed that Christ was part of the gospel, and that he had heard him

say it in conferences in the early 1950s. I reminded him that Mr. Armstrong had neither said it in the 20 years since I was called in 1966, nor did he ever say it privately to me. Further, I explained the Bible was absolutely plain, and that I had studied the entirety of the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, on the subject of the gospel, and it was about the kingdom of God—nothing else—with Jesus only preached in conjunction with the kingdom.

“He was adamant—and so was I. It ended as a quiet, but cordial, standoff. I did not buy what he said, and he did not buy what I said, and both of us knew it. His attempt at authoritative intimidation had also not worked.

“The story has a happy ending, however. My article went on to become the opening half of my first booklet in *The Restored Church of God*. The time spent had been profitable. The reader can actually see for himself what Global headquarters rejected.”

### **Government, New Moons and the Elijah**

Perhaps the biggest issue that affected the organization immediately was the first piece of literature produced, a booklet titled *Church Government and Church Unity*. The leader wrote that God’s government was “collegial,” denoting some sort of shared or collective responsibility within a group of colleagues, with no person having much more authority than another. He made a point of saying that there was no “Moses” or “Pope Peter” figure in the New Testament—an obvious denigration of Mr. Armstrong’s understanding that Peter was the leading apostle in the early Church.

After the release of the booklet, Mr. Pack tried to confirm exactly what the presiding evangelist meant. He asked, “You mean that right now things are more collegial while

we are getting organized. But you do not mean the government of God could ever have *shared* authority in that all or some of the ministers would serve as a collective committee running the group?"

"No," he restated. "I am in charge, but the government of God is collegial."

Mr. Pack realized that the new leader either completely misunderstood the most fundamental understanding of God's government or simply disagreed with what Mr. Armstrong had taught! The word "collegial" derives from the word "college," meaning that all are of equal status, rank or authority.

"This doctrine was no less troubling than the man's gospel error. In fact, both subjects have to do with government, either in the world to come or the Church now. They were the two most important subjects in the mind of Mr. Armstrong. Recall that he also taught how, 'Government is everything,' and that he had been, 'Raised up to restore God's government to His Church.'

"In these early days, there was a fourth doctrine that the presiding evangelist had on his mind, talking about it privately almost everywhere he went. He wanted the Global Church of God to keep New Moons. He had a litany of terrible 'reasons' for this idea that were easy to shoot down with just basic understanding. He did not care what Mr. Armstrong taught, and it was obvious he wanted his own 'signature' on certain doctrines. He wanted to be able to show that he could be 'original' and could 'grow.'

"There was no changing his mind. This doctrine almost turned into an open war in a couple of ministerial conferences, one of them hosted in Akron. It would go on to be the very first thing he brought up on the first day of the first meeting of the Global Council of

Elders. Happily, the Council would never let him get away with this one.

“To make matters worse, in fact much worse, Global’s leader made it plain that he did not believe that Mr. Armstrong had fulfilled the role of the final Elijah to appear before Christ’s Return. This was huge, because it meant that he did not believe that ‘All things’ had been ‘restored’ to the Church during Mr. Armstrong’s leadership. He even hinted early on that he hoped God would use *him* to ‘shake the nations’ as Elijah did. He asked a number of men privately to pray that he would be able to do this.

“For the first time, however, the errant position of Global’s leader on a doctrine—how the government of God leads His Church—opened a door in my mind that I did not know how to close. He posed a dilemma for me, defined in the following way:

“We did not have a living apostle, and we had all been long aware—and it was taught by Mr. Armstrong—that truth only enters the Church through apostles. If the leader carried the same authority as did Mr. Armstrong in this way, he could throw out truths and ultimately scatter God’s people with no less effect than did Joe Tkach. And his pattern had already become *very* troubling. (Remember, he did not believe Mr. Armstrong had restored all things, having *not* been the Elijah. Therefore, some things were still ‘up for grabs.’) On the other hand, giving authority to either a Board of Directors or Council of Elders to block any proposed doctrinal changes—translated errors—seemed good. Yet it would not be what we all understood to be the pattern of God’s government. In other words, Global would have a wrong structure, but it would be capable of blocking a rogue presiding evangelist.

“At the time, from 1993 and forward, I saw no other solution. I would later have to acknowledge

participating in a government that was wrong. But God knew the ONLY REASON for the position I took was to allow NO FALSE DOCTRINE into GCG.

“Ultimately, this dilemma is exactly why the large splinter that formed in 1995 chose to lead itself through an elected committee of 12 men. In effect, they let Joe Tkach’s actions cause them to throw out the only way that God has ever worked.

“Of course, in the end, Global’s leader brought in much false doctrine anyway, and the Council of Elders looked the other way, either because he signed their paycheck or, even after the apostasy, they still did not know truth from error.”

Because of this confusing public explanation of God’s government—in the very first piece of literature produced by the Church—hundreds of people rejected the Global Church of God and joined the Philadelphia Church of God, which capitalized on GCG’s error. Many knew the Philadelphia Church had new, strange doctrines, but its administration stayed closer to the correct government structure.

### **Would They Remain Private?**

At the time, it was sometimes uncertain whether these doctrinal positions were the evangelist’s firmly held personal beliefs or simple speculation, since they contradicted the group’s bylaws. But, dismayed that he seemed to be unclear or unable to communicate even basic understanding, Mr. Pack was grateful that the man at least refrained from saying most of these things publicly in the earliest days. But when he did, most seemed not to hear.

“There were specific moments in time when each of the subjects referenced in these previous subheads were addressed in early conversations with the leader

of Global. It was never all at once, meaning that we covered it in one long conversation. It was here a little and there a little all through my Global years. While I am sure that those who know me well, understand that I would *actively pursue* removing error to the ‘nth degree,’ it is important to state for the record that in fact I ALWAYS did this!

“I prosecuted every false teaching, I think, without exception. There was never a false doctrine—not one—that I was aware of being taught in the Global Church of God where I did not ‘ring the bell’ in either Council of Elder meetings, Regional Pastor meetings or annual conferences. These included doing so in private conversations with the leader and other leaders.

“I was truly the thorn in the presiding evangelist’s side, although I did not seek to be, but there were also others who saw me to be no less a thorn on matters of teaching.

“It is also important to state that I believed things would be righted in time. It was not remotely in my thinking that we were going to have to leave the Global Church of God right away. And there was still the ever-present question of where would one go if he did. But, after what we had all just experienced in the WCG, I was not about to let ideas pass that were wrong.”

### **A Troubling Episode**

The official teaching on government was not the only problem in regard to this subject. Its practical application, in terms of administration in the field, was a disaster.

In January 1994, GCG hired its first ministerial assistant. He lived in Cincinnati, and he was assigned to Mr. Pack in Akron, Ohio, 200 miles away. But his father-in-

law had come with Global in 1993, and was the pastor in Indianapolis, just 100 miles away.

Incredibly, the man as much as refused to report to Mr. Pack immediately after he was hired, choosing to report to his father-in-law instead. Somehow the man believed he could do this and was permitted to make his own choice.

“This was the most unbelievable thing in terms of field administration that I had experienced in all my years in God’s Church. I had never heard of such a thing. The man should have been immediately fired for insubordination—plain rebellion. Nothing like this would ever be remotely permitted in a worldly corporation. Imagine a new salesman just hired, and refusing to report to one district manager in favor of another, and because the other was his father-in-law.

“The brand new Church Administration Director, my brother-in-law, had just come with GCG only about 10 days earlier. He had been immediately put in an impossible position by his new boss, again, *also* his brother-in-law. First he went to Cincinnati to see the man, and then swung through Akron. He tried as hard as humanly possible to solve the problem, and create peace with his hands tied behind his back. He would never have tolerated the matter when he was a district superintendent, area coordinator or regional director, all positions he had held in the past. But he had no backing, and I finally encouraged him to just transfer the man away if Global’s leader was not going to fire him, because this status quo was intolerable. So he did.

“Any discussion of early problems would have to include the very disillusioning episodes such as these that were also occurring. Remember that this was on top of the fact that many ministers who had come with us should never have been in the ministry in the first place, let alone be thought of as men who

had ‘stood up for the truth.’ Some of their wives were even worse. This young assistant’s father-in-law was a classic example. He had a head almost exploding with false doctrines and zany ideas. His son-in-law was in part a victim of in-law family pressuring him.

“What made the ‘Cincinnati assistant’ story most incredible was that Global’s leader thought that I must have in some way been harsh with the man—until my brother-in-law set him straight—when I had had no dealings with the man whatsoever. We had never even met to my recollection. It should not be surprising that this ‘assistant’ is now a pastor in the largest splinter.”

### **Another Ministerial Assistant**

About five months later, Mr. Pack received a ministerial assistant sent directly to Akron. It was his nephew.

“My wife and I were thrilled to have our nephew come as a ministerial assistant to the area. I had had several assistants in the past, but it was quickly obvious that this would be the best one we had received. It was obvious that he belonged in the ministry. There were almost no other options for where to send him, so any concern about nepotism got trumped by reality.

“I had first met my ‘assistant’ in 1971 when he was standing in a little robe at the foot of my bed in Milwaukee at the age of two years. For the first time, I began to feel a little old. He was now 25.

“Unfortunately, he was only able to stay in Akron for about six months because the nature of my ministry was that I was on the phone a great deal, continuing to answer the same two questions described earlier. These were still coming from around the world. The

goal was to give him training and I could not keep him busy enough. It was better that he work under a man who was a more traditional minister and pastor, even by the broader geographical standards of GCG.”

### **New Writing Opportunities**

Scores turned into hundreds of brethren joining Global, but trained full-time ministers were still arriving in relatively small numbers. This led the GCG headquarters to rely on its few ministers to fulfill a variety of writing assignments for the Church’s fledgling publications.

Mr. Pack was asked to write as often as his schedule would permit. It had been 10 years since he had written his second article in *The Good News*, and he relished the challenge of learning to effectively present God’s truth in convicting fashion through the written word.

Mr. Pack wrote articles for *The Global Church News* such as “Which Came First—Truth or Love?” He also wrote articles for *The World Ahead* magazine, Global’s counterpart to *The Plain Truth*.

“At first, writing was a pleasure. I loved it. As often as I could find time, I wrote an article. Raymond McNair, the first Editorial manager, also urged me to write as regularly as possible. The subjects were usually of my choosing, until I was asked to write an article on Christmas and then later one on Easter. I may have the order wrong. Both of these appeared in GCG’s flagship *World Ahead* magazine.

“Things began to change when another inexperienced ‘personality’ got brought into the editorial process. This person was impossible to deal with, and would throw screaming fits right out in the open office. The reports of this were beyond belief, but it was tolerated. He was a young man, and

was trying to teach me to do things a certain way when many of us knew more than he did. The Global ‘gospel booklet’ incident also did not help make the early writing effort rewarding.

“The kicker though was when the presiding evangelist told me that my Christmas article was ‘too strong.’ We went out to dinner and he unloaded on me in front of another man. I asked him who thought this, because I was hearing that people loved this long, carefully researched article. In fact, some people still mention it.

“He bluntly answered that he thought it was too strong, and that that was enough—that he was the leader.

“The next day, I was speaking to his direct assistant about the comments. The man was privy to everything going on around him. I asked if he knew of criticisms. In truth, I really did not care what was said and would probably not change the article one whit, given the opportunity. (Virtually all of it—and even stronger material—is within my Restored Church of God Christmas booklet today.)

“The assistant told me that over *1,100 favorable comments* had come in. He explained that it was the most popular article that had been produced to date—by far! Only *two* criticisms came in—and these were from members of the Global leader’s *personal family*. One of his daughters-in-law and her father—an elder still in the WCG that the leader was hoping would come with Global—had complained.

“No wonder he would not tell me his source.

“Eventually, these kinds of wrong-headed situations and confrontations made it impossible for someone with a direct approach to continue to write for that church’s publications—and ultimately of course to even remain in the Global Church of God.

At the time, however, these incidents were providing vital insight into the nature of the presiding evangelist. Problems were simply piling up on all sides.

“But there would be so much more yet to occur.”

### **Appointed Regional Pastor**

Despite Mr. Pack’s periodic objections to doctrine or manner of administration, Global’s leader expressed implicit approval of Mr. Pack’s ministry by allowing him to be appointed one of three regional pastors in September 1994. From the beginning, he had actually already functioned within this capacity, covering much of the eastern United States. But now it was official. His new region included one third of the country, the eastern U.S., and eastern Canada. His responsibilities still included serving the needs of the local brethren, but now also organizing the full-time ministry.

“This promotion brought with it a wonderful opportunity to learn. Although I had trained many deacons, elders and ministerial assistants, I had never supervised pastors before.

“Eventually my region included seven pastors, besides myself. It was allowed to be largely my decision to put a man in New York City, Boston, Washington, D.C., Charleston, West Virginia, Lansing, Michigan, Columbus, Ohio, and Rochester, New York. Akron was basically in the center of these cities.

“I visited all of the men and worked closely with them on difficult matters occurring in their areas. My job was to guide and support them. Some had never been pastors before at the time they were assigned to the northeast region. So it was very much a hands-on process of building pastorates and pastors. I was also

training ministers who supposedly had already been trained, but who lacked an understanding of some of the most basic concepts of being a shepherd over Christ's sheep.

“For a host of reasons, this additional training would be invaluable in my post-GCG years.”

### **WCG Throws Out the Law**

In the meantime, the Worldwide Church of God remained in a state of terrible and worsening confusion. To help brethren make sense of the apostasy, Mr. Pack gave his final “30 Reasons” sermon, as mentioned, in late 1994. It was one last attempt to explain with precision the course a true Christian should take when the Church is in full-blown apostasy. It was the strongest of the three sermons.

Nine weeks later, Mr. Tkach gave his infamous sermon to the Atlanta, Georgia combined congregations, in which he “liberated” members from the need to obey God's Law, the Sabbath, the Holy Days, tithing and dietary laws. What happened spread like wildfire. This act removed any doubt that the WCG was *not* the Laodicean era of God's people. It had become completely Protestant—a church of the world! This had started with the local pastor sort of beating Pasadena to the punch on all these things, and then Mr. Tkach coming to supposedly sort out and correct matters. Instead, he went further.

The haunting words of Mr. Pack's friend from years before echoed in Mr. Pack's ears. Everything that the small band of doctrinal architects at Pasadena—now essentially Evangelical/Methodist ministers—had conceived was carried out according to plan.

“I distributed a lengthy synopsis of the local Atlanta pastor's offending sermon, with a list of all the damning points broken out. That list spread far and

wide, eventually landing in Pasadena—who simply could not look away. They had to take a position. The local pastor had in a sense, wittingly or unwittingly, called their bluff by jumping out front of them with full-blown agreement regarding what they were doing. That pastor had been a friend of mine from college and after. Somewhere he went terribly wrong. Now he had been premature—and had blown their cover. Faced with confirming or denying his message, no doubt very reluctantly, they confirmed. I was glad that my paper played a role in flushing the destroyers from the closet.”

By the hundreds, and then thousands, brethren began an exodus from the WCG. January through April of 1995 saw an explosion of members leaving for GCG, but also for PCG. It was throughout this time that many read *There Came a Falling Away* and heard the “90 Reasons” sermon series. In the wake of Mr. Tkach “throwing everything out,” the Global Church of God received a major surge of growth.

### **Humorous Story**

Everything happening during this period was not grim and awful. There was some humor. Here is one example.

“One of my friends over the years was Mr. Frank McCrady, Jr., (not Frank III) referenced earlier in the biography. A funny story with a certain tragic twist in the middle is associated with him.

“Mr. McCrady was coming to Canton, Ohio, from Big Sandy, Texas, in the spring of 1995 to attend (or perform) his grandson’s wedding. He was asked to give the sermon. I heard that he had come, and asked certain former Canton members, now in Global, who

were attending in Akron, if they could find out where he was staying and to see if he were willing to talk to me.

“It was reported back that he was willing to talk to me, and I called him at the number given.

“The call began cordially, but almost immediately he said to me, ‘Dave, you just got me in a lot of trouble. I am probably going to be fired on Monday (the next day) because of you.’ Having not talked to him in some years, and naturally surprised, I asked what he meant.

“He answered, ‘Just before I drove out of Big Sandy, someone handed me all three of your “30 Reasons” tapes. I listened to them over and over on the way, and got more and more angry as I got closer to Ohio. By the time I stepped behind the pulpit yesterday, I let it fly. It split the congregation right down the middle, and one woman actually jumped up and shouted at me from the congregation that she hoped I dropped dead of a heart attack right then. Half of them walked out, and the other half cheered. So I think I am going to be fired tomorrow or the next day.’

“I congratulated him, and suggested why should he have it better than the rest of us. We had a big laugh. I answered some questions on his mind. He *was* fired, and did come with Global.

“Still alive and healthy in his 80s, he is an example of one of the men residing in another group today whom I would love to talk to.”

### **Constant Theme—and Wrong Choices**

Going back a little in time, because Mr. Pack was the first minister hired by the Global Church of God and was overseeing a large area alone, he was intimately involved in much of the early planning and organization of the Church.

From almost the beginning in Global, he had long talks and visits with a growing number of men whom he had known since Ambassador College days. The conversations were generally about the ministers' pastoral duties during the apostasy.

As Mr. Pack spoke with man after man, a frustrating and recurring theme emerged with almost every minister—few if any wanted to follow Global's leader. Even this man's brother-in-law expressed strong hesitation about leaving WCG and joining Global. He felt that this man had always been doctrinally sound and loyal to Mr. Armstrong, but he knew it would be a challenge to work with him. This kept him from coming with GCG until January 1994.

Despite these personal impressions, some few pastors did continue to trickle into Global.

“Some of the men who entered the Global Church of God should never have come with us. This is not because they were odd or strange men as some who have been described, but rather because they more belonged in United, and GCG had somehow become what is probably best described as ‘the church of their choice,’ much as people pick a church in the world. They would have been much more happy in UCG.

“However, I do not ever remember hearing that any minister at headquarters ever asked a single minister why he was choosing Global instead of United. Nor did I once hear that anyone ever asked ministers coming with us what he believed in order to determine whether or not he would be happy or compatible in the Global Church of God. Not once—except I did. With ‘numbers’ driving decisions, it just was not something that anybody cared about. The assumption was that men wanted to come with Global because of ‘the truth.’ That was enough. There

was nothing of *which* truths, *how much* truth, or what they saw to be the truth, etc.—just ‘the truth.’

“This introduces an infamous Council meeting exchange regarding these kinds of ministers and brethren coming with GCG. It is a story that could be told in any of the Global Church of God chapters, but it probably best fits here.

“On one occasion, we were talking about the Church’s open door policy. I was very animated. One evangelist on the Council expressed how he ‘could not really see a way to “keep the gate” as we once did because the apostasy created so many people who needed to *quickly* flee to a “new home.”’ As usual, there was no real resistance in the meeting.

“I asked for the floor. I asked those with bibles to turn to Matthew 13:24-30 and read the part about how Jesus warned of how tares got into the Church: ‘But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat.’ I paused for dramatic effect and asked, ‘Are we in this meeting making a corporate decision to *officially* go to sleep?’ I believe I also referenced I Chronicles 9:19.

“I could not get anyone to acknowledge the wisdom of Jesus Christ, and Mr. Armstrong who both so strongly taught against keeping tares from the Church. No other attendee would do more than mumble. The presiding evangelist wanted numbers. They could not see the devil had won.”

### **Interviewing, Hiring and Counseling Ministers**

It was during this time that Mr. Pack gained a much broader knowledge of what it meant to structure the Church, when building from scratch. This included interviewing, evaluating and recommending potential ministers and, of course, supervising other pastors in his own region. It also

included the opportunity to observe many of the most senior ministers. Some of the men coming aboard or considering doing so went back to the 1950s. Some of the most senior pastor-rank and evangelist-rank ministers were also joining Global.

As more ministers came aboard, the pressure of being responsible for the entire East Coast began to subside. As concentrations of brethren became more compact, the country was divided into smaller regions. One of the first areas shifted to another man was the southeastern U.S. (This was actually before regional pastors were appointed.) This provided the opportunity to focus on the Midwest and Northeast. However, brethren across the country continued consulting with Mr. Pack because his early WCG departure made him the most recognized figure—but also the biggest target—who had stood up for the truth.

The period of interviewing and recommending ministers for hire overlapped the period before and after Mr. Pack became a regional pastor. While the official promotion brought vital additional training, it also had the effect of limiting Mr. Pack's work to a third of the United States. That was certainly fine, but it did mean he was no longer 'in the loop' in terms of which ministers were hired in other parts of the world. Some, however, did continue to call him for advice. For instance, one minister called wanting to give his own version of the "90 Reasons" sermons, and needed counsel.

"There are so many stories that could be told about men I talked to, who would go on to join GCG. But two stand out head and shoulders above all others for how their WCG exit played out.

"I drove into Kansas City in March 1995 from a counseling session in Columbia, Missouri to meet with a small group who were ready to leave the WCG. One of the three local pastors there, and his associate, asked to meet with me while I was in the area. I had

known this minister in college and he was a very fine man—and fine pastor.

“I arranged to meet with both men for dinner before going to the Bible Study, which was scheduled to last until about 11:00 p.m. It was a Tuesday night.

“The dinner went very well, with both wives also present. After many questions about whether the GCG leader had changed, the two men said that they may wish to meet with me again in the morning before my plane departed at 8:00 a.m. I called the pastor back at midnight and he confirmed that they did all want a follow-up meeting at 6:00 a.m. at the airport.

“They were absolutely on fire to leave the WCG the next morning. There was a humorous moment when they both said that they wanted to get fired rather than resign, and asked me how to best accomplish this. I explained that I was good at getting fired, so that if they followed instructions exactly, they could be assured of this occurring immediately. I literally gave them instructions on what to say from the pulpit three days later on the Sabbath right up to the point when I had to separate and board the plane. They were writing notes furiously.

“That Saturday night, there were two messages awaiting me after services on my answering machine. The first was from the associate pastor, virtually shouting, ‘It worked! I got fired right after services!’ There were a couple other comments. Next was the pastor’s almost identical message thanking me because he too got fired. Both were ecstatic.

“The important part of the story was that over 200 people, from a congregation of about 450, immediately followed their pastor out of the WCG. Interestingly, the other half walked out in the middle of his sermon—a message simply listing as many of the 90 reasons as he could include in a 75-minute

sermon. The associate had set the table in the sermonette with principles from my “Truth” sermon.

“This may have been the largest number of people who left the Worldwide Church of God in a single congregation, on a single Sabbath. No matter the man’s thinking today, I still salute his courage demonstrated in a sea of cowardice.

“The second story that stands out also involved a pastor trying to decide what to do. He was another friend from college. He called to talk. His thinking was toward joining the new, big, large splinter forming the first week in May of 1995. I spent almost four hours telling him why going with that group would be a big mistake. He hung up, agreeing with me, but saying he would still probably attend and ‘observe’ their Indianapolis ‘set up’ conference.

“He went to the conference. After returning, he called back to report that he had changed his mind again and was going with the new organization. We spoke for another four hours, covering basically the same things. The result was also the same. He flipped again and came with Global.

“So many are willing to let others do their thinking for them. I realized later that this is what I had also done. In effect, how was I any different from those who had twice turned him toward the new group? So many showed weakness and ambivalence during that time. It was sad to watch grown men who had no idea what to do. They needed someone to hold their hand and tell them every step to take.

“The irony is that this man rose to ‘evangelist,’ and now heads the group’s entire ministry. But so is the Kansas City pastor now an ‘evangelist’—the one I had to work so hard on to sell Global’s leader to him. I have often wished I had just let these men, and so many others, make their own decisions. Many more would

have wound up in the largest splinter, and perhaps not have been among the additional ‘friends’ who fiercely attacked me later for merely upholding doctrines they once believed.”

### Two Schools of Thought

As more ministers contacted GCG, as he had opportunity, Mr. Pack warned them candidly about the Worldwide Church of God’s downward spiral. Most with whom he spoke well understood that a full-blown apostasy was occurring, but were unsure of the most effective way to exit the Worldwide Church of God. They were concerned that brethren would turn against them if they did *not* approach the congregation (and correctly) regarding the changes. Others would do the same if they *did* speak out.

Like lay members, many ministers asked two related all-important questions: “What is my obligation to the local brethren? What is the correct way to leave?” These were the same two questions that Mr. Pack asked himself when he began to recognize the scope and severity of the changes in the WCG.

There were two prevailing ideas about a shepherd’s responsibility to his flock. Some men believed that the honorable way to leave was to slip out without causing a stir. These men felt they should leave without warning brethren—they would not give sermons explaining the importance of truth nor present any clues as to how to navigate the rocky spiritual shoals of the apostasy. In effect, these men thought it best to pull a vanishing act.

Without warning, many ministers left their pastorates without notice, thus ambushing their congregations through use of a sudden absence—translated *abandonment*. This left brethren confused and uncertain—they were in effect thrown to “grievous wolves” (Acts 20:29) and left to fend for themselves. These men thought that this was somehow the most

“honorable” thing to do. Yet it could not have been more dishonorable and cowardly.

Of course, Pasadena openly applauded such “honor.” What could be better for them? They were now free to slaughter the flock with almost no resistance.

The alternative was to “blow a trumpet,” as Mr. Pack often put it, warning people in a final sermon about the state of the Church, and informing them about the decision lying before them. If people chose not to act after warning, they would at least have made their own choice.

Two ministers who joined Global typified the two ways of thinking.

One was a longtime evangelist. Through the years, he had gained a reputation as a man of principle and doctrinal conservatism, and had earned the respect of many. He chose to leave his Miami pastorate quietly, telling no one except a single one of his local church elders. The outcome was predictable: only his wife followed him—and he had been an evangelist since 1952.

The other man was the Kansas City pastor: His result? Over 200 people followed him from the WCG!

### **“Dance with Who Brung You”**

The biography discussed earlier the problem of ministers coming into GCG who were neither doctrinally sound nor balanced men. This was permitted almost by policy. Mr. Pack was far from the only person who could see what was happening.

“I called headquarters many times about some of the men who had already been permitted to enter the GCG ministry. A lot of these men were freelancing with doctrine, and sending their tapes all through the church. It was causing real problems. We were paying a price.

“I would call headquarters and reference a particular minister and his problem teachings—this happened often—and I would hear philosophic comments about why the presiding evangelist, but also others, would not do anything about most of the men. The answers were never spiritual, never based on the Bible. The three most often repeated comments to me were, ‘We have to dance with who brung us,’ meaning the ministers who were coming had brought us to the dance. But of course the truth was it was headquarters that was letting men attend a dance where they did not belong.

“Another saying came off of the need to confront and/or discipline certain ministers about their beliefs. The answer I heard time and again, and these are the exact words used, ‘You have to *manage* problems, not *fix* them.’

“This is administrative insanity, and the most inexperienced managers and executives know better. Looking the other way never works in the long run, although there might be a very temporary period where you manage a problem until a full solution can be worked out. But this is not what was meant. Men were being tolerated—‘managed’—for years.

“Finally, when it came to dealing with either members or ministers, I would hear, and these again were the exact words used, ‘We are no longer herding sheep in this age—we are herding cats.’ The man had read a book written by a worldly minister saying this. Of course, I objected (and did so with all three of these comments) by saying the Scriptures did not state that God’s sheep in the end-time were now *cats*!

“The name Global Church of God always elicits the same three problems in my mind. (1) Many and worsening false teachings, (2) many and worsening false ministers—(3) both of these permitted because

its leader did not care. These were the three constants that always grew worse with the passing of time.”

### Council of Elders

Over time, more senior pastors and evangelists joined Global. In February 1995, the presiding evangelist appointed and convened a Global Council of Elders, somewhat similar to what Mr. Armstrong had done. This was possible because there was now a *group* of senior men who could provide counsel.

Because of his early involvement in the Church, Mr. Pack was invited to serve on the Council. For obvious reasons, he welcomed it. He recognized it was a chance to contribute during a time of growth and progress. He also welcomed the opportunity to interact with men who had served directly under, as well as around, Mr. Armstrong. These included the French regional director, AC college chancellor, and *The World Tomorrow* presenter, among others. Naturally, Mr. Pack also hoped there were things that might still be gleaned—helpful or bad—from Global’s leader and certain others.

Mr. Pack was certain he would be able to gain lessons from these men because they had witnessed Mr. Armstrong firsthand during a decades-long period of great growth, change and constant restructuring. These men watched the Worldwide Church of God grow from a fledging organization into one with worldwide impact. In addition, they had been privy to the details of how Mr. Armstrong accomplished what was achieved.

It was humbling and an honor to participate in the next phase of the Work as the Church grew from several hundred members to several thousand.

At the very first meeting, as Global’s leader opened by describing the purpose of the Council, Mr. Pack sat at his immediate right. He asked about a seemingly small detail.

In front of the Council, he asked the leader, “Why have you called this a Council of Elders, instead of an *Advisory Council of Elders*?”

The man explained that he was actually a *member* of the Council himself. He went on to carefully explain that he wished to be considered “first among equals.”

This did not mesh with Mr. Armstrong’s view of the Council. The reason for the Advisory Council under the late Pastor General had been for men to simply *advise* him—not to act as equals with him. Even though some of the Global appointees had sat on the Advisory Council with Mr. Armstrong, they did not seem to comprehend the difference.

Mr. Pack and one or two other Council members were puzzled. This murky explanation of the purpose of the Council had greater implications. Everyone in the Church had once understood that God’s government works properly only when one man is in charge. This authority, from the top down, is the only way to ensure that the Church of God does not turn into a community of voices where everyone has an opinion and input on every matter.

From the outset of the Council, this lack of precision represented a pattern with which Mr. Pack was all too familiar—and it spelled trouble. As he continued participating in the meeting, it slowly became more evident that many *did* believe to one degree or another that God’s government should be a shared responsibility, meaning that when there was disagreement, a consensus of opinion would have to be sufficient in final decision making.

The group failed to comprehend that seemingly small issues, when glossed over rather than resolved, *always* lead to larger problems.

“The moment of the first meeting was truly surreal. I was sitting in a room with several evangelists. These were men I had thought to be titans in the faith. Other

evangelists would later join the Global Council. So I was honored to be there. But there was also a sense that there were going to be problems, and that something was ‘just not right.’

“Of course, it did not help that the presiding evangelist almost immediately brought up the idea of introducing New Moons to the church as something that should be an optional monthly Bible Study held in all areas on this date every month. He felt that Mr. Armstrong ‘got this wrong.’ He was willing to let the monthly date be ‘low-key,’ as he put it, but he did want the church observing New Moons. It was all we could do to convince him that this alone would quickly destroy the Global Church of God. Not one Council member stood with him. Yet he would not give it up (and then only tacitly) until much later.”

### **Other Doctrines Compromised**

Wrong government was far from the only problem. Global’s leader quickly began to mention being more “accepting” and “open-minded” on topics such as baptized people marrying unbaptized people.

“One of the most incredible moments in my time in GCG occurred during a regional pastors conference regarding a discussion about baptized and unbaptized people getting married. The CAD Director had just put a letter in the quarterly ministerial journal that officially okayed such marriages, ‘under certain circumstances.’ The ministry had been ambushed. Yet none seemed to care—and this was its own equal problem.

“I was the only one in the room who took a stand. There were two evangelists and two pastor-ranked ministers and I sitting around a table. None of the four men could comprehend either II Corinthians 6:14—

‘Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers’ or Romans 8:9—‘If any have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.’ I also reminded them, and in no uncertain terms, of what Mr. Armstrong had always taught. I made reference to his June 1980 or 1981 *PGR* in which he said that anyone who even *dated* outside the Church was to be disfellowshipped. One man said that he was aware of the article because he was at Headquarters at the time—and he could vouch that Mr. Armstrong never really meant what was written. Stunning!

“I could not get them to care, literally. It was a ‘vigorous’ conversation, to say the least. They would not back down, but neither would I.

“I was absolutely flabbergasted that these ‘senior’ men could not understand these scriptures or see the importance of Mr. Armstrong’s view of them. One man made a point of saying, ‘I always performed such weddings in Worldwide.’ Incredible! He was actually holding up his long pattern of quiet, but outright, insubordination against policy as reason for continuing it.

“This was truly a defining moment for me. It ended with me saying that I would administer one thing in my region no matter what headquarters or the others did. Interestingly, when I reported this to another headquarters evangelist, not present in the room, his comment was, ‘Well, you’re not going to obey that instruction, are you?’ My answer was, ‘Of course not.’

“But think what we were saying! What organization could sustain such confusion?

“This example reveals the kind of open disagreement and division that existed on some of the most basic matters. This particular conversation was in about the summer of 1996.”

## No Resistance

Shocked that others offered little resistance in Council meetings, Mr. Pack quickly learned that these meetings were not based on spiritual thinking. The Bible was almost an irrelevant book at times. Instead, these men wanted to speak about practical and pragmatic issues. Only rarely did they discuss doctrinal issues.

A lack of doctrinal conversation would not have been a problem on the Council during Mr. Armstrong's time. The Church had decades of sound doctrine as a foundation, and was led by a faithful apostle. During those Council meetings, everyone's beliefs had already *seemingly* been settled. There was no need to linger on doctrinal topics.

But now that Mr. Armstrong was gone and each man on the Council of Elders had taken a different spiritual path to the Global Church, arriving at different times, Mr. Pack felt it was necessary to regularly confirm basic doctrines. To his chagrin, *nobody* else was thinking the same way. Some did have small concerns. But otherwise everyone assumed they were holding to the full truth since the corporation's bylaws asserted this. Yet, doctrine was slipping out the door on a daily basis. So were traditions such as dress on the Sabbath. This became proof that there was nothing new under the sun.

“Things were to grow very, very bad, but it was always subtle. On one occasion in the Council it was not subtle, with Global's leader opening a meeting with the following words: ‘Does anyone have anything new to discuss in terms of doctrine? The brethren like to hear that we are learning new things. They want to see that we can grow.’

“I could not help but remember Acts 17:21, regarding the practice in pagan Athens, where people

‘spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing.’

“On another occasion, something else was being entertained as a new idea. Perhaps it was that the wedding supper was in heaven—another false idea that was eventually accepted in GCG. I do not recall. But I had readied myself for the next time *anything* new was going to be brought up. I had been carrying a list, ready for the moment.

“At the end of this particular discussion, I asked for the floor and received it. I proceeded to list 14 different doctrinal points, including also a few matters of policy and tradition that GCG had changed. I was brief, but ended by saying that the matter was serious. The presiding evangelist smiled piteously at me at what he took as the suggestion he was leading the church incorrectly. He was dismissive and nobody else said a word.”

### **Accepting the Present**

Mr. Pack continued struggling to resolve the government catch-22 situation in his mind. On the one hand, a more collegial and empowered Council could block the presiding evangelist from implementing significant, or *major*, doctrinal changes (but not *minor* ones, with no one able to define the difference). Several men on the Council did recognize that unfettered power in the leader’s hands would destroy the Church. So this was the wrong form of government. Eventually something would have to change, because, as Mr. Armstrong stated time and again, “Government is everything.” The government of God establishes and upholds everything in His Church.

It was the same previously stated dilemma, now largely centered in a Council of Elders setting. But there was still no other place to go!

“As explained, I was basically willing to accept the ‘first among equals’ explanation. But this was not because I liked it. However, I *was* glad the leader could not unilaterally change doctrines. Without realizing it, he had openly empowered the Council through the bylaws to be able to block him. The question was always whether it would.

“On one occasion, the presiding evangelist and certain men on the Council wanted to allow interracial marriage. It came up for discussion, and the consensus in the room was that under no circumstances must this be permitted. Shortly after the Council decision, the leader gave an interview to the Texas ‘newspaper’ called *In Transition* (later renamed *The Journal*). He unilaterally announced in this paper that interracial marriage was acceptable, and that GCG ministers could perform such marriages if they wished. We were *ambushed* again—this time by bald deceit and rebellion.

“I was outraged, and called as many Council members as I could find to see who would take him to task. Others were outraged as well, but, replaying the spirit I had seen in the WCG, no one would take action—not one. He got away with it.

“But there was a second *big* lesson in this. When it happened, also no members I heard of made a peep. I knew many never knew about it, but others who were aware did not care. Of course, this was its own great problem, and I noted it.

“I was forced to conclude that God did not want an evangelist to carry the same authority as an apostle. Of course, in a sense, this was obvious. The chasm between the two offices is vast. For instance, again, Mr. Armstrong had long taught, and with authority, that truth only enters the Church through apostles—and I knew this absolutely. But not one man on the Council of Elders ever spoke of this

transcending truth, or would acknowledge it when I did. Other things related to the differences between these two offices I would only later fully understand. This would happen at the time God made known *how* he was going to reconstitute His Work, when my training was complete.

“This much I knew. A (compromising) evangelist was leading what I believed to be God’s Church and Work. What this ultimately meant was yet to unfold.”

Though there were serious issues with Global’s doctrines, Mr. Pack trusted that God would end this compromised form of government, along with the rest of the doctrinal confusion—one way or the other. Whatever happened, he resolved to continue to teach everything that Mr. Armstrong had taught.

He would learn later that one other major point of doctrine was escaping his notice. It would eventually have to be understood and dealt with. But that would need to come later.

## *United Church Forms— House of Health Inc.*

**M**onths had gone by since Mr. Tkach had *openly* rejected the truth, wholesale. It was now decision time for the remaining Worldwide Church of God ministers—and a new level of urgency took over there!

### **Impasse for Remaining WCG Ministers**

To anyone seeking to remain with the truth, staying in the WCG and hoping the ship would turn around was beyond the realm of possibility. Remaining in that organization meant such ministers were “on board,” either actively or passively acknowledging that they agreed with the new doctrinal direction.

Forced to compromise doctrinally, these ministers had appeased, politicked and accepted paychecks now *long* after the new administration had introduced a new god. By their actions, they had shown they were willing to sit in the presence of a false, trinitarian god for over two and a half years—and do nothing! This had forced them to either preach false doctrines or sit idly, allowing brethren to spiritually “die where they sat.”

Now, with so many leaving the Worldwide Church of God, these ministers were at an impasse. If they stood up on their own and sounded an alarm in opposition to what Pasadena was doing, and fought for the spiritual safety of their flock, they knew that within a day or so they would face termination. On the other hand, if they did not sound an alarm, they would, and had already, let countless brethren—who had in many cases wrongly placed their very salvation in their pastor’s hands—drift out of the Church.

“It had come to be crunch time for the men who just would not move, meaning from the WCG, even though years had been passing. The WCG no longer believed in tithing, and salaries were either going to disappear—or migrate elsewhere, meaning to a place where tithes could be had. Even the most blind ministers had no trouble seeing this.”

### **New Organization Grows Within WCG**

By the middle of 1993, Mr. Pack first heard rumors that “something big” was in the works with a large group of ministers in the Worldwide Church of God. Exact details had not yet crystallized, but there was a rudimentary plan in place to build the structure of a breakaway organization with ministers from within the WCG. A tightly organized “Star Chamber” of “deep thinkers” operated from the closet, very carefully guiding the plan to completion.

The prevailing thought among this covey of senior men was that if they operated covertly inside the Church, they would be able to quietly “prepare” thousands of brethren for a signal to leave. But after staying so long in the Church following its doctrinal compromise, their purpose was hardly to stand for *all* the truth. (They had accepted many errors, some consciously, others not.) Rather, they sought to pave the road to a sufficient tithe base and infrastructure. Later

documents would actually spell this out. The internal, self-appointed “new administration” determined that they could better build from within, while on the WCG’s payroll, instead of after they had left, where there would be less money and less time to do this. This was crucial.

The plan involved organizing ministers into a concealed coalition that could collectively create a net to soften their financial landing. As imagined, this plan would work only if built on secrecy. The scheme encouraged ministers not to take a stand until the correct time. They were to “buy time.” A critical part of the plan was to be discreet—and ministers kept local brethren partially in the dark until the appointed time was reached. The covert organization instructed, “Don’t say anything until the right time.”

As the plan took shape, the Assistant Director of Church Administration (in the U.S.) quietly approached all 12 regional pastors in the United States to get “unofficial” confirmation that each was still on board. He had in fact carefully handpicked these in mid-1993 to this end. This cowardly approach was taken while he was (and all of them were) still on the Worldwide Church of God’s payroll.

At the same time, as mentioned, the treasurer and office manager in Pasadena had devised a plan behind the scenes to offer ministers who resigned favorable severance packages. With this security blanket in place, the secret organization scheduled a conference to begin on April 30 in Indianapolis, Indiana. Over 320 ministers and local church elders attended to learn more and to confirm their plans of joining the new group.

However, the urgency had developed because more and more brethren were exiting Worldwide to join Global. Some ministers realized that they may have waited too long to make a move. In order for their organization to be successful, they had to now quickly get out front of the flock and act as though they had been leading it all along. The truth was that many of the *brethren* stood for the truth much more

quickly than ministers did! Of course, salaries had not blinded their eyes.

Before, and for awhile after, this conference, Worldwide Church of God pastors received their severance packages, which eventually cost the WCG millions of dollars. Within months the vast majority became ministers for the newly formed United Church of God. Now, severance in hand, hundreds of ministers began to loudly chorus their “love” for the truth.

It was clear that these men would *permanently* lose their paychecks if they did not immediately follow thousands of tithepayers from the WCG. Not wanting to look like followers—and concerned that many who left were joining or contemplating joining one of the already existing and more doctrinally conservative groups—they jumped in front of the departing flock, claiming to be leading it.

These largely faithless pastors chose to move together, shielded by the security of large numbers—and instant paychecks. If these men had taken a stand earlier and organized in a coherent way *before* brethren became doctrinally poisoned, they may have reached a great many more who drifted from God’s Way altogether!

“My brother-in-law told me that a ‘point team’ of WCG ministers approached him in the summer of 1993 regarding their new organization, fearing he was going with Global, and saying, ‘Why go out with a *pop* when you can go out with a *bang*?’ meaning with a much greater number of ministers in a much larger new organization. Of course, my brother-in-law saw through it immediately.

“Two years later, this same ‘point team’ met with him again. They wanted to explain why they would not follow the Global leader. There would be no significant, high-level contact between the groups for several more years.

“Not all who went with the United Church of God were bad ministers. Far from it. Many good men left who were simply deceived. And not all men knew what the Star Chamber had done in advance, or when it had started. In time, of course, by inaction in the face of facts, they took *full ownership* of their decision. I do realize the final chapters for some of these men are yet to be written.”

### **Unique Opportunity for Akron Congregation**

Mr. Pack’s former Worldwide Church of God pastorate in Akron, Ohio, represented a unique scenario—unlike anywhere else in the world. This was the only congregation where WCG members were given two distinct *chances*—two *opportunities*—two *choices*—to leave the parent organization.

Recall that the pastor who was transferred to Akron in March, 1993, to replace Mr. Pack, arrived as an advocate for the leadership that was changing and destroying everything. Also recall that the apostates had handpicked this man because he *supported* all the new doctrines. (He was present immediately after Mr. Pack’s firing.)

Further recall that the man stated he agreed with *every* change. And when the mass exodus (of eventually about 20,000 brethren) occurred to a new organization, this man also moved. Sadly, about 230 people in the Akron congregation did not care what he had taught them. Almost all of them had been present 26 months earlier. Yet they did not care that Mr. Pack had warned them *over two years before*. Not one person seemed to recognize that *right in their own area*—a shepherd had stood up and given his life for his sheep. Instead, they believed they should continue to follow the “Pasadena-chosen cheerleader” who had poisoned them for so long, but now suddenly “loved the truth” again. And still further, also as mentioned, his new organization would

10 years later elect him its president—and not because he was known to have repented of the false doctrines he taught in Akron to hundreds willing to follow him anyway.

In hindsight, the majority of brethren (or ministers) who experienced the apostasy “loved the truth” only until it meant holding services in a living room or by themselves. The “safety in numbers” idea was dominant during this time. This event forced Mr. Pack to confront the fact that there were *very few* brethren who had proved *everything* when called, and who *deeply* loved *all* of the truth. Most need to be reinforced with the presence of many human beings beside and around them.

“I often marveled at how people could not see through those who should have been so easy to discern. Smooth personalities, particularly when large numbers are following them, seem to be most important to the majority of people. Of course some people just have short memories. However, the greatest truth I learned in this was that most simply do not care. And I speak of those who left the WCG, not of those who stayed.

“I learned a powerful lesson: members *and* ministers will stand for some truths—but only the big, convenient ones. Many will flee false leaders—if they have a pastor and a hall. In other words—an instant congregation, with all the accoutrements, to continue as they were.”

### **Thoughts After United Forms**

Just as the organizers had planned, in early 1995, roughly 16,000 members of WCG moved to this group en masse. (It would temporarily grow to over 21,000 by the Feast of Tabernacles that year.) They decided it was better to form a new organization with a democratic government than subordinate themselves to the Global Church of God leadership.

Again, thousands heard Mr. Pack's tapes and read his books, resulting in them leaving the WCG and entering one of several major groups. As Mr. Pack remembers:

“A greater number left WCG because of my ‘90 Reasons’ tapes and went *elsewhere* (than GCG) because of Global's leader—and it began to trouble me! I thought to myself, ‘Wait a minute! They're going to other places because of this man? Do they have a point? We are also shot full of doctrinal compromise, so how much different are we?’

“In the end, UCG's false doctrines were certainly *more* and *worse*—but false doctrine is false doctrine, and we were gaining on them. But it had not all crystallized in my mind. I even have to remember today that hindsight is always 20/20.

“I did at that time decide to focus on the horrific form of government being formed in the United Church of God. The result was my second book—*Except the Lord Build the House*. This volume was really a compilation of a series of quotes under topics from Mr. Armstrong that a careful researcher had helped me put together.

“Examples were ‘God's Government Is Always from the Top Down’—‘Satan Can Overthrow God's Government’—‘Government, Unity and Division’—‘Doctrinal Compromise’—‘Personalities Versus Fruits’—‘A Biblical Council of Elders’—‘Government in the Church Enables It to Do the Work’—‘Laodicea and Democracy’—‘Laodiceans Are Headed for the Great Tribulation’—‘The Responsibility to Warn Those Headed for the Great Tribulation’—‘Yes Men’—‘Christians Are Training for Positions of Authority in God's Government.’

“Each of these topic titles introduced a series of quotes from Mr. Armstrong. They explained exactly

what he taught about all of these things. These were quotes that were impossible to misunderstand for those reading with any carefulness at all.

“My thought was that people would see and remember what Mr. Armstrong taught, and realize that United’s government was ridiculous—and could not possibly be anything that God was leading. However wrong it was, Global’s government seemed infinitely better. Our president and Council members did not face the requirement of being *re-elected* every three years, as in UCG.

“The book did seem to help a few, but not as many as was hoped. Most who read it just did not seem to care. They settled into United as though they had been there for years. However, the first book (detailing the changes) and the three-sermon series about following the truth did help thousands—and this brought great satisfaction.

“I would have to go on and learn that there is little difference between the many Laodicean organizations, large and small, other than slight grades of temperature.”

Despite thousands of people having joined the Global Church of God in the first two and one-third years, the start of the United Church of God (UCG) sobered Mr. Pack greatly. It spoke volumes about how many people were likely to escape the apostasy and reconstitute the Work. He had high hopes that many of the men with whom he attended Ambassador College 25 years earlier and served with in the ministry were eventually going to come with Global. Surely they would see their error.

It was now clear they would not—at least in the short term.

Meanwhile, the presiding evangelist continued to single out Mr. Pack behind the scenes because of his perception that

there was an inordinate focus on the “younger minister.” This, coupled with the growing doctrinal and governmental issues not being resolved, left Mr. Pack increasingly uncertain.

“I had a clear thought at this point about what I felt was happening with the birth of UCG. Obviously the Worldwide Church of God was no longer connected to anything of God. It was cold, not lukewarm. It had become a completely dead organization.

“My thoughts were that Global appeared to be the remnant of Philadelphia. Of course, there were growing questions with this idea in the back of my mind. It was easy to see that UCG was Laodicean. That was a ‘no-brainer.’ In fact, it was almost as though the leadership set out to be Laodicea with their ‘the people (and ministers) rule’ approach to government. But ultimately, it would be a church ‘of, by and for the ministers.’

“The group planning the new organization was very confident. When it broke away, they predicted that 50,000 people would be with them in six months to a year. They terribly overestimated their pulling power—and just as terribly underestimated the power of the conspirators in Pasadena to overthrow the thinking of thousands, while these men sat planning in a state of delayed exit. In a sense, pride came before a fall, because so many fewer joined them.

“The troubling part that would take three and a half years to come clear in my mind would be *Where is Philadelphia?* It had to be a single organization, holding to all of the truth, while doing the very same Work as before under God’s perfect form of government.

“I could not find such an organization. I knew that I was not in it, but did still have hopes that GCG could become what it should be. Maybe time would solve our problem.”

### **Randall Pack's Health Deteriorates**

In the summer of 1994, Mr. Pack began to notice that his father had developed a slight limp. This was a precursor of a serious health concern.

From the day his mother died in the spring of 1992, his close relationship with his father grew even closer. Having left the Worldwide Church of God for doctrinal reasons shortly after Mr. Pack did, and joining GCG, Ran Pack had not only lost his wife, but also most of his close friends from the Church. He was quietly lonely. Since his wife's death, Mr. Pack's father had little physical or emotional support in his life. At the same time he was a person who could function largely alone. He was far from being a "dependent" type.

Mr. Pack recognized this fact and made an effort to call his father every day, never missing a day. There were occasions when it was two or three times in a day as his father tried to make sense of the doctrinal issues in the Church. Mr. Pack realized that he would not have him around forever. He wanted to be sure that he supported his father, but also learn as much as possible from him about leadership.

In March of 1993, Ran Pack suffered a major aneurism and underwent a procedure to repair the damage. After this incident, Mr. Pack became even more involved with his father.

A year later, Mr. Pack noticed as they were walking into the house that the older man seemed to be slightly dragging his left leg. At first worried that his father had perhaps suffered a mini-stroke, he pressed his father to get himself checked by a physician. But he was reluctant to do this since the problem appeared minor.

Next, it was evident that his father gradually began dragging his leg more noticeably. Unable to any longer take the long daily walks he was used to, he also seldom went to his health food store.

### **Reaches a Breaking Point**

Finally, the condition having grown steadily worse, he visited a specialist. The condition was neurological, arising from the spine rather than the brain. Suffering from a form of listhesis, or shifting vertebrae, the neurosurgeon painted a grim picture. Due to years of degenerative arthritis, which led to the breakdown of the structure in his neck, his spinal cord was slowly being crushed by two shifting vertebrae in his neck. The leg dragging was irreversible. The damage had been done.

Unless doctors fused his neck, using parallel metal plates and screws, the vertebrae would continue slipping and crush his spinal cord, leaving him a quadriplegic within 12 to 18 months!

At 75 years of age, the idea of major surgery was daunting. Deciding the alternative of paralysis was worse, he agreed to the reconstructive neck fusion. His brother and niece and son, David, had all had spinal fusions.

The day before his scheduled surgery, Mr. Pack's father summoned his son to his home and sat him down.

### **A Big Decision**

"Son," he said. "You're going to have to take over the business for me. I just cannot do it anymore. If something happens to me, I want you to already have become the President of the corporation. Can I count on you?"

Mr. Pack agreed without hesitation. "Yes, Dad. Whatever you need me to do. I will do it."

Mr. Pack realized just how difficult it must have been for his father to turn over the business for which he had worked so hard.

Undergoing the first of two operations on July 12, Ran Pack made it through a follow-up operation two weeks later.

As Mr. Pack waited for the results, he prayed for the strength to be able to support his father, manage the operations of the business, and fulfill his ongoing responsibilities in the ministry.

“My father had been my greatest friend for my entire life. I was determined to be with him regularly through July and August, the period of his two surgeries and recovery. I actually had to refinance my house to afford what became six flights to Greensboro. Both my sons were there working for him at the time, and this was helpful, but he was my father and I wanted to personally be with him as I could. I stayed one day each time. My back had been fused, and this had been hard enough with a family all around me. I well understood what he was experiencing.

“The one thing I do recall so clearly was my father’s amazing steadfastness in everything he endured in this trial, so consistent with his entire life. I still consider him one of the strongest men I have ever known.”

### **Absentee President**

Within weeks it became obvious that something major had to give in Mr. Pack’s schedule. There was no way to be an active president of a company from so far away. Fortunately, Rob had been in the business for 17 months, while in college preparing to enter medical school. Mr. Pack remembers taking a walk with his son at the end of July 1995, just three weeks before his wedding day, and spelling out the reality of the situation.

“Rob, your grandfather is not capable of taking care of himself or running the business anymore and my first responsibility is as a minister,” he said. “I am going to suggest that Grandpa move up to Ohio with your mother and me. There are only two options: First, you run the business with

me overseeing from a distance. Second, we sell it and move on with our lives. There are no other alternatives.”

After much thought, they agreed to continue to run the business together. Rob dropped out of college to manage the store.

In the area of business, Mr. Pack thought of himself in terms of Gideon’s self-description in Judges 6:15—“my family is poor in [Israel] and I am the least in my father’s house.” Although he had been surrounded all through his life by very successful businessmen in the family, the ministry had always been his focus. But there had been exposure from childhood forward to business deals and the start-up of companies. His father had owned three companies, his grandfather had owned perhaps five, and his uncle had essentially run a very large company for decades, and had also been the President of World Book.

In taking oversight of his father’s store, the first months consisted of a crash course in bookkeeping, financial statements, cash flow, inventory, human resources and a variety of other day-to-day responsibilities. Although Rob managed the eight to 10 employees, along with all daily operations, he was only 21 in July 1995. Mr. Pack was determined to maintain the store’s success while his father recovered. He did not take lightly the care of a business his parents had spent more than two decades building, and dove headlong into this new role.

“I spent a lot of time at my father’s bedside talking with him about his business with more than the usual passing interest of previous years. It certainly did help that I had a long history of experience in eating natural foods and in use of specific vitamins and supplements.

“My other son, Randy, had been in the business for almost two years at this point, so he was very helpful. I also talked to my Uncle Frank at every opportunity. The

four of them, including Rob, made it doable. (There were also several longtime, established employees in place that made the transition relatively smooth.)

“In the end, however, I was making executive decisions about a very successful company. It would at times be trial by error in terms of decisions made and people hired. I expected that my father would be available for a long time to come in the background. So I was not worried. The biggest problem was finding enough time to handle the new responsibility. I did not want to let my father down, or injure my son who was leaving school to manage the store onsite, or in any way undermine the 19 and a half years that my mother had invested in a store both parents loved. There were also the thousands of loyal customers to be remembered.

“I was aware all through the time I led the company that I was being given extraordinary training that not one other minister in the Worldwide Church of God had ever received *while in the ministry*.

“The *why* would come later.”

### **A Move to Ohio**

After several weeks of recovery from surgery, it was obvious that Ran Pack could not stay in North Carolina by himself. As hard as it was for him to leave, it was necessary. He could no longer drive a car, meaning he was severely limited in terms of shopping and mobility.

There was also a sizable Global congregation in Ohio. This meant Ran Pack would not only have his son and daughter-in-law to care for him, but brethren would also be available.

At age 75, Ran Pack was headed back to the Midwest. Since he had spent over 50 years in Ohio and Indiana, the adjustment would not be overly difficult.

On September 6, 1995, less than two months after he had entered the hospital, he temporarily moved into a skilled nursing facility not far from Wadsworth, Ohio, spending nearly seven weeks there. He then settled into the Sterling Oaks assisted living complex, close to his son's home.

The Packs were excited to have "Grandpa" living close by. Jennifer could have a grandparent living in the same community. With the store stable and running smoothly, Mr. Pack would be able to visit and help his father on a routine basis.

The second surgery had left Ran with congestive heart failure, however. It took quite a period to get this under control. It would be seven Sabbaths in Ohio before he could finally get to services on October 28.

A Church member recalls Ran observing his son at work, and while at services, and commenting, "He sure loves his job!"

"It was very difficult visiting my father in the nursing home, which was some miles away. But we saw him almost every day, thinking we were counting down until he would be moving to Wadsworth into an assisted living complex that was not quite completed and ready to receive him at the time he arrived in Ohio."

### **Sudden Illness—and Death**

Four days after moving into the new assisted-living facility, Ran attended services in Copley. However, shortly after services, he felt very faint and decided to return to Sterling Oaks.

Upon hearing his father was not feeling well, Mr. Pack raced downstairs to check on him. Ran assured his son that he was fine and just needed rest. Since Mr. Pack customarily stayed long after services counseling and visiting with breth-

ren, two young men in the congregation, one of them Mr. Jeff Ambrose, were asked to take him home. On the way home, he conversed and kidded with the two younger fellows, continuing until he laid down in his room. Looking up at them from the bed, he joked, “How tall are you two Arabs?”

Mr. Pack checked in that night and it just appeared to be the flu. He saw his father again the next morning, and he was not doing well—but urged his son to not stay long lest he get sick, and be unable to attend the upcoming Council of Elders meetings in three days.

Sunday evening brought an ominous call from the facility to come quickly, and that an ambulance was on the way. Mr. Pack arrived in time to briefly speak to his father, and to follow his ambulance to the hospital.

Less than two hours later, Ran Pack succumbed to a systemic bacterial infection, or sepsis, which had severely compromised his immune system.

His daughter-in-law present, Randall Pack’s very last moments were spent expressing gratitude to the individual nurses and hospital staff working over him. “Thank you, you’re all doing a wonderful job...” he told them—he then went unconscious mid-sentence, setting an example of gratitude and selflessness to the end. He died two hours later, Mr. Pack holding him.

“I always regretted that I was not with my father at the moment he lost consciousness. I had to call my brother and sister to tell them what had happened so suddenly. By the time I got back, he was no longer awake. But it was not quite like my mother where I had missed speaking to her by a few hours.

“It was so like my father to be concerned for people around him, even though *his* condition should have been receiving all the attention. But that was not my father.

“Some weeks before, when still in the hospital, the staff had revived him from heart failure, thus violating a code blue restriction that my father had imposed against all such ‘heroic efforts,’ as he and my mother had long before decided. He was actually upset that he had been revived because he saw his next moment as being in the kingdom of God. I had to actually tell him that he was in a bad attitude—‘Dad, what are you talking about? You are here. We don’t want to lose you!’ He felt sheepish, but I have never forgotten the point about how he saw this life. He had no concern over staying alive, particularly without what he called, ‘quality of life,’ as God intended.”

### Reflections

One of the first things Mr. Pack remembers doing after hearing the news was sitting in a restaurant by himself for several hours. He was scheduled to board a plane bound for Global’s corporate office three days later.

Mr. Pack describes himself as having initially been in shock. There was so little warning. His father had only been in Ohio for 51 days, and in the new residence for just five days. Both of his parents were now gone.

Ran Pack was a unique man who had shaped his son in many ways. He passed on a toughness forged by the Depression and World War II battles. He had been an army pilot, world-class salesman, master card player, ballroom dancer and star athlete, among other things.

Even as he enjoyed considerable success in the later decades of his life, he never forgot his humble beginnings, saying in his wheelchair just weeks before his death, describing his approach to needs, “Son, what you do not realize is that I am still about 90 percent pauper.”

Another trait he passed on was boldness. An example of this occurred during his time with Kurfees Paint Company.

He was the firm's leading salesman, and one day he received a call from the National Sales Manager at its corporate offices in Louisville, Kentucky.

The man stated, "Ran, you should have my job! You should be training all of our young salesmen." Ran countered, "I do not want your job. I can make more money here, and have more freedom besides! You can send all the young salesmen to work with me if you wish and I will be happy to train them." They did.

"New salesmen came to our home in Lima on a regular basis all during my childhood years. They would join us at the dinner table for conversation and stories. Each would be a man whom my father was training. One, I recall, had been the second most decorated American soldier in World War II, only behind Audie Murphy who was in the European theatre of war. This man, I believe his name was Lt. Carter, or something similar, was the most decorated man in the Pacific theatre. I recall sitting for several hours listening to him and my father tell stories. This man had escaped in dramatic fashion from a Japanese prisoner of war camp in China. What a story of grueling endurance.

"I learned that my father had been teaching some of the old ladies in the facility to play poker on the Friday, just two days before his death. I never saw anybody who could play solitaire or bridge as well.

"My father had beaten the fourth-ranked Ping-Pong player in the world while in France during the war. He taught his children to play in our basement. Naturally, he was an absolutely fantastic player, and with almost no warm-up. He had learned as a camp counselor, and then honed his skills in college and after. His shots were almost impossible to return.

"Virtually everybody liked my father. Even though he had only been in the facility for five days, the nurse

regularly attending to him was still so distraught at his death that she had to immediately turn around and go home. Her shift started after he had died. I went to visit her the next night at her home to console her. She was still upset, explaining to me that she had *never* met anybody like my father, and yet again she had only known him for five days.

“My parents probably did more for people in God’s Church than any *minister* I ever knew. For instance, they would invite all the little children in the congregation to their home, especially being sure to include those who were disadvantaged. They would roast wieners with all of them in the backyard, and then be sure that transportation had been arranged to get all of them to the zoo. They would take them all on picnics, hikes, to gardens or to see the local minor league baseball team.

“They would also bring all of the widows over for dinner, being sure to give extra time and occasions to those widows whom they felt were most overlooked. My parents almost always went out to eat after services on the Sabbath, but rarely went alone. Frail widows and the poor were ever with them. They got excited about this weekly, each time almost like they were doing it for the first time.

“They were put in charge of what my dad had called the 5H Club. It was for seniors. The names stood for happiness, health, heartiness, humility and one other ‘H’ word I cannot recall. Only rarely would perhaps one of the eight deacons or three elders ever show up for activities. The pastor never did. But my parents always wanted me to join them on these occasions when I was in town on vacation. I would tell myself that at least a pastor was there occasionally.

“And racial origin made absolutely no difference to my parents. I am not sure they saw *any* difference

between a white and a black person. I have never seen so much affection as was the case with my parents and these special ladies. To this day, I get occasional letters of affection about them.

“My father’s love of people actually cost him ordination. It is quite a story. The local pastor was going to ordain him a deacon on Pentecost in about 1979 or 1980. I was there visiting in Greensboro one week before it was to occur, and the pastor wanted to tell me in advance. The next Saturday night was a brief deacons meeting before the Holy Day, and my parents had been attending as guests. At a point when serving the widows came up, my father made an impassioned plea to the deacons who had seemingly all forgotten the Acts 6 genesis of the office they held. He took them to task for never coming to any of the 5H Club activities—and that was the end of his ordination.

“I could not bring myself to tell my father what had happened until near the end of his life. I wanted him to know that he should have been a deacon for the last 15 years, and that had I been his pastor, he would have been a local church elder long before. By 1995, I was a senior minister, had worked with many ministers, and was on the Council of Elders. He was well beyond many I had trained and ordained. In fact, he was more an elder than most elders I have known.

“My parents never sought public reward. They always wanted to toil in the background. In fact, my father never wanted to be a deacon because he felt so many of them were virtually useless, and he did not want to be associated with them. He also did not want to have to ‘play any games.’ He was utterly apolitical. So it bothered him not one whit that he had not been ordained. He found the story I told to be amusing because he understood the minister who had made the decision.

“I thought of the many sayings my father had trained into me—‘Beauty is on the inside’—‘Don’t toot your horn, let others do it’—‘There is lots of room at the top’—‘Your word is your bond, lying is the worst thing’—‘You cannot outgive God’—and so many, many more.

“My father and mother had put me in a beautiful home growing up. They brought ‘country club’ living to their children. Yet my father had not really even had a father, and had lost his grandfather Pack when he was just seven. I think he had seen him twice because he lived so far away.

“I had so many, many thoughts of my father after his death, and these lasted for years. In fact, I still do, almost every day of my life. His words never stop being in my ears. Much like Mr. Armstrong, my father in the gospel, I will probably always hear them. In fact I regularly review the words of both.

“I felt a little cheated at my father’s death that I had lost him with so little notice, and before his years should have been through. My mother-in-law of over 36 years died 10 days ago at this writing, and she was almost 91. (Recall I had lost my mother early, at age 70.) But my father always thought 70 was good enough, believing that if he honored his mother he would get his three-score and ten. He consciously acted as though each additional year past 70 was living on borrowed time. He used the days.

“Finally, I am convinced that God allowed my father to die perhaps somewhat before his time so that I could inherit the business and learn necessary lessons in preparation for my role today. I do not see how it could have happened otherwise.

“I was in awe of my father all my life. I knew that a special member of the ‘greatest generation’ had died in my arms.”

### Randall Pack's Bible

Immediately after his father's funeral, Mr. Pack had to go through his father's possessions. He came upon what he still considers one of *his* most valuable possessions today—his father's wide-margin Bible.

At first, as Mr. Pack paged through its personal, marginal notes, he was moved by the treasure trove of information. It represented one of the only remaining links to his father, with whom he could no longer talk. But thousands of notes in its margins spoke volumes about how he saw the Christian path.

As he continued, he noticed certain other notes in the Bible, recalling a special story.

In late 1977, after Mr. Pack had been in the ministry for some years, his father came to him with a request: He asked for a written explanation of *all* the Bible's difficult scriptures. Thinking of the magnitude of this task, Mr. Pack said, "Dad! You do not know what you are asking." His father put on a mock sad expression—as Mr. Pack recalled, "He put on an Academy Award performance"—and with a flourish of "unhappy" showmanship lamented, "Well, okay. If you don't love me enough to do it, I guess that's fine. I just brought you into the world, and raised you, and fed and clothed you—but that's okay. Don't feel any pressure to do anything for a father just because he asks you..."

Laughing, Mr. Pack relented and agreed to take on the task when he could. Recognizing it would take a staggering number of hours to do it properly, Mr. Pack initially put the project on hold, because the request came just after he arrived in his first full-time pastorate in Rochester, New York.

However, his father persisted. So the writing finally began, and was planned as a surprise Father's Day gift for the next year.

At first, the undertaking seemed even larger than expected. The Father's Day deadline began to seem unrealistic.

But as the winter of 1977 turned to 1978, Mr. Pack enjoyed the process as he delved into it more deeply. The project was completed in time to present it to Ran on Father's Day in 1978. He was thrilled!

A side note. Getting the list finished had been a "horse race," and there was not even time for a single proofreading. Mr. Pack simply photocopied the rough manuscript for his own future use. He would later give copies away to deacons and elders as a part of his sermonette seminars. While certain parts were rough, the manuscript contained 137 typed scriptural explanations, including many correct interpretations of confusing scriptures, as taught at Ambassador College under Mr. Armstrong.

These explanations formed part of the extraordinary doctrinal understanding restored to God's Church in the 20th century (Matt. 17:11; Mal. 4:5-6). The Ambassador faculty expected students to be able to explain these scriptures to those who had questions. Because of this, Mr. Pack took his photocopied version and eventually refined it into an extensive tool for elders, deacons and other leaders in his pastorates. Many found it helpful in their personal Bible study and in preparing sermonettes and sermons.

"Years later, a thief in the local congregation would steal a photocopied version of this paper, and claim for justification, falsely of course, that someone else had written it. We contacted him and told him to cease and desist, and that he was violating copyright law. He did not care. His actions were brazen. I decided it would be counterproductive to take action. If others got copies of the correct explanation of these verses, fine."

As Mr. Pack continued examining his father's Bible, he was surprised to find that time had been taken to painstakingly cut out and paste every one of the explanations into the margins beside the corresponding passages. He had

first had them reduced in size, so that they would fit in his Bible.

“My father had the largest wide-margin Bible I have seen. I could only wonder where he got it. Every one of my explanations is somewhere within it. There seemed to be none missing. I must admit that it was a little painful to see them again in such rough, un-proofread form. Obviously, however, I was overjoyed to find, although after his death, that he had derived so much joy and benefit from the gift.

“My father was an extraordinarily diligent Bible student until the day of his death. I have both my parents’ bibles sitting in my office today.”

The original manuscript was reworked many times before eventually being expanded into a full-length book, *The Bible’s Difficult Scriptures Explained!*, almost 30 years later.

### **Uncle Bill Pack Dies**

Ran Pack’s older brother, Bill, had also not enjoyed good health for some years by the time of his brother’s death. He had suffered from Alzheimer’s disease for much of this time. In February of 1996, he died at the age of 78, just four months after the death of his brother. In the end, neither knew that the other had died.

“I had not gotten to spend a lot of time with my Uncle Bill (and his daughters, my cousins) in later years, but we did see him periodically through the 1970s and 1980s. I knew he was struggling with areas of memory for many years, but was still surprised when he died suddenly in Augusta, Georgia. He had lived for many years in Jacksonville, Florida caring for my grandmother.

“As a career military officer, my uncle had commanded a number of naval airbases, including New Brunswick, Maine, having risen to the rank of naval captain (or full colonel if in the Army or Air Force). We have family photographs of President Kennedy reviewing the troops at this base beside my uncle on a number of occasions, with Maine Senator Edmund Muskie, who later ran for president, present in some of the photographs.

“There is a side of my uncle that is important. Much like my father, he would never toot his own horn. I saw in his office a thank-you letter from Ted Kennedy, and asked what it meant. Here essentially was his answer:

“Many will recall that the Kennedys lost a two-day-old baby boy when they were in the White House—Patrick Bouvier Kennedy. The baby was buried in Massachusetts. When the president was assassinated in 1963, Senator Ted Kennedy contacted my uncle and asked if he could move the baby’s casket to Arlington National Cemetery from Massachusetts without the press knowing at either end that it had happened. He pulled it off, and Senator Kennedy wrote to thank him.

“I have visited Arlington twice, the second time specifically wanting to see the graves, the spot where the baby was buried. My uncle had never repeated the story to the rest of the family.

“I decided to attend my uncle’s funeral partly so that I could see my cousins after some years. But also, he was the last link to my father, and attending honored both him and my father. He gave my dad the nickname ‘Buddy’ that stuck throughout his life. My father could hardly speak about his brother without having tears because this older brother had so watched out for him as a little boy, as his ‘Buddy.’

“The funeral was an extraordinary affair because my uncle had also been the naval air base commander

in Pensacola, Florida, the location of the Naval Air Museum, and the place of his burial. It was quite an experience to see a 21-gun salute, then trumpets playing, and a squadron of jets fly over, tipping their wings to an uncle who, like his brother, my dad, had been a war hero to a once little nephew.”

Mr. Pack flew home to the reality of a new future trying to lead a business, while continuing in the ministry, without knowing he was about to face a new series of trials that were just over the horizon.

## *Growing GCG Problems*

**T**he nature of the inheritance left by Ran Pack to his children was straightforward. He had left the store solely to his oldest son, who had been acting as the president of the House of Health—and after only 129 days was now the *owner* of the store. But his grandson had been managing the business day-to-day, so the transition was not nearly as difficult as it could have been.

Although there have been rumors and wild speculation about an “instant fortune” for Mr. Pack, the reality of his inheritance was far from that. He received no giant lump sum of money—in fact, no money. Rather, he became the owner of a single retail natural food store, 450 miles from his home in Ohio.

### **Company History**

When Mr. Pack’s parents purchased the store in 1973, it was a very small operation, largely due to the fact that vitamins, supplements, herbs, and natural food—thought of as “health food”—were seen as a part of a fringe lifestyle that was a residual effect of the 1960s counter-culture movement.

While retail natural food stores, organic markets, juice bars and health food products are now common, this was not the case in the early 1970s. During this time, when the average American thought of health food, he generally pictured a sandal-shod hippie carrying a sack of granola.

“My father was able to anticipate that the natural food industry would one day become a booming business. He and my mother thought, ‘What could be better? We can buy and develop what will be a successful business—and become healthy at the same time.’

“I am glad that they thought like this. I was presented with a wonderful opportunity to understand business in a consumer products environment—and I could now improve even more my family’s health at the same time.”

Between 1973 and 1995, the entire natural food industry had been transformed, and this included the House of Health Inc. The small “hole-in-the-wall” store, opened in 1963, was now a thriving 2,000 sq. ft. retail operation. The store offered thousands of products including vitamins, supplements, herbs, natural health and beauty care products, organic and natural groceries, sports nutrition products and a wide variety of other products that supported a healthy lifestyle.

In the decades before widespread Internet access, if customers wanted to get information about a specific supplement or natural food product, or learn how to manage a health condition themselves, they were often blocked from going further. A focal point of House of Health was its extensive bookstore and education center, which served to enable customers to take charge of their health through reliable information. This was a unique aspect of the store and perhaps the largest factor in its continued success.

## Unique Challenges

Overseeing this business from a distance presented unique challenges. At first, Mr. Pack contemplated selling the store in order to simplify his life. This would generate a single sum of money, a large portion of which he could possibly donate to the Work—under certain circumstances. He explored this through a formal appraisal and discussions with a business broker.

However, after considering that selling the business meant letting go of his parents' legacy—a fixture in the city of Greensboro that had enriched the lives of many thousands—as well as jeopardizing his son's job security, Mr. Pack decided against it. In addition, the added source of *sustained* income would further enable him to support the Work on an ongoing basis, as opposed to one large offering from its sale.

While he was gaining valuable business experience, Mr. Pack did not consider himself a business magnate. After over 22 years as the owner, Ran Pack described House of Health as “a goose that lays a golden egg each month”—but it was a small egg!

The store would have to be worked with and carefully monitored for it to continue producing as it had for so many years.

“The leader of Global authored the story that I was now a ‘millionaire.’ This story would grow to be ‘multi-millionaire.’ It was never true, and I never had more than a *tiny fraction* of even *one* million dollars. The man knew that it was untrue, but he recognized that people would believe him, and it would make it appear that I now wanted to be a businessman rather than a minister. Later, this is exactly what he would tell people. Some will still occasionally tell me that they heard this in GCG, and later in the Living Church of God.

“The truth is that I was not able to really work the business much. As fascinating as it was, I really did not want to give it the necessary time and attention. But I did learn a tremendous number of lessons. Just what I learned about advertising in the little over five years that I had the business was worth its weight in gold. My father, uncle and grandfather had been very big in advertising. But I had not.

“The many lessons learned, advertising and otherwise, made clear to me why God used a former advertising man to do His 20th-century Work. Mr. Armstrong could not have completed the Work on the scale he did without that specialized training.

“Neither would I be able.”

Still mourning his father, and having been forced to postpone the funeral until after regularly scheduled quarterly Council of Elders meetings, Mr. Pack boarded a plane for California to attend. He was determined to address certain concerns he had.

It should be noted that in 1994 the headquarters of GCG left San Dimas, California for a larger and nicer office north of San Diego. Growth had required this move. The Council meetings would always be held in San Diego, the second Global headquarters. (The original organization, today called the Living Church of God [LCG], is now headquartered in Charlotte, North Carolina.)

### **Weak Leadership, Slow Progress**

The Global Church of God had been started almost three years earlier and the fruits evidenced were relatively meager. Vital, basic literature was being produced slowly, despite growing manpower and financial resources. Worse, some doctrinal subjects were simply left unaddressed, with lay members filling the vacuum with their own personal ideas.

Weak and indecisive headquarters leadership, along with the lack of a single voice of doctrinal precision and accuracy, was becoming painfully evident. The ideas of certain ministers, some of whom specialized in “prophecy,” were creating camps—for and against—radical new ideas being preached.

“Two ministers, friends, in the northwestern United States fancied themselves as ‘prophecy specialists.’ In truth, what they preached was outrageous, silly junk. One man taught things like Christ would return on Pentecost, the Wedding Supper is in heaven and, worst of all, that there was no coming captivity of modern Israel—that they were *already* in captivity—and it was *to sin!* He was openly teaching that one of the Two Witnesses would be the Elijah, and many in GCG were buying his idea, obtained from the well-known ‘Dr. ——’ in Pasadena.

“The best way to describe the things this man believed was that many on the Council found them interesting. Of course, others knew they were nonsense, and easily disproven.

“I had had a long conversation with the Church Administration Director the very night after my father died about the heresies of the above two ministers, and why headquarters was permitting it. I got the, ‘You gotta dance with who brung you’ answer.

“What was perhaps most disturbing was that the same kinds of wild, lunatic-fringe prophetic ideas sweeping PCG (coming from its leader) were also finding a home in the Global Church of God. It was becoming increasingly difficult to see a difference between the two organizations in this regard.”

### Missing Bibles

It was puzzling. How could high-ranking ministers who had served with Mr. Armstrong for decades appear so cav-

alier about important doctrines? Looking around the room, Mr. Pack realized some on the Council did not bother to bring their bibles to meetings! Others rarely opened them.

“Another item that I believe came up at this time in the Council was that members did not need to eat unleavened bread on each of the seven days of that festival. This engendered serious strife on the Council, and I dug my heels in on it. Someone cited Joe Tkach as having said this in 1982, and somebody else said that he heard Mr. Armstrong say in the early 1960s in England that we did not have to do this every day.

“I asked for the floor, and opened my Bible to Exodus 13, and read verses 3 through 9. They are literally impossible to misunderstand, with verse 9 (1) equating unleavened bread to *God’s Law* in our mouth. Obviously, this is an everyday event in the Christian’s life. (2) So is Jesus Christ, the unleavened bread who came down from heaven, to be eaten every day of our lives. And (3) verse 7 states, ‘Seven days *you shall eat unleavened bread.*’

“Not one Council member said a word. Finally, the presiding evangelist acquiesced, because no one could argue with these three points.

“This was another moment of truth in my learning process. It was very difficult to comprehend such basic, biblical ignorance in those who had been with Mr. Armstrong for decades. I knew there were minds in the room that just did not have God’s Spirit.”

It became evident that the Council of Elders was passively divided on what it considered to be “less important” doctrines. And no one felt the need to take a firm position.

It was as if these men had been in the Church for so many years, they felt that as long as they were keeping the

Sabbath, observing the Holy Days, tithing and not eating ham sandwiches, all was well.

Mr. Pack began to draw a direct correlation between the often “Bible-less” Council meetings and the lackadaisical efforts to unify the Church doctrinally.

Another problem became obvious: Senior men had stayed in the Worldwide Church of God too long. Whether they knew it or not, they had absorbed certain attitudes and doctrinal errors. Many could no longer remember what they had learned and from whom they had learned it. Others no longer believed, or had never believed, some of the most fundamental doctrines Mr. Armstrong taught!

Naturally, confusion was trickling down to local congregations. Many field ministers would not, or could not, address doctrinal issues because they often did not know the position of the Church on a given teaching. Not surprisingly, this led to an “anything goes” attitude among some brethren.

### **“Are You a Millionaire?”**

Although Mr. Pack brought up a wide variety of pressing doctrinal questions on this trip, the event that stands out distinctly in his mind is a separate conversation he had with Global’s leader.

At a lunch engagement, as Mr. Pack opened his wallet, the presiding evangelist caught a glimpse of a Platinum credit card. With two or three personal cards and now a couple corporate cards from House of Health visible, he was apparently focused on the possibility that Mr. Pack was now “wealthy.” The man was aware that Mr. Pack had taken the helm of House of Health four months earlier as his father prepared for neck surgery, and that he would be inheriting the business.

He literally reached over and took Mr. Pack’s wallet from his hand, and began flipping through the contents, asking, “Is that a Platinum credit card? Dave, are you a *millionaire*?” his voice rising in excited interest.

Stunned at such bluntness, and such a question so soon after his father's death, Mr. Pack stated he had no idea his worth, and that he was focused on burying his father and fulfilling his obligations as executor of his estate.

He ended the conversation by assuring the man that he would support the Work to the best of his ability after returning home and evaluating the financial condition of the business.

“This was Wednesday, November 2, 1995. I will never forget the date. I opened my wallet to pay for the lunch. But it was not the only time this man wanted to know my ‘worth.’ And there would be many a time he would try to get me to give more to the church.

“On one other occasion, when I offered to pay for a meal—with five others at the table in a restaurant—he responded by literally calling out across the table in an irritated tone, ‘What we really want is for you to give a lot of money to the church, not pay for dinners.’ He was loud. This episode was some time in early 1996. When the others left the table, well aware that he had crossed way over the line, he rushed around the table to soothe the moment. But in the eyes of those present, the damage to him was done.”

### **“I Need You in San Diego”**

In late 1995, the Director of Church Administration had planted the seed in Mr. Pack's mind that he wished him to move to San Diego the next summer (of 1996) to take over the United States field ministry. They thoroughly discussed the idea at the time of the November Council meetings. Mr. Pack agreed to think about it.

“At the Council meeting right after my father died, my brother-in-law, the CAD Director, also admitted to

frustration with some of the ministers being permitted into Global, and explained that he wanted to bring me to San Diego the next summer. He wanted more local support when addressing them, including when he sought back-up from the presiding evangelist. I was not sure I wanted the assignment, but I told him I would consider it. In any event, the offer was firm, and it was intended to be a clear promotion. It meant supervision of the United States regional pastors.

“Just before my uncle’s funeral, we decided to buy a new house, because I had decided there was no way I wanted to go to San Diego. I had come to realize by early 1996 that I would be stymied there—I would not be permitted to do my job, and would be trapped in a place of suffocating misery.

“My brother-in-law was unhappy with me, but he did understand because *he* was miserable. I felt bad about this part of it.”

### **Go Off Salary?**

As 1996 began, Mr. Pack remained focused on his regional pastorate and continued to receive his normal salary from the Church. There were times he considered going off salary completely to assist in the Work, but realized that “a laborer is worth his hire.” He preferred to continue accepting normal payroll checks as compensation for efforts as a minister.

However, intermittently over the course of the year, he did the equivalent of going off salary by simply sending in an offering that was the same amount as his paycheck the day after he received it. He considered his responsibility no different from that of any other Christian, to give according to his blessings—and he counted himself truly blessed. He now had the ability to support God’s Work in a little greater way.

At that time, almost the entire church was led to believe that Mr. Pack “was not accepting his salary” or had “gone off salary.” Neither was completely accurate, but there were some senior ministers and members of the Council who understood his intention to support the Work as much as he could—both with his ministerial salary and income of the House of Health.

“I did consider for a time going off salary to help the Work, but I was never able. I was constantly reminded that this was practically my duty. Yet, in 25 years, I had never had a savings account. Now I had a very little money, and I was being pressured to no end to give most of it to headquarters.

“This was one of the most ungodly things a person could do to another human being—and it was coming directly, and solely, from the leader of the church, making the pressure even greater. He was also trying to get me to invest in gold stocks in South Africa so I could give more to Global. The man even *told the church* I was going off salary in order to put extra pressure on me. But the laborer is worthy of his hire, and that is the way it remained.”

### **Conspiracy Theorists Infiltrate Global**

At the beginning of 1996, as Mr. Pack was settling into his new long-distance responsibilities as House of Health owner, a serious problem slowly appeared in several congregations in Mr. Pack’s region. A growing number of brethren began to reflect a deep involvement in “conspiracy theories.”

At first, this appeared to be limited to a small, confused contingent divided between two congregations (Rochester, New York, and Cincinnati, Ohio). Gradually, it became apparent that brethren were being sucked in across other

areas, including northeastern Ohio and Michigan. It would be learned later that there were some in these areas, but also around the country, who came into Global with similar thinking. These were mostly veteran conspiracy thinkers, not new converts who could be easily worked with toward recovery.

The basic premise behind many of these theorists' ideas was a paranoia that there was a "New World Order" underway (a phrase first heard in a 1991 speech by President George H.W. Bush). It was supposedly being constructed secretly by governments around the world, and would soon be imposed on the citizenry of the United States.

Those of this mindset spoke of "black helicopters" following them home from work and secretly monitoring their homes, and they believed that certain manufacturing facilities and warehouses near their homes were actually secret "concentration camps," among other outlandish ideas.

Many of them held a warped obsession with the April 1993 Branch Davidian incident in Waco, Texas, claiming a government cover-up. They were also caught up in strange forms of numerology, randomly associating world events with numbers in Scripture. Some "knew who shot JFK" or that "the Rockefellers had been killed and cloned for government purposes" or "the Soviet government actually destroyed the Challenger spacecraft in 1986 by space-based laser weapons—but only after the astronauts had first been secretly taken out of the capsule and hidden in Arizona, where they now reside." Another member in Mr. Pack's congregation "did not believe the Holocaust had occurred." He could not be convinced otherwise.

Sadly, this mentality was not limited to the members' view of the outside world. They began to believe that some ministers in Global were actually covert agents of the Jesuits (a religious order within the Catholic Church)!

### Spiritual Boredom

An inset fits here. Such thinking is difficult to comprehend, but it is partly attributable to what may be called “spiritual boredom.” Some members complained that they were tired of the ministry preaching “the same old things” repeatedly, explaining God’s Plan and spiritual principles in the same way. One member of a congregation in Mr. Pack’s region began to put check marks in her Bible next to every scripture that was referenced or used in sermons and Bible studies. When certain scriptures were referenced more than once over the course of several months, this would be cited as proof that “the ministry was not teaching anything new.” Again, some members mirrored the Athenians, who lived to hear “some new thing.” Ironically, the Pasadena conspirators had carefully prepared the survivors of the apostasy to look for new things. But conspiracy theorists were perhaps the most susceptible.

The irony is that this was only a few years after the truth had been thrown out under the guise of “new” understanding. The *basics* of doctrine were what was needed to re-establish brethren in the faith.

“The conspiracy theorists who entered Global were a cancer of the worst order. I had dealt with them many times in my ministry, and they are minds that can rarely be brought back to balance. Once they have been involved for any length of time in the drug of what are endless conspiracy theories, they become addicts. Over time, and not much time at that, this becomes their religion. I liken it to the ‘Holy Names’ people, or to some who make aspects of natural food a religion. They ‘know’ something that everybody else does not know, and nothing will change them.

“I studied conspiracy thinking in the early 1970s at great length. I read a host of books and magazines

to see what there was to the idea of ‘the Illuminati,’ as they are often called. This is when I learned it was a drug of the mind with vast reach—and that involvement in it was very dangerous to maintaining spiritual growth. It tends to block out the sun in its victim’s thinking.

“Consider. There are only three views of conspiracy theories, and I have taught this for decades. First, they are all true—who could believe this?—but if so, there is nothing you can do about them. Second, they are all false, and obviously should not be given the time of day. Third, they are a mixture of both, and we cannot know which is which. So what would be the point of studying them?

“Finally, there is the all-important point that conspiracy thinkers are dangerous to the image of the Church. Not only are their ideas wrong, but they make the Church look to be composed of kooks, something people are eager to believe anyway. We did not need ‘members’ fostering the image that Global was a Church that did not believe in the Holocaust. So there was the protection factor for the Church.

“But headquarters could not see this!”

Another factor in the conspiracy problem was an event that had a permanent impact on the whole world—the advent of the Internet.

While the Internet is now a huge part of everyday life in many nations, this was not the case in 1995-96. Many were new to this medium, and were transfixed by the information found there. However, in seeking information, many could not discern the reliable from the faulty, and the timeless wisdom of “considering the source” fell by the wayside.

Soon, minds ripe for strange ideas became addicted to the Internet, and the conspiracy theories found there, again, as if they were a drug. Anyone could get a “fix.”

These people began to be more vocal about their ideas, which led to division in congregations. Mr. Pack repeatedly had to let them know—in no uncertain terms—that such bizarre theories had no place in the Church of God. This fell on deaf ears.

Soon, at social events at the Feast and combined activities, a few brethren began to be grouped into a caste system. There were those who were ignorant and those who considered themselves the “enlightened few,” who knew the “story behind the story.”

Incredibly, some of these brethren actually began to insist that Mr. Pack and other senior ministers should not be warning of the coming Great Tribulation, but rather of the covert activities of those building the “New World Order.”

Such odd, strange and divisive ideas could not be tolerated in the congregations of Mr. Pack’s region. It was crucial to address these members. Hoping that brethren could be protected, he told them, through sermons and counsel, to *wash their minds* of the conspiracy ideas.

By this time some members had become so paranoid that they were convinced Mr. Pack was a member of the Freemasons, and had reached the highest level, which is the 33rd degree! He would only learn this accusation later.

Unbelievably, upon hearing that some were mixed up in such thinking, Global’s leader tacitly permitted some of it. Realize that he had set a certain tone in the church by holding to strange ideas of his own such as New Moons, of which some knew. By choosing to not clearly condemn the focus on conspiracies, he tacitly added fuel to the fire.

As Mr. Pack dealt with some of these situations locally, a recurring accusation began to reappear. Once again, certain members in his region began to complain that Mr. Pack was “being too harsh.” As had happened early on due to the “30 Reasons” sermons, he began to hear rumblings that the presiding evangelist was upset with him.

“At a certain point, I had to deal with people in the Akron area, and other areas of the northeast region, who were very deep into these things, and who were closely connected to one another in opinion-sharing. I learned that a small group of them had also sprung up in Michigan. But that the real genesis of the problem lay in brethren within the Cleveland area. I had to address them, because they were causing division in the church.

“Naturally, some of them got very, very angry. And just as naturally, when they complained to headquarters, the presiding evangelist did not rebuff them. I did not know this at the time. I was forced to threaten suspension of two or three people. This outraged the others, and caused an explosion.

“At a point, I got a blunt phone call from Global’s leader stating that I ‘was costing the Church income.’ I thought, *Where is the most basic, righteous judgment in matters? What is wrong here?*

“Somewhere along the line, I believe in about late 1997 or so, I came to the point where I had to confront the Council as bluntly as I could. It was high drama. I told them in no uncertain terms I was charged by God to protect my flock from false doctrines—no matter where they came from. I explained that if I were going to tolerate heresies and wrong ideas I would have just stayed in the WCG.

“Sitting at the end of the table, so that I could see all 12 men at once, I stated that I would protect my flock from THEM if I had to. I made it clear, later, that I would *mark* ANYONE in the MINISTRY who tried to harm the people in my area with false teachings. They were shocked. Of course, had this had to be done, this action would have caused chaos, but it was my duty. Recall the *Mystery of the Ages* quote from Mr. Armstrong, referenced earlier. This quote will come up again in this biography.

“But remember again, it had still not once occurred to me what would be the only final solution to all these problems. Mr. Armstrong needed years to leave Sardis, and I needed years to do the same with Laodicea.”

### **Administratively Harsh?**

Led by its leader, certain senior leaders on the Global Council began to have significant issues with the way that Mr. Pack dealt with brethren’s problems in his regional pastorate. Starting with those who were entertaining certain conspiracy theories, but eventually including others who had clear problems of conduct, there was a growing concern that Mr. Pack was not showing enough understanding. Of course, the real problem was his doctrinal positions. And, much like Pasadena, they had to be sure that this was never perceived to be the problem. They had to keep it about “his administration.”

In the end, however, they were right. He was not “understanding” with people who thought that they were being followed home by black helicopters after work or who believed the plastics factory near their house was a United Nations operation—and were talking about these things. Concern for their welfare, and for those around them, dictated that certain brethren who could be reached needed immediate help to come out of this destructive, exclusivist, isolative mindset.

Although the conspiracy theories were a new twist, this was déjà vu. The New Testament is replete with examples of the early apostles addressing foreign ideas entering the Church, whether Jewish traditions or the intellectual vanity of Gnosticism.

“We had the happiest, most doctrinally sound and unified pastorate in the entirety of Global. We were also growing fast again, much like had occurred in the

WCG. Liberal ministers were not happy, however, and were complaining about my lack of ‘inclusiveness’ as they would put it.

“By April 1996, I was summoned to a meeting in Cincinnati because a minister down there in my region had put one man out of the church—and then told him *I said to do it*, when I had specifically told him NOT to do it, but rather to only suspend him until I could get there in a few days.

“The reaction against *me* within his ‘conspiracy circle’ was almost violent. The insubordinate pastor was excused as an ‘old man who got it wrong.’ Yet, this man finally admitted openly to the CAD Director that I had *not* told him to disfellowship the man in question. The Global headquarters retired the man. But the CAD Director flew in and the Louisville pastor drove over because he was to now take over this pastorate. I was placed in a hotel meeting room with about 10 angry conspiracy theorists around the table, each of them permitted by the two ministers present to lambast me. The Louisville pastor had blasted my parents’ congregation in Greensboro in 1974, and only later was Pasadena barely able to ‘restore’ him. I knew he was *very* liberal.

“This was one of the most outrageous experiences I had ever been in. I was so very happy that I was not going to San Diego, and knew that God had protected me from this move. I drove home from Cincinnati well aware that I might soon not be a regional pastor. I did not care, since I was blocked from doing my job.”

As had happened in the WCG, many wondered how Mr. Pack’s ministry could yield so much growth, have so many fruits in his pastorates, and at the same time be dealing “so harshly” with “so many.” It just did not add up. Yet still, this charge continued to be leveled.

His response was always the same. He learned early in his calling that to be considered a true Christian, a person must “live the Book” (God’s Word). And, to be a true minister of Jesus Christ, a pastor must *administer* the Bible.

Most love correction—as long as it is directed at someone else.

This period represented a turning point in Mr. Pack’s thinking. Although long recognizing there would be *some* in the Church whose conduct slipped (Paul’s letters to Corinth bear this out), he saw for the first time that there were elements of alien, confused thinking cutting large swaths through all of the WCG splinter groups.

The other groups that had splintered from the Worldwide Church of God were obviously Laodicean—and sometimes they seemed determined to prove it through their decisions. Now, he began to see many of the same attitudes in a much bigger way in the Global Church.

### **The Northeast Pastors**

In the background, Mr. Pack was working with seven men in the Northeast region. He lived toward the center of the region, with these men largely surrounding his area. His job was to work with each man, and keep the region on track.

“The men in my region were a very diverse group. Two had been international pastors in Worldwide, transferred into the Northeast region by Global. All the other men were moved into their locations from other parts of the United States. I was to learn a great deal about working with ministers during an apostasy that brought invaluable experience.

“One pastor came in from an international area, where he had pastored a small number of people. I had known him a very little bit from my time in New York City. His thinking would turn out to be bizarre

beyond all bounds, eventually coming to services dressed in outlandish international garb. He was insistent that interracial marriage was not a sin, and the CAD Director told me not to work with him, that he would do this from headquarters. They shared the same view of this doctrine. I was being backdoored, and there was nothing I could do. The man soon resigned.

“A particular U.S. associate pastor lived in a city where there was also a pastor. This made him expendable to the area, if he were ready to be on his own. I called the pastor to see if he would recommend the man to move up to pastor and be sent to a post in my region. The pastor had doubts, but did reluctantly agree. This man turned out to be a complete pastoral dysfunctional. His teenage son came to a dance in Akron, and deliberately destroyed the ceiling of a room in the home of his host by soaking the floor above it with water. The act was malicious. I told his parents what he had done. They ignored me. That son was not long after killed in a car accident.

“Another pastor was a man relieved of his duties in the WCG some years before coming with Global. I interviewed and hired him. It was a terrible mistake. He wound up believing Mr. Armstrong was never even an apostle, among other bizarre ideas. At a point, he refused a transfer within the region. Headquarters did back me up on this one, permitting me to tell him that he would be fired if he did not report to his new assignment. He showed up, but picked a home an hour from where he was supposed to live. When his wife died some years later, he buried her before even telling the church she had died. This barely scratches the surface of strange things he did.

“I interviewed and hired another man who had not previously been a pastor. He seemed like a

nice person. I learned much later that he believed and taught such things as abortion was okay under some circumstances—Christians can hate others under some circumstances—there are two groups of 144,000, totaling 288,000—he shopped at flea markets on the Sabbath—and told off-color and racist jokes. I never knew any of these things for the short time the man served under me. Two staunch local members later went to his regional pastor (I was then out of the picture), and he told them to take up these concerns with the man. When they followed instructions, the man got angry, pounded his fist, jumped up and rebuffed them. He died very shortly after.

“Of course, there was also the older man who had lied and created problems during the matter of the conspiracy theorists. This man should never have been in the ministry for even five minutes. Church Administration knew this and retired him. I had not interviewed or hired this particular man.

“The last two men in the region essentially always went around me to evangelist friends at headquarters. They had strong political connections, and used them. They became ‘hands-off.’ When I saw that this was tolerated, it became another reason I knew my time as a regional pastor would come to an end.

“I registered complaints to headquarters about the kinds of things described here, as well as so much, much, much more regarding just the men outlined above. Almost never would anybody take action about anything. I was ‘making waves,’ and ‘not seeing the big picture.’

“But, just as had happened in the WCG, they *would* soon take action against the messenger.

“I learned untold volumes from hiring men who *never* should have been ministers, never mind men

considered to have ‘stood up for the truth.’ I count these among some of the worst administrative mistakes of my life. I was inexperienced. While I take some umbrage at Mr. Armstrong having ordained evangelists whom he later acknowledged did not have God’s Spirit, I am not completely off the hook for ‘missing the mark’ so badly on these men. I got fooled, plain and simple, by a number of men.”

### Linking Conduct to Doctrine

To understand Mr. Pack’s ministry, certain basic instructions from God’s Word must be examined.

Consider this instruction in Philippians 4:5: “Let your moderation be known unto all men.” Mr. Pack understood this was a doctrinal statement—and it spoke to a person’s conduct. Most people simply did not connect the dots that conduct is described and specifically labeled by God in His Word as *doctrine*.

Next, I Timothy 1:9-10 sets up more: “Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, for whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons...”

All of the items in these scriptural lists are matters of basic Christian conduct. But most people never connect them to the end of verse 10: “and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine...”

The point? Wrong *conduct* is “contrary to *sound doctrine*.” Mr. Pack knew few considered this.

Also notice verse 11, tying conduct “to the glorious gospel of the blessed God.” The way individual Christians are to “preach the gospel” is through conduct, as a light to the world.

Philippians 1:27 makes this clear. Notice: “Only let your conversation [conduct] be as it *becomes the gospel* of Christ...that you stand fast in *one spirit*, with *one mind striving together* for the faith of the gospel...”

“These verses are central to almost everything that I learned in my years in Global. They also brought a powerful message about what was *not* happening in any of the splinters. The Church that Jesus built was to be unified, *living* the gospel, and understanding that all matters of right conduct were an equation with right doctrine.

“I came to see what could be called a second kind of apostasy that was evident in hundreds of people I knew from the WCG who had moved to one of the splinters. I referred to it as ‘the apostasy of conduct.’ People’s most basic Christian conduct had degenerated every bit as much as had their doctrinal understanding. I would one day have to write much about what I saw.”

If a person attended services sporadically, Mr. Pack would remind him that the Sabbath was a commanded assembly. He told them to attend regularly.

*Most ministers would not do this.*

If a woman came with revealing or inappropriate clothing, his wife brought this to her attention.

*Most ministers would not do this.*

When brethren did not faithfully save second tithe to attend the Feast, Mr. Pack would admonish them.

*Other ministers saw this as harsh.*

To determine whether someone was being called, it had to be known whether the person was serious about obeying God, and in all points. Mr. Armstrong had established the policy that if, after attending for one year, a prospective member was not pursuing baptism, they should drop out.

*Most ministers wanted to keep attendance up.*

The truth has everything to do with how people *live*, not just the *doctrines* or *ideas* they believe.

Recall that Mr. Pack believed the simple principle of “God’s Math”—removing divisive brethren leads to unity in the Church—and growth in numbers.

Holding members to high standards and refusing to compromise doctrine in the early 1980s brought the best financial years ever in God’s Work. But this was lost to GCG’s leadership.

### **Another Hint About San Diego**

In May of 1996, the leader of Global broached the subject of Mr. Pack moving to San Diego to bring additional business experience to the staff. This was in no way connected to the idea of joining the Church Administration team. They were separate ideas by separate men, six months apart.

Although the idea sounded interesting, both men agreed that there were several reasons not to yet make the change. Mr. Pack reasoned that this could be a possibility in the future—however slim—but current circumstances with learning the business made it unrealistic. Mr. Pack was still in the early phases of this new challenge, and anticipated gaining much business knowledge in the months ahead. The men agreed that he should not yet leave Akron. Mr. Pack was willing to serve at headquarters when circumstances changed. The Work was the first priority.

“I was shocked at the thought that I would come to San Diego for the position that the leader had described. He made it very clear that he wanted me to essentially run the entire Work under him, as a kind of Chief Operations Officer. He was most specific, and believed that my business experience, however thin I thought it was within my overall family, would be something that headquarters did not have. He would

tell me every time he talked to me that he needed an ‘idea man’ around him. But I saw that so many men were stifled under him—so how much more would be any ‘idea man?’

“For the same reason that I did not want to move to San Diego to serve in Church Administration, I was not very interested in this opportunity. On the surface, it was an even greater promotion. But I could not imagine working directly for this man, and neither could my wife. I mulled the decision for almost one year, but could never get myself to be comfortable about it. I could not see how God was in it, and believed that I would not be permitted to do my job by a man with no idea how to do his.”

### **Overspending Leads to Borrowing**

From the very beginning, the Global Church of God made bad financial decisions. They put the organization in deep financial trouble. Although Mr. Armstrong was aggressive in doing the Work, he understood the command to be “a good steward.”

Global’s leader had no business experience, and both he and those under him wildly overspent beyond revenue received. This brought them to the summer of 1996. When the United Church formed and Global did not continue growing as had been projected, an extreme financial crisis developed.

GCG reached an impasse. It needed big money fast or risked folding. Its leader decided to borrow from the brethren and ministry as much money as possible for what was hoped to be a short period.

Mr. Pack was approached.

The evangelist made clear the situation, “Dave, we just need the money temporarily. Please get as much as you can and send it right away. Without an immediate infusion, we

cannot meet payroll! Can you send money to get us through this short term cash crunch?"

The situation had to be dire, but Mr. Pack had limited resources. Since the death of his father the previous fall, he had accumulated a reasonable—and necessary—cash reserve in his business. But this was exactly that. It was a *reserve* that was vital for normal store operations. It was not something that could be permanently lost.

Something had to be done. Mr. Pack called his son and asked what was the largest amount that could be pulled from the business account and sent to the Work without endangering the company financially.

Mr. Pack decided he could loan \$57,000 to the Church, but only with the absolute guarantee that it was a 90-day loan to be repaid once the fall Holy Day offerings arrived. He asked for a promissory note, and received assurance that the note and the date would be honored.

At first a month passed, then two, without the promissory note's arrival. After many requests, by phone and letter, Mr. Pack still could not get headquarters to send him the promissory note, needed to confirm the transaction had occurred.

"The leader called me in about late July or early August of 1996. He was urgent. I had never heard him so frantic. Headquarters was in deep financial trouble. I had been hearing from different ones there that some sort of accounting malfunction occurred, and that the church had fallen into a hole to the tune of almost \$1.5 million without anybody recognizing what was happening. I was pressured in the worst way to give all I could, and to do so quickly.

"I happily agreed, but made clear a promissory note was necessary, and must be sent right away. I was sending every dime I had in the world, as well as my 16-year-old daughter's inheritance from her

grandfather the previous year. I was asked to solicit a couple others if they could help. I did, and they did.

“But I could not get the Business manager to send me the promissory note. I called him at least 10 times, asking for the note that I had been promised. They had my funds within 48 hours, but had not kept their agreement to send the note. I finally DEMANDED it. I got the note just before the Feast of Tabernacles. What had been done was an outrage!”

The Feast came and went without repayment. Mr. Pack made it clear to the Global leader that his business needed the money to meet specific obligations before the end of the calendar year. Begrudgingly, the funds were remitted, but it was made clear that he was more interested in his new business than “God’s Work.”

This implication stunned Mr. Pack. After everything that he had done to pour his entire life into God’s Work—he now stood accused of not enough zeal for that Work.

It was at this moment that all the collective events that transpired over the course of 1996 began to make sense. But things would grow worse—much worse.

## *Demoted— Gaining Business Experience*

There was a bright spot that occurred before, during and after the Feast of Tabernacles of 1996. The Packs were sent to keep the Feast in Australia. This would be preceded by a visit for the Day of Atonement to New Zealand. They would be able to visit Hawaii on the way home.

“My family was thrilled to hear that all of us—wife, daughter and I—were going to visit Australia and New Zealand for the Feast of Tabernacles, after which we could ‘take in Hawaii.’ When I married my first wife, she made me ‘make a promise’ to her—that I would take her back to England and Hawaii some day. She had kept the Feast in Hawaii the last year before we married. We never got to England, but did make Hawaii—and with our daughter.

“Of course, the main part of the trip would be keeping the Feast with God’s people halfway around the world in a place that the three of us had never been. I had heard that New Zealand was the most beautiful country in the world, and we were scheduled to fly into Auckland first.

“We arrived, toured north of Auckland for one day—all out of sorts with the time change. We then kept Atonement before touring one more day south of Auckland.

“I must say that New Zealand *is* the most beautiful country in the world. We were thrilled that our daughter could be with us. I remember thinking how my calling into God’s truth put me in a position to see places of the world that I likely would never have seen otherwise. The brethren were very warmly affectioned toward visitors. I learned that many people had read my book and heard my tapes from these areas so far away. It was its own reward hearing that these things had ‘made the difference’ in leaving the WCG.

“We were next to go to the beautiful city of Perth, on the western side of Australia, to keep the first half of the Feast several hours down the coast on the Indian Ocean. Again, we found the experience extraordinary, and western Australia to be very different from New Zealand—we toured a little as we could. The second half of the Feast was spent in Canberra, the capital, located in eastern Australia. Here we saw kangaroos in the wild, and they were everywhere—‘Reds’ and ‘Grays.’ After the Feast, we toured the east coast of Australia, going north to Sydney, no doubt one of the most beautiful cities in the world. My aunt had once lived there for five years.

“It was as though we had now been to three entirely different parts of the world, including east and west Australia, which are very dissimilar. I gained a perspective of how these diverse parts of the southern hemisphere are more than just ‘down under.’ The birthright blessings in God’s promise to Abraham are evident in more places than North America and Britain. But I must say there are an awful lot of deadly creatures in Australia—spiders, snakes, sharks, tree frogs, crocodiles, potent jellyfish,

scorpions, and many more. I bought a very big book, titled, *Australia's Deadliest Creatures*, and was glad I was reading about them after I had left.

“Of course, Hawaii was entirely different, and it became the fourth part of the world we saw in this one trip.

“The only negative to the trip was that I learned later that the presiding evangelist wanted me far away from any kind of influence in the United States at what would be larger Feast sites, meaning exposure to greater numbers of people. Australia and New Zealand together were under 200 in attendance. I was well aware he was upset that I needed the note repaid right after the Feast.

“He had ‘plans’ for me I would soon learn.”

Despite all that was happening behind the scenes, Mr. Pack’s public relationship with the Global leader was still cordial. But events about to unfold forced the situation closer to a breaking point.

### **Demoted—Again!**

The presiding evangelist scheduled a trip to Akron for the weekend of December 7, 1996, with the intent to speak with Mr. Pack. Mr. Pack learned of it just one week before when his brother-in-law finally reached him in Greensboro, where the family had gone for Thanksgiving. (Both his sons lived there.) There was both urgency and gravity in his voice.

Not knowing what the meeting was to be about, and having been told he would find out when the leader arrived, Mr. Pack approached it with some apprehension, but at the same time, eagerly looked forward to the meeting, hoping some of the serious administrative and financial issues facing the Church could be resolved.

The purpose of the visit would soon be clear.

The leader walked into the house, literally dropped his bags six feet inside the door, and declared, ‘Well, let’s get this over with.’ He sat down, and got right to the point. After reiterating that several senior men—including himself—believed Mr. Pack was dealing too strictly with brethren in his pastorate, he informed him that the decision had been made to remove him as regional pastor.

Of course, this was not a complete surprise. Neither was the fact that the leader tried to put a salve on the situation by assuring Mr. Pack he would still be on the Council of Elders.

The presiding evangelist said this was also being done so that he could focus more on his business. Mr. Pack thought, *Focus more on the business? What does he mean? I’m a minister of Jesus Christ!*

Mr. Pack’s only *true* business obligations had so far consisted of phone conversations with his son and brief visits to North Carolina every two or three months. He was obviously a minister first and a business owner second. The store, along with acting as executor of his father’s estate, had taken some of his time, but had not significantly impacted his ability to serve. Besides, it had now been over 13 months since his father had died, and about 17 months since he had taken over as president. The business was well under control.

Mr. Pack accepted the decision. But presented a long story of all that he had been dealing with in his region. This was an opportunity to “explain *everything*,” and then see if it made a difference. It did not.

It is critical to establish that Mr. Pack did not resign as regional pastor. He was removed against his will. He had been demoted for unjust reasons before—but God had used it for good each time.

The reasons given were a thin predicate for disciplinary action—because he had consistently been bringing up problems that Global’s leadership had ignored, and because, in their view, he was “shrinking the Church’s tithe-paying base.”

“Who do you think should replace you?” the GCG leader then asked, casually bringing up two names.

“I spent about two hours covering everything that was on my mind. I left nothing unsaid—and neither did my wife. But, as this man had been for decades, once he had made up his mind on a matter, he was impervious to facts, evidence, proof, reason, truth, Scripture and all forms of logic. They all bounced off.

“I eventually told him that he had done me a favor, because I was not being allowed to do my job as regional pastor, anyway. Removal became relief. But I argued passionately for him to deal with the many wrong *causes* that were going on in GCG. Instead, he chose to deal with the *effect*—me constantly complaining about false doctrine tolerated, mismanagement of funds, bad administration, politics, division, and so much more. But I was absolutely respectful and accepting of the decision, as will be seen momentarily.

“We moved to the kitchen table to spread out a map of the region. There were two men being considered to be my replacement. They were men who now reported to me. My nephew, a pastor for about two and a half years at the most, had been recommended by his father, my boss. Young, and green as grass, and utterly over his head, he was at least an honest man. Even the leader, another of his uncles, knew this idea was ridiculous.

“The other option was a man who was extremely liberal, had been fired in 1974 for attacking Mr. Armstrong from the pulpit in Greensboro, North Carolina, before he was reinstated and given another chance. He was on record as saying he agreed with the apostates that Jesus Christ had no possibility of sinning during His human existence. When fully understood, this is one of the central elements within the definition of the doctrine of anti-Christ!

“The man was, however, a very good golfer, fisherman and teller of jokes. He got the nod.

“When does a man who is being demoted select, or help select, his new ‘boss’? It was all upside down—more administrative craziness, and evidence that God was lacking in what was happening.

“Two years and three months as a regional pastor were over. But I had learned a treasure trove of lessons. More time in this office would have been of limited value. This is because I had worked with and interviewed many other ministers outside my region, and trained others previous to entering GCG.

“What happened on this occasion was administrative insanity—and borderline real insanity. There never should have been a change made. But what would occur the next afternoon from the pulpit would pale the evening before. And even *this night* was not over.

“The meeting ended with my wife and I going to dinner with the man. In all cases through the years, the visitor from headquarters would pay for the dinner—ALWAYS!—no exceptions! At the end of the meal, I was left to pay the large bill. The man had wanted to go to a nice restaurant. The expectation of the leader—who had just removed me from office and who was staying in my home—was that I ‘had a lot of money,’ and should pay the bill.

“The next evening the leader wanted to have dinner out again, and this time others were scheduled to meet us to form a larger group. I was *again* expected to pay the much larger bill, this time of several hundred dollars.

“Such was the man.”

### **State of GCG’s Finances**

Over 200 people were present the next day at services, including a number from Akron UCG there to hear the presid-

ing evangelist of the Global Church of God. Some had driven long distances. Mr. Pack had not seen these people since February 1993.

The first element of the man's announcement was his admission that the Church's finances had been mismanaged. This was during what would have been an extended sermonette time. The long announcement was rambling, but it is best to read it exactly as it was spoken. Portions that had nothing to do with either Mr. Pack's change in duties or the church's finances are the only things deleted.

"It is anyway very good to be with all of you, and to be with Mr. and Mrs. Pack again because they've been friends of me and my family for many, many years, and appreciate being with them and getting to see their beautiful home..."

"We're tightening our belts at Headquarters, financially because of the financial situation I think you know we're in. We did have the very tight time in the middle of the year.

"The year started off just wonderful back in, well, January. We had 85 percent increase over the previous January. Then it dropped to 68 percent increase in February. But then in March and April it went on down, and by summer it was down very low in a surprising way.

"We didn't know that we began to come back up though last month, I guess was, I forget October. I think [it] was [up] somewhat, 8 or 10 percent, and last month, November, was [up] 17 percent..."

"Therefore this past Monday we had 425 percent increase over the previous December and of course I knew that wouldn't last. That's because we had that big, you know, could vary a lot the first few days. But then the next day it dropped to 33 percent and so I don't know what it is. It's probably 20, or 25 percent, 30 percent

now. But at any rate here things are getting better and I appreciate your response.

“I appreciate your prayers. I appreciate your continued prayers for that. We certainly want to do our part, and it did sneak up on me because I honestly did not know about it, and I had given Mr. ———, our business manager and Mr. ——— and Mr. ——— who’s come with us now since about June. I guess he came in the Church several months earlier but now has been with us full-time since June.

“He was for about 20 years in the accounting department at Pasadena, and I mean Pasadena in this case, and he was, got to be their chief accountant for the last three years. He’s very sharp and when, after he came with us, he let me know how bad it was, because Mr. ——— and Mr. ——— and the secretary and help there, [name], had been so involved in doing the switch over from QuickBooks, they call it, to Solomon Accounting System, and at the same time participating in the annual audit in the spring.

“Both things seemed to hit at once that they didn’t realize what was building up as far as the debt and going on this big station out in L.A., and the number of other things that we did and they didn’t tell me about it. And finally Mr. ——— told me about it in, in July, and we’d begun to take action right then, and of course we’ve been taking action ever since.

“So I have apologized to God and asked Him to forgive me for being careless and trust that that will never happen again. I told everyone involved, I said I’m holding you, and you, and you accountable, anyone of you, collectively. And we are going to get out of it and I know God will be with us because we definitely intend to do that. But we will appreciate your prayers.

“It’s going to take several more months of being, you know, belt tightening, let’s say, to get out of the

particular situation, and yet the Work is still growing in spite of that and we're very grateful for what God is doing."

This portion of the announcement was a tacit admission that Mr. Pack was not causing the Church's financial problems, as the presiding evangelist had alleged. Rather, poor fiscal oversight and executive decision-making, and for a long period, were the root causes of problems in Global.

"I was happy to see the man fairly thoroughly cover Global's financial situation. Of course, it was outrageous that he had been blaming me privately—when he absolutely knew better—for what had been simple, gross overspending that had occurred. None of the brethren present knew that he had been badgering me about the sinking tithes when he knew the fault was what had happened at headquarters—on his 'watch.' He was the Chief Executive Officer of the corporation, and knew exactly where the buck stopped.

"Such was the man."

### **The Announcement About Mr. Pack**

Local members knew how active and diligent Mr. Pack had been in his ministry, known to them for years. He was curious to see how the demotion would be characterized. It was littered with falsehoods. In fact, other than the part about going to San Diego, almost everything said was untrue. The wording is again as delivered.

"Now I want to mention a, give a special announcement, and this is one of the reasons I came, which you would imagine, so I don't want to hide that. It's something that Mr. Pack and some of us at headquarters have been discussing for a number of

months. He actually proposed it two or three times within the last several months.

“As you know his father died...it’s been about a year now since his father died and he’s been under a lot of pressure with this whole estate and a whole business that he’s inherited that is his responsibility there, and of course we’ve had many pressures in the Work; attacks and this and that and something else all being involved here but because of that pressure on him, and I know he’s been under a lot of stress because of that and related things.

“We have mutually agreed and talked about it. This has not been something that’s just been out of the blue. In the sense he has brought it up to us a number of times himself without pressure at all but we’ve decided that he would step aside as the regional pastor. So Mr. Pack will not be the regional pastor. He will continue to be your pastor, but he will not be the regional pastor for the time being. That’s not to say he will not be one again. He may be one again.

“I have been trying to get him to think about, I mean just think about, he doesn’t even like to think about, moving to San Diego, and because frankly he is a man as you know of great sort of business and creative and ideas, ability more than most of the men we have in the field. And if we could get him to leave the promised land here in Ohio, and go to the real promised land in San Diego, why, we would like that. And I mean that very sincerely.

“There are a number of things we thought of, we prayed about, and we think this is the best thing and so he can continue to be your pastor and devote himself to that, plus being able to build this business and he intends to be very generous. In fact, he’s volunteered, no one indirectly asked him to do this before he volunteered, and has talked about even a few days before I even came

here and I didn't know it, to our accountants there that he would go completely off salary.

“So he's planning to do that because he has an inheritance, he has a business. So he'll be working for you for nothing and working for me for nothing. And if he's working for me, he's working for God of course, because all of us work for God. But at any rate that's what he's trying to do and we're very grateful for that and I do plan and, and I mean that we, we plan and expect that he will be in San Diego or regional pastor in some other job, a bigger job, within 18 to 24 months.

“Whatever works out the best to give him a chance to step aside to do these things to rebuild his health and his well-being and everything else during the meantime. Not that he's been in *bad* health. But he has been under a lot of pressure, and we hope that this will work out for good.

“I know he's happy about it and feels that it will. So I hope you will pray about that and accept that in a positive light, and he'll continue to be right here with you in every way, and help you, and have even more time to help you rather than having to run all around all over the northeastern part of the United States.

“Mr. Pack is conferring with me and I've talked with him a good deal about it already, and will continue to, about choosing his successor. It's not that we thought that we, you know, it's some great man, it's just that we have two or three very capable men and so we're not going to announce that probably for another week or two it's a transition period.

“It's not some urgent thing. It's just something that we all feel is better so within another couple weeks or so, we'll probably have someone we can announce and Mr. Pack will have input into that, the new regional pastor.

“And then I guess I mentioned he volunteered to go off the payroll, he is going to go, remain, I think it's good

that you understand this too, as his own brethren here. We do want him to remain. I've asked him to remain on the Council of Elders, which he is going to do, so this is not some great big kick in the stomach and it's not intended that way at all. So I don't want any weird rumors or nonsense going out from here or I will get you if I hear about that. I can't get you.

"Some of you young guys are bigger and stronger than me, but I, I, my daughter Elisabeth has told me she, because I'm only 5'10" and 160 and you know, and when people see me on television she said I look better than I am. See my daughter loves me. She is one of my fans by the way. She, she's my older daughter. She and I are very close, but she says, 'Daddy,' she says, 'TV makes you look better than you really are.' I said, 'Oh, really?' 'Yeah.'

"See they got a lower stand. They don't have a big stand like this and somehow I tower, I didn't ask them to do that, it just worked out that way, and somehow the way the camera angle comes, or something a little bit up, or something it makes me look more broad-shouldered and a little bit bigger so when people see me that then come in from television, they thought, 'Oh, we thought you were big, oh.'

"And but anyway, I'll get you in some other way. I'll, I'll, I'll ask God to rebuke you if you go spreading evil rumors or whatever. So I was kidding about that.

"Anyway, I hope we'll all pray for one another, and all these things that all of us go through in the right way. That God will guide it, and help all of us to do everything we can to love one another, help one another, encourage one another, be loyal.

"We know that Christ is guiding the Church overall, if we're trying to serve him and generally love one another, and Mr. Pack and I do love one another, and he is one of my best friends. I really mean that and

I mean that even more today. I didn't plan to say this, but seeing the absolute graciousness with which they [Mr. and Mrs. Pack] responded to this, because he'd already suggested some of this.

“Why, it makes me realize even more deeply the depth of conversion of Mr. David Pack. It really does, and I'm very grateful for that and our God will bless him and bless all of us for that kind of an attitude. So anyway, let's all pray for one another and all of this and please pray for the Work.

“We need God's blessing on the Work and we're doing everything we can to help things be better in the Work and to preach the gospel with all of our heart and all of our strength. I'm 66 and a half, and I'm trying to push myself as hard as I can go and a lot of the others are, too.

“Mr. Pack has here in spite of tremendous problems that have come up [sic]. Maybe some of you didn't know the details, but all the perhaps hundreds or thousands of hours that's taken to fly to Greensboro to make this business not fold up since his father's death, and get it going, and get it going even bigger, which he plans to do, so he'll have even more to give to God's Work.

“All of those things take time and energy, and so we need your prayers and I know if you pray for us with all your heart and ask God to intervene, help us learn every lesson that God wants us to learn there at headquarters, teach us everything that we should learn and be with us, though then if we respond I know he will bless us and help us to grow and shake this nation. You've heard me express that, but that's the way I feel.”

Mr. Pack and his wife were sitting in the front row. They had had a night and a morning to think about what had happened. They had determined to be supportive, and to look

agreeable to all that would be announced. Everyone could see them—the brethren would be watching.

“When he finished, my wife and I sat absolutely stunned. But we made sure no one could tell. Nothing could have prepared us for what we heard. We simply could not believe what had just happened. More outright falsehoods had just been told to over 200 brethren than I had seen snowflakes fly during a blizzard. I could not believe my ears. It was my job to get up and make the regular announcements after this, and I explained, through use of humor, why I did not want to go to San Diego. I wanted to be on the record *from that very moment forward*.

“I had witnessed such deceit with Joe Tkach, and with others, but I never thought a man who had been my friend and family member for over 25 years at that point—or any point—was capable of saying what he did—that I had *volunteered* to do ANY of the things that he had entirely decided on his own. He put on what my wife and I referred to as ‘the Academy Award performance,’ one that we would forever characterize as ‘magnificent to the point of breathtaking.’

“The idea that I was under stress is ridiculous in the extreme, and everybody who knows me would know this. I thrive on stress and challenge. I came out of the womb with almost unbounded energy—that I still have today. And again, *everybody* who knows me knows this. Nothing was ever uttered by me along the lines of stress, rebuilding my health and well-being or being under pressure. There had certainly been no hundreds, let alone thousands of hours involved with the business.

“All of these statements were absolute fiction.

“I *had* spoken of going off the payroll, but had not done it because I had obviously not decided in a final way to go ahead with it. The man deliberately

overcredited me with a final decision that I understood was intended to publicly push—force!—me into what he wanted. It was rank evil, and on top of so many untruths just presented. His statements about me giving more, and hoping I would give more, were also intended to publicly *pressure* me to do this. How could he not know these things would have the opposite effect?

“The thought that, because I graciously obeyed the government over me—as we all should do on every occasion, whether decisions are just or unjust—he would represent me as *agreeing* with the decision to not be a regional pastor was also 24-karat deceit. So was the statement that I had *volunteered* several times before to do this.

“No such offer, or even suggestion, had *ever* been discussed, not remotely.

“That he had referenced me as one of his best friends made the whole announcement so much more galling to hear—but I knew it made his comments convincing to his listeners.

“The only thing that the man had said that was true was the statement about wanting me to come to San Diego, and why he wanted me there. He had talked about it with others, so I knew he was serious about it. He had flown to Ohio the previous May (seven months earlier), and we had taken long walks, having talks about this idea. He *really* wanted me there, presenting a host of things that he would want me to do. Yet, he seemed perfectly willing to do everything in his power to alienate me.

“Such was the man.

“I left this Sabbath service knowing one of three things would happen. This man would be removed by God from leadership of the church—or I would be put out of the congregation in the future (I did not yet

know what that would mean, of course)—or he would completely repent (and I *did* know that was highly unlikely).

“But I had myself to blame for much of what had just happened, and in a sense all of it. Mr. Armstrong had told me the man was not of God, and I had reasoned around it. Is there any wonder why I would not warm to the idea of moving to San Diego? And, of course, I realized that he would not *order* me to come if he did not perceive me to be ‘on board.’ Naturally, his actions on this day made this decision open and shut.

“There was a hidden message in this episode. I was the person who had pushed for the construction of United States regions. For reasons obvious now, oversight was vitally needed. Strangely, there was at first no ‘space’ at headquarters for the idea. It took the first eight months of 1994, and constant lobbying, to sell Church Administration and other San Diego leaders on implementing the structure. The initial three men appointed eventually became five. Now, the only person who could see the need for this field system was out.

“I never listened to the tape of this announcement after hearing it live on December 7, 1996. I did decide to keep a copy, however, thinking I would probably never need it. When the idea of a biography of my life was born, I was very glad that I had spent a great deal of time organizing my files and keeping an archive of almost everything ever done in my ministry. For instance, I have a record of every visit I ever made through all of my assignments, going back to 1971. This record has been useful many times. I literally have kept files of most of my swimming practices from my junior and senior year of high school. So I was in a position to now reach for and employ my files for something useful.”

## *House of Health Provides Unique Opportunity*

Mr. Pack was now only responsible for his local congregation. This *would* provide a chance to catch up in his personal life. Now over a year since his father's death, some elements of his estate *did* need finalizing. The most important part of events was he had been given *another* "time to think." He knew, "All things [always] work for good to them that love God and are called according to His purpose."

Thankfully, House of Health's annual sales were better than ever. Over the decades, the store had garnered a devoted and always growing local clientele. Each year its sales receipts had risen—no exceptions. The increasing customer-base was magnified by a period of tremendous growth in the natural foods industry and by a prospering economy.

In his first year of involvement, Mr. Pack often had scant time to take a hands-on approach to the business due to the needs of his regional pastorate and his role on the Council of Elders. There were periods when all that he had time for was a phone report from Rob each day.

Focusing more closely on the House of Health was an unexpected development—and in hindsight represented a great opportunity for personal growth in executive leadership.

### **Expanding to Second Store**

At the end of 1996, another critical event occurred. His son had now been working in the store for almost three years, and had been married for over a year. In November 1996, shortly before Mr. Pack's demotion, Rob approached his father for the second time about an idea, on this occasion with a fuller proposition. This is his description of the conversation:

“Dad, we have a wonderful opportunity to expand the business and the time to do it is now. Greensboro desperately needs a new, large vitamin, supplement, herb, natural food and grocery store. Until now, there have only been small health food stores. If we find the right location and open a large market with food service and expanded groceries, the business could really explode. I think I have found a site that will work.

“Also, I'm at a personal crossroads. I gave up pursuing my education and a potentially successful career after medical school, and at age 22, and married, I feel I either need to focus back on school now that we have grown the business, or we need to operate on a larger scale—which will become my long-term career. I don't want you to feel pressure, but it is the reality of the situation we are in.”

In fact, this did create some “pressure” on Mr. Pack, but he recognized that his son carried his genes. He had much of the same ambitious nature as his dad had as a young man!

After examining his son's business plan, there did now appear to be an open door for the House of Health to expand. However, because of his full-time vocation—the ministry—he was not yet convinced it was a door he could walk through.

Therefore, Mr. Pack called his Uncle Frank and carefully sought counsel on whether to expand. Since he was still rela-

tively new to the business world, his uncle's insight was vital. As the biography has shown, Mr. Pack had maintained a close bond with his uncle. He had watched from a distance as his uncle took the lead in transforming Encyclopaedia Britannica into the corporate giant it had become in the mid-1990s.

Mr. Pack realized that he either needed to sell the business, freeing his son to pursue a different career, or expand. There was no middle ground. There was not enough financial future for his son in a single store. He could not help but wonder if his removal as a regional pastor was serving a purpose, and whether God expected him to take advantage of this opportunity. Just a few months earlier, this thought would not have crossed his mind. But now it was inescapable. He decided to move forward.

“My uncle had initially made it quite plain that I should go very, very slowly with any expansion. He suggested waiting and analyzing the opportunity for another six months or so. My father had also told me two basic pieces of business advice not long before he died. One had to do with how to set employee salaries. The other was a caution about being careful of expanding too fast. His words rang loudly in my ears.

“I decided to wait over two years after his death to start the new store. I did know that my parents had been considering expansion just before my mother died, and then again, just before my father had his surgery.”

After a year of careful planning, the second retail location of House of Health Inc. became a reality. Over double the size of the original store, it opened December 31, 1997.

### **God's Purpose for Business Focus**

Mr. Armstrong's training for his commission included a wealth of business experience that gained him much vital

knowledge, most specifically advertising, marketing and promotion. Having helped organize the Global Church of God from the beginning, and then sitting on the Council of Elders in San Diego (and with four men who had sat on Mr. Armstrong's Council), Mr. Pack appreciated even more how important was this background for any leader of God's Work.

With this parallel as a backdrop, Mr. Pack thought, *It appears God wants me to give more attention to elements of corporate planning that could also allow me to better serve the Work in the future. It will allow me to speak more bluntly about what no one else on the Council of Elders seems willing, or able, to address.*

Yet again, Mr. Pack found himself in circumstances he did not fully understand—not yet. But he would be able to see in retrospect that God had been actively guiding him.

“A case could be made that I should not have received my parents' store because my brother had a more natural business mind. The initial reason that I was happy to receive the store was because it meant my sons, who both enjoyed the natural food business, had a place to work.

“The next reason I came to appreciate this unique inheritance was that I knew a movement against me was gaining a toehold in the mind of the Global leader, particularly by the middle of 1997—to push me out.

“It was not until the second year, and really more in the third, and even into the fourth year of leading the company, including planning its major expansion, that I saw the tremendous worth of the experience that I was gaining.”

### **Intensive Business Experience**

Alongside continued duties in the ministry, the *hands-on* business training began.

Between 1995 and 1998, the House of Health had grown from one small store with six employees to two retail locations with 15 employees, and many thousands of local customers all over and surrounding the metropolitan area of two-thirds of a million people. It was the only two-store chain of its kind in what is called “The Triad,” meaning the three cities of Greensboro, Winston-Salem and High Point, North Carolina, an area of over 1.5 million people. Ensuring the continued success and development of the business involved a great deal of effort, as well as proficiency with the basics of management of a corporation that was not really any longer just a “small business.”

One of the most fundamental aspects of operating a business is understanding how to read and communicate through financial statements. For instance, it is easy to look at a business’s income and subtract its expenses to see how much money was made each month.

However, it was also necessary to glean information from income (“Profit and Loss”) statements on product sales and details of expenses. Also, the income statements work in concert with the balance sheet, providing a snapshot of where the company stands at each month’s end. Examining, managing and improving the profit margins—gross and net—become central to the health and continued growth of the company. Starting a second store would change these numbers for a time—but how much, and for how long? This had to be carefully watched—and understood.

Mr. Pack had always worked closely with his personal accountant, but working with a *corporate* accountant, and on a regular monthly basis, was different. Understanding and discussing the tax implications of the corporation’s profits at the end of each year represented its own “business school” coursework. Caesar—state and federal—is watching. Taxes had to be paid correctly. Doing this was a learning experience.

Also, acting as President and CEO of a “closely held sub-S-corporation,” as opposed to owning a sole proprietor-

ship—or partnership—or C-corporation—carried a host of implications. There were also the corporate minutes that had to be maintained. In the end, working within the constraints of a corporation provided priceless training.

### **More Training**

There was also the human resources side of the business. Although the staff of House of Health Inc. was stable, employee turnover is normal in any retail business, and more so with the passing of years in the modern American society. Employees had to be interviewed, hired, trained and sometimes terminated. While Mr. Pack had discussed manpower in certain contexts with Mr. Armstrong, and also in Global, much of this was a new kind of additional experience.

Operations at the original House of Health were pretty straightforward. Once the company expanded to two locations, and the number of employees rapidly increased, and continued to do this, more needs arose—employee handbooks, group healthcare plans, a variety of insurance matters, including Workers' Compensation and unemployment, and much more. There was the Health Department to work with. Attorneys were involved in establishing leases, now for two stores. These leases also had to be negotiated.

Mr. Pack now oversaw six-figure monthly and seven-figure annual budgets. This brought the realization that the financial security of 15 people rested on his decisions. This brings a certain *natural* pressure, but only the kind every business owner has to deal with. It is life, but a new kind of "life."

Another important element of Mr. Pack's training was his immersion into marketing. This was something he enjoyed immensely. As he coordinated a large advertising campaign for the new store that harnessed television, radio, newspaper, (regional and neighborhood) and a variety of other print media, he learned about its vital importance. He

also worked with Rob on in-store promotions, and with vendors through cooperative advertising.

“An encyclopedia of information about advertising was presented to me. It amounted to a whole graduate course in business school. My son and I met with radio people, television people, newspapers of different sizes and shapes, as well as representatives who wanted us to buy space on a billboard near the new store. There was also the purchase of a very large, and expensive, sign and a second smaller one for the new store. They had to carry the right beauty and color, as well as size.

“I learned about Yellow Page ads, and their sizes and worth per dollar spent. For instance, I came to realize that size is not as important as most retailers think. They can be quite small, yet effective. I also came to realize that the people selling all of these things made their advertising medium appear to be the only one that worked, or the one that worked best. There was also the monthly newsletter, and whether to advertise on the new and expanding Internet, etc., etc.

“Learning all of these things, just regarding advertising in the business, was a process. I am tremendously thankful for the broad array of helpful background exposure it brought that is so useful today.”

The need to communicate with existing customers through a variety of publications, but primarily a monthly newsletter, became obvious. Within three years, the customer database grew to over 6,000. These received a monthly newsletter containing articles, educational pieces and in-store promotions.

In the late 1990s, as the popularity of the Internet skyrocketed, a company website was launched. Mr. Pack and his son collaborated on the project, looking for ways to capitalize on this new avenue to reach consumers.

Overall, expansion to a second store represented a big challenge. This was a chance to coordinate a large project, involving landlords, building contractors, bankers, lawyers and accountants, with hundreds of thousands of dollars at stake. Mr. Pack considers the value of this experience second only to his ministerial training. If it had not been for his demotion at the end of 1996, he never would have been able to immerse himself so thoroughly.

It was an experience and training period that would last for just over five years, until July 31, 2000.

“The time I spent working with banks, realtors, lawyers and accountants, as well as the builder of the new mall we were entering, was worth its weight in gold. There were many long, detailed conversations about all that would be involved in the expansion of an *established* retail operation in an *unestablished* strip mall.

“Also, both of my sons have strong business minds, and they had been trained by a master, my father—their grandfather—so, even though both were in their early 20s, I picked their thinking a lot, while trying to make it look like ‘Dad knew what he was doing from the outset.’ They are the judge of how well I pulled it off. I can report that they never told me.

“My uncle was also most helpful in the early stages of planning and carrying out the expansion. We talked scores of times about everything regarding the business. I had a burning desire to learn—and *know!*—all that I possibly could about the operation of an American corporation. Having taken Encyclopaedia Britannica from annual sales of 200 million dollars to almost a billion dollars, having been for so long the Director and later the Executive Vice President of Sales and Marketing, he could cut through advertising jargon and worthless ideas. It helped the company avoid certain mistakes.

“It is helping God’s Church even more today!”

## *Much More Happens*

**I**t was now January 1997. In a surprise offer, Mr. Pack was invited to attend the upcoming GCG Regional Pastor Conference scheduled for Big Sandy, Texas that month. His brother-in-law was still the CAD Director, and was also still hoping that Mr. Pack would come to San Diego, even if in a different role.

“My brother-in-law was very kind to include me in this conference. I was surprised to be there so soon after being removed. His thought, or at least hope, and he said this was the reason, was that I would be on the inner team in San Diego soon. He wanted me to stay in the loop of what was happening. I appreciated it.

“The conference was a horror show for a number of reasons. It revealed to me for the first time that perhaps most ministers in GCG would never come to be on the right doctrinal track. Here is how I knew:

“At a certain point, the CAD Director pulled up a series of large charts and graphs. He came to a chart he was using to illustrate. A question began his point: *What percentage of Mr. Armstrong’s teachings would*

*each of you say were truth? In other words, you would say that he taught X, Y or Z percentage of the Bible's doctrines.*

"I thought, *This was an incredible way to make a point. Where is he going? What is the purpose of this?* The answer to these questions became irrelevant. The answers—the percentages—that the men put forth was relevant, and told the tale of the Global Church of God.

"Not one man present thought that Mr. Armstrong had restored all things. Not one man thought that the doctrines he taught were all correct. And not one man resisted the answers everyone reported. There were about eight or 10 men present. One man credited Mr. Armstrong with about 95 percent truth, most said about 90 percent. Most others said 75 to 80 percent.

"But one man put his amount well below the others given, without committing to a specific percentage. He just kept pointing to the graph, and saying, 'Lower,' then again, 'No, lower' and 'Still lower,' etc. I had once worked with this man for nine months, and had no idea he held these feelings. One of the WCG's very oldest ministers, who had been ordained a preaching elder in 1954, making him 43 years in the ministry, and therefore one of the longest-tenured ministers from Mr. Armstrong's time. His position, and willingness to speak publicly, spoke volumes. And he was on the Council.

"By now, the reader of this biography could have assembled quite a list of different doctrines taught in the Global Church of God. It can be easily imagined what the men in that room were thinking.

"I do not know how often these volumes have said I was 'shocked' or 'stunned,' but this conference would be included on the list. Most of all, I was *instructed*. I was being *schooled* in the Laodicean world. While men did seem to care about certain doctrines of God,

true enough, they cared no more about certain others than did the apostates—and they could see no problem with their position. Truly, blindness seemed to be everywhere.

“What was the most important thing to me on this occasion was that the disagreement with Mr. Armstrong was now wide open. This was a meeting of regional pastors—and the leaders of the organization. They were the pacesetters—the administrators in the Work—and virtually all of the men present were on the Council of Elders. Where would the resistance to false doctrine come from? Mr. Armstrong was dead. It would have to come from someone else—but where?”

### **The Toledo UCG Pastor**

This would not be the only organization about which Mr. Pack considered himself being “schooled.” With many relatives in the United Church of God, as well as many former friends there, reports from that organization were equally grim. One was particularly instructive.

“In early 1997, the United Church of God pastor in Toledo, Ohio, broke away from that organization and formed his own. The man was relatively young in the ministry, dating back to about 1987 or so.

“He had become disenchanted with United. Soon after he left, some of the people who left with him shortly after came with Global. They kept contact with certain friends and, after a time, he wanted to meet with me, and invited me to his area to speak.

“I drove to Toledo, thinking there was some possibility he wanted to come with Global, or was at least exploring the idea. It became apparent that this was not on his mind, but not right away. Neither was it

on the minds of any of the people with him. This was actually good because I did not any longer know how to represent Global in such matters. He was at that point no better or worse off had he been with United or gone with Global.

“We met for dinner on one other occasion. I also stayed with him at his house. He seemed like a nice person, just very confused about what he had experienced in both the WCG and UCG. He was disillusioned with all forms of church government, including what Mr. Armstrong taught.

“Eventually it became apparent that he was not going to do anything other than his own thing. I watched—up close and personal—as this tragically inexperienced and unsound man literally melted down. Today, he believes that he is one of the Two Witnesses, and if this is not bad enough, he has appointed his wife to be the other.

“Of course, the man is simply a false prophet. He would be one of a number that the apostasy would produce. Watching these men sort of ‘pop up’ here and there, as well as watching the kind of people who went with them was its own extraordinary coursework for me. I would later see this coursework as being even more valuable.”

### **A State Basketball Championship**

In another forum, over the same winter of 1996 and 1997, Mr. Pack’s daughter, Jennifer, was enjoying a wonderful experience of her own, similar to that of her older brothers several years earlier.

Jennifer had also inherited the family trait of height—she was always the tallest in her class and eventually reached just over six feet while in high school. Following the example of her father and two older brothers, athletic involve-

ment started early. Her experience also took a high-profile place in the community. It would be 1992 revisited.

As her junior year began in the fall of 1996, expectations were high for the Wadsworth High School's varsity girls' basketball team, the "Lady Grizzlies." Several teammates were ranked as all-stars in the county and state. Jennifer was only the third tallest on the team—with girls 6"2' and 6"4' playing. Talk of a state championship buzzed through the community.

The season progressed and the team won all but one of its games. Anticipation was growing!

Like her brothers, Jennifer was missing approximately half the games due to conflicts with the Sabbath. As the team's profile rose, her absence for Saturday games gained attention in the community and with local news writers.

In an article titled "Pack stays true to her beliefs," her coach, Todd Osborn, was quoted as saying, "The hardest thing for me, at first, was I was always worried about what everyone else thought. But as for myself, I don't feel bad for her. She has her values and her beliefs. You've got your family, your values and beliefs, school and then basketball. Basketball's not very high on that list. It's good to see a kid has values and beliefs like that already."

Holding to the convictions imparted by her parents was at first relatively easy for Jennifer. She had the full support of the coaching staff, her teammates, and even the community to some degree.

But soon after her team won the Regional Finals, it became more difficult. Suddenly the team found themselves in the Final Four of the Division One Championships for the state of Ohio. But the semifinal game was on a Friday evening!

Jennifer knew that if her team won on Friday, she would play in the championship game on Saturday evening after sunset—in front of 10,000 people. If they lost, her season would end without a chance to play in the final game.

As she told a reporter for *The Cleveland Plain Dealer* in an article titled “Believe,” “It’s hard to miss the games, but my church, religion and beliefs are my top priorities...I know I am doing the right thing. I’m just rooting like crazy for us to make it to the state championship game.”

Mrs. Jennifer (Pack) Denee recalls the time:

“I can’t remember how many times during those months and weeks leading up to the game that I was asked by teammates, classmates, reporters, etc, ‘Well couldn’t you just make a one-time exception to play on Friday night if you made it to the state championships?’ Each time I would explain simply that from my perspective, I wasn’t looking to try to make an exception even if I could, and, from God’s perspective, there are no such things as ‘one-time’ exceptions or allowances to breaking His Commandments, simply because it is a little harder to keep one in a given situation.”

Jennifer’s team did make it to the state finals. She spent Friday night sitting by herself in a motel room in Columbus, Ohio. And she attended services the next day. After the Sabbath, she got to play and hit one of her few shots. As the strongest player on the team, she was used as more of a rebounder and a defender than an offensive threat.

Her basket was a crucial contribution—her team won by two points at the final buzzer!

“I always humorously told my daughter that it was her two points in that game that was the difference—and it became, ‘How could she disagree?’

“The family had a great deal of fun during this time, particularly after which she could always—and Mom and Dad could always—remind the older brothers that *her* team won the state championship. I would ask them, ‘Now remind me, how far did your teams get again?’

“The principal from Rob’s time was gone. The new principal was certainly not opposed to what Jennifer was doing, but she did have to stand a little bit more alone, meaning on her own with no help.”

The next day, the streets of Wadsworth’s quaint little downtown were cordoned off for a welcome parade for the team.

Mrs. Denee recalls what a remarkable blessing that God provided—it was a chance to test her beliefs early on, and to take part in a thrilling experience at a young age.

Her father is still often recognized by residents of the city because of his children’s unique sporting accomplishments and the public profile they gained as a result of simply keeping God’s Sabbath. Truly, as God said, it is a sign that sets His people apart.

This family event would be part of preparation for duties to come much later in Mr. Pack’s life and ministry.

### **Events Grow Serious**

About May of 1997, matters with the Global leader would begin a process of coming to a head within the Council of Elders. The regular quarterly meeting was scheduled for this time. Virtually the entire Council of Elders was coming to grips with the fact that its leader was personally out of control. While a few saw the problems as less serious, but real, most Council members were growing to feel that they were very serious, and many in number.

“The 1997 spring and summer Council of Elders meetings marked a turning point for the Global Church of God. The behavior of the presiding evangelist was causing many alarm bells to go off.

“Most Council members were not nearly as concerned about wrong doctrine as they were the

leader's *conduct*. A memo to headquarters in February 1998, coming up later in this chapter, regarding these problems summarizes the *two* issues facing the Global Council of Elders. But there were concerns among perhaps half its members that some doctrines were off track. The difficulty here centered on disagreement over *which* teachings were wrong."

On August 30, 1997, Mr. Pack gave a second crucial groundwork sermon in Akron—"Maintain a Sound Mind." Surprisingly, he was asked to speak two months later in San Diego after the Feast, giving it there October 25. The sermon was sent to all congregations. It spoke of the Bible's repeated warnings about unsound *doctrine* and unsound *words*.

### **New Regional Pastor Supports Conspiracy Theorists**

The problem with the conspiracy theorists had not gone away. The very liberal pastor who had taken over the Cincinnati area where a serious problem existed, was now the regional pastor. Mr. Pack reported to him, instead of the other way around. In a strange twist of authority, however, Mr. Pack was on the Council of Elders, but his "boss" was not. This would set the stage for high drama.

"I knew that the regional pastor did not like me even a little bit. Two more different people never existed. My ministry stood for everything this man despised, and his stood for everything I despised. This must be understood to appreciate what followed.

"Recall that the change in the regional pastorate had occurred in December, 1996. Through the winter, spring and summer of 1997, the matter of the conspiracy theorists did not go away. Rather, the people involved who were in Akron—the 'high priest' of this cult lived

near there—had gone underground, but they now had a sympathizer in the regional pastor.

“There came a point, in perhaps August of 1997, where I could no longer have certain people present in the congregation. The most entrenched conspiracy theorist had to be sent away. His friends were upset. They chose to involve the regional pastor. He chose to drive into the Akron area and secretly call and/or visit people within my pastorate. I was not notified of his coming.

“His stated purpose for the trip was to ‘investigate’ the matter, and then conclude it by meeting with me. But his *real* purpose was crystal clear to me. Gain leverage against me by having ‘brethren’ appear to be ‘unhappy’ with my ministry, thus making himself able to take a report to headquarters that I had been ‘unnecessarily harsh.’ It also became clear that he was not freelancing, meaning there was headquarters support behind his actions—and it was from the top. He could not on his visit find one iota of support beyond the conspiracy theorists.

“He called me from a motel on the other side of town. This is when I learned that he had been visiting in the Akron area for an entire day. No servant of God would enter another man’s pastorate and visit people without telling him, ‘boss’ or no ‘boss.’ I knew at that point that a far greater conspiracy was at work *against me* than that of the ‘conspiracy theorists.’ And I absolutely knew that the devil was now driving events through his servants, directly against me.

“When the man called, I let him have it. While he was my ‘boss,’ I told him that what he had done was unethical in the extreme—and was ungodly. He was trying to split my pastorate and turn people against me that I had been pastoring and working with for almost eight years. We did set a time to meet the next day at my home before he left town.

“My wife and I sat down that night, and again in the morning, to discuss and confirm what was happening, as well as the ramifications. We both understood that another carnal mind was about to enter our home the next day. I had known and understood that mind since it had vomited on my parents congregation in early 1974. We thought there was about an 80 percent chance I would be fired then, or soon after. I understood that the last thing I could permit this man to see was weakness, uncertainty or fear. I knew God would only bless us if I ‘resisted’ the spirit with him entering our home. This spirit cannot handle resistance (James 4:7). I made it clear to my wife that I would not back down one inch. She understood. We decided that if I was fired unjustly, it would not be the first time, and God would reveal the path ahead.

“The next day at my home, it began cordially. Soon, I told the visitor he had better *never* enter my pastorate without *my permission* again! I made it plain I was *telling*, not *asking*, him, and told him to not get confused and think I would forget what I said just because he might. (I also made it clear later that I would *mark* him as an *enemy* of my pastorate if he *ever* tried to sow division there again, let alone through use of local people not of God. And he understood this when he left.) I also made it plain that I understood the presiding evangelist was building a case against me, and it was time to get this in the open. I knew, and intended, that my words would get back to the leader.

“Strangely, the man backed off, and became meek and agreeable. It was evident that God had intervened. Resistance and boldness had worked. Weak people always buckle under both. Any plan to terminate me was at least temporarily derailed. The visit actually ended quite cordially, with the man assuring me that he was, ‘On my side.’ Whether his statement was true or not was

irrelevant. He had more or less bound himself to not be able to spin on a dime and assist in any termination in the near term. I did not have a problem with being fired. But since it had not happened, I gave not one thought to what God would want me to do if I had been. We certainly did not worry about an income because we had a sufficient House of Health income to be okay.

“I did determine to directly and boldly confront the presiding evangelist regarding his plans for me at the November Council meetings, with witnesses present.”

It is important to understand that every one of those in Mr. Pack’s pastorate who were involved in conspiracy thinking left the church. Ultimately, not one remained.

### **Private Warning**

By the late fall of 1997, very soon after the meeting with his regional pastor, Mr. Pack was privately warned that he was being “targeted” by Global’s leader for termination, and removal from *any* role in the ministry. This was just nine or 10 months after the same man had publicly declared Mr. Pack to be “one of his best friends,” and “deeply converted.”

“San Diego was a very divided place—truly a ‘house divided’ by this point. Two unyielding camps had formed. One was large—those opposed to the conduct of the leader. The other was small—those standing by him. Another one or two did not know whom or what to believe.

“I arrived in town alone midday Sunday and checked into a hotel, where my brother- and sister-in-law met me for a chat before we went to a dinner with his brother and the presiding evangelist, their wives included. There would be seven people present. The wives sat at one end of the table, and the four men at the other.

“It was not long after the main dinner that the discussion moved in a direction where I could bring out what I wanted to say. I had witnesses who were family to both the leader and to me. I knew they agreed with me. It was a moment no less confrontational than the September meeting with the regional pastor.

“I told the Global leader straight across the table that I knew he was gunning for me, and so did others. I said, ‘Don’t deny it. I know!’ He denied it anyway, but that was fine. First, I knew it was true and that he had been caught and had to lie about it, but I also knew that it had bought me time because he vociferously denied it in front of witnesses—men he knew I was close to, and who would support the facts—if he made a move.

“It would become clear that these two conversations would buy me exactly one more year in the Global Church of God.”

Mr. Pack now believed that one of two things would happen: either he would be fired, or God would prevent this by causing the presiding evangelist to be removed as the leader of the Global Church of God. The only way the latter could occur was if the Board of Directors would remove him as the corporate president. Presumably the Council of Elders would then remove him from the ministry. They would be separate actions. Mr. Pack well understood this.

“As early as November 1997, I felt that the presiding evangelist would have had the Council of Elders remove me, if he could. But the other members would never have permitted it.”

### **Hold Fast Sermon Quotes**

By January 1998, Mr. Pack decided that he could no longer avoid speaking publicly about the doctrinal problems in the

Global Church of God. Similar to the “Truth” sermon, he decided to draw a line in the sand before his local congregation. On January 17, he gave a sermon titled, “Hold Fast at All Costs.” The following are the most important excerpts. They demonstrate where Mr. Pack’s thinking was, and how strongly he was willing to take a stand to protect God’s people. Ellipses are used each time the context breaks off.

“Change is everywhere. It’s in everything. And frankly brethren, when you come to understand people, it’s appearing in just about everyone...”

“I’d like to take you back to 1966 when I first learned the truth. Of all of the verses that struck me, I think one of the three or four that was the most profound to me, I don’t know why it struck me, but it just did. I can guess, and I’ll tell you in a minute, but let’s turn over to the verse...”

“I Thessalonians 5:21: *‘Prove all things. Hold fast that which is good.’*

“Revised Standard and other translations will more often say *‘that which is right.’* Hold it fast. Now, that’s not one of the Ten Commandments, but the way it is written is a command from God. And it struck me pretty early on. I was still a teenager. I was under a lot of pressure—‘Don’t get into that church. It’s crazy.’ My Presbyterian minister wanted to tell me why I shouldn’t do it...”

“Suffice to say, this verse struck me. Why would God, through Paul, tell us to hold fast that which is good after we proved all things if it could *not* be done? Now you know how people say, ‘You can prove anything from the Bible,’ or ‘You can make the Bible say anything,’ or you can sometimes ‘disprove’ anything from the Bible. You can prove anything or you can disprove anything, or you can make it say anything. That phrase, in its various forms, was pushed at me

in 1966 by people that my parents wanted me to talk to...”

“The word there for hold fast, if you look up the word, here is what it means. It is the Greek word *katecho*. Any of you ex-Catholics recognize what word comes from *katecho*...catechism puts the emphasis on the first syllable. It means to *hold down* or *hold fast*, to *have*, to *keep in memory*...”

“You know I think one of the most amazing things about the changes through the doctrinal sleight of hand we all lived through was that people just forgot how much truth we had. They just forgot it! It just went out of their head. They had it, but they never studied later on the way they always studied earlier on, and it just went out of memory.

“It’s interesting what *katecho* means. The Catholics know what it means. When they decided to name the course work for little kids who were part of CYO (Catholic Youth Organization) they called it catechism because they knew exactly what *katecho* means. Now they don’t hold to the ‘hold fast that which is right’ part, but they want kids to prove all things within Catholic doctrine. It always means possess. The truth is something we possess, retain, take, seize on and stay. That’s strong. I don’t know why, but when I was 17 years old...it just struck me how it wouldn’t say to do that if it cannot be done...”

“Malachi said that God would send Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful Day of the Lord. Christ is commenting on that [in Mark 9]. The scribes knew of that verse, the last verse in the Old Testament. Mark 9:12: ‘And he answered and told them, Elijah verily comes first, and restores all things; and how is it written that the Son of man, that he must suffer many things, and be set at nought.’ In other words, be rejected as just a nothing—as a ‘nought.’

“Mr. Armstrong believed he was the Elijah to come. There are those who believe it and those who don’t, even within Global, among the ministry. You just might be aware of that. I do believe it. I do believe he restored all things. We discussed it in the Council. It’s come up. I do believe it. I believe he was the Elijah. I can’t understand how an Elijah will come at the very end doing mighty miracles, traversing back and forth across the land right before another two guys come and do the same thing. It doesn’t make sense to me.

“And for those that feel ‘Well, Mr. Armstrong would have had to do a lot of mighty miracles.’ Look, John the Baptist came in the spirit and power of Elijah and he did no miracles! He didn’t even baptize anybody where they received the spirit of God.

“If Mr. Armstrong was Elijah, and if he restored all things, all of the truths of God, and if an apostle was among us, we better be very, very careful brethren before we get off into little ‘this’s and that’s’ on what I call the edges of doctrine. It is a very dangerous thing. It is really the core of the great lesson for our time.

“Now I’ll talk more about that, but first I would like to turn to Acts 17. There are those who think a sermon has to have something new to be exciting...I think the most exciting thing in the Bible is the truth. The truth is what fits. The truth is the mind of God. What could be more exciting than that? Studying something that is new, but false—but hey, it’s *new!*...”

“Acts 17:20, Paul is being accused, ‘For you bring certain strange things to our ears: we would know therefore what these things mean.’ Verse 21, ‘For all the Athenians and strangers which were there spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing.’”

““Oh, now we’re going to hear another sermon that is just the same old, same old are we?’ and I heard that

a lot. As a matter of fact, I came to appreciate down through the years there were people who would say ‘I want to hear more meat in the sermon.’ Invariably, what those people were saying, and I don’t recall an exception, ‘You are not telling us anything we don’t know. I want to hear something new.’

“I was sitting in a meeting with a group of ministers sometime back and one of them said, ‘You know what, we need to think of something new because the brethren want something new.’ I was appalled, and that’s exactly what was said. You know what, most of the others in the group didn’t react to it...”

“Do you want something new, or are you willing to live with the same old, same old? Beware of being unwilling to change in the areas of your life that involve character growth, but always willing to take a look at that little different idea that comes along—when a real Christian is supposed to be unwilling to change when it comes to ideas, but *always* willing to take a look at his character and change wherever he needs to...”

“We in Global must not be part of what I call the ‘broad Sabbatarian brotherhood’ out there that is reflected in the kind of ecumenical thinking that the Catholic church has brought to the front page in the world today. Mama Rome wants to bring all the baby girls home. All the harlot daughters need to be brought home to Mama, and that’s the goal. That’s what the book *All Roads Lead to Rome* is about. We talked about that two or three years ago, when that book was hot. We cannot be in God’s Church spiritual ecumenists.”

“Let me make a statement, and I hope that you never forget it. If any of you ever read this thing called *The Journal*. It makes me sick whenever I read it. I periodically read through certain bits of it, and kind of hold my nose, only because people call me from other

organizations as they're taking a look at Global and I need to know something of the things they're reading. I quit reading it for six months, I couldn't stand it.

"It was kind of like the new *PT* [*The Plain Truth*]. After all, I couldn't bear to read that anymore, but I kept reading it because there were people coming with us who were seeing things in it, and for them, the experience of coming out of all that was raw, and... they needed help, and I couldn't very well say 'Well, I haven't read one in a year.'

"So the same thing is true with this matter of *The Journal*. But what I notice is—I'm not trying to attack the authors or anything—I'm just telling you there are an awful lot of people who have come out of the apostasy who are what I would call 'hybrid brethren.' There are 'hybrid ministers.' They certainly didn't run off after all the junk that we left behind 350 doctrinal changes ago. But, there are those who picked up a lot of baggage.

"I've often found it interesting and had to be very careful myself. 'Oh, I didn't pick up any baggage,' while they have one bag in each hand, one under each arm, a bag hanging from their teeth and one hanging on each ear—and 'they didn't pick up any doctrinal baggage.' They don't realize how much they ingested. And yet the basic command was to 'prove all things, hold fast that which is good,' and that's what the Berean's did earlier here in Acts 17:11 '...in that they received the word with all the readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether these things were so.'

"But, 10 verses later you've got this bunch from Athens, not very far from Berea. Boy, they said, 'Titillate us!' That's what they wanted. So there are lots of *hybrid brethren* and *hybrid ministers*, and *hybrid groups* out there as a result. I'm not trying to attack them. I'm not even saying they aren't converted

in many cases, but they are missing a very fundamental command—and how deeply they are converted, and how hot they are, is a huge question...”

“Matthew 24:13: ‘But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.’ All right, we have to endure. A lot of people thought five years ago when we were looking at this verse that *endure* means stay in the organization into which you were baptized. That’s what endure means, and if everybody leaves—you know the falling away is going to be a bunch of people who leave the Church, instead of the Church leaving the truth—it will be...people leaving the Church and we have to endure. A lot of people used this verse to *not* endure...and they misunderstood...”

“All right, it says endure, but what does it mean?”

“Look at II Thessalonians 3:6, we’re going to look at the Greek here again, ‘Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you withdraw yourselves from every brother that walks disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us.’ But he commands them, ‘I *command* you, *hold fast* the tradition as you have been taught.’

“Now II Thessalonians 2:15, ‘Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which you have been taught, whether by word or epistle.’ Hold fast. A little different Greek word here...*krateo*. See what you notice. *Katecho* is ‘hold down, fast, have, keep in memory, possess, return, take, seize on, stay.’ *Krateo* is ‘to use strength, a little stronger even, to seize or retain, to hold by, to hold fast, to keep.’ If you were describing to a Greek mind, if you said, ‘Well, I want you to *krateo* the rake. That means to ‘grab hold of’ or ‘lay your hand on it’, and ‘obtain’ and ‘retain.’

“Now the truth is something we obtain, and then we’re told after we grab it to retain it. That’s exactly

what it means. That's *krateo*, stand fast, and if people do not do this—*withdraw from them*. That's what it says!..."

"Turn to II Timothy 1:13, this is *katecho* again, 'Hold fast the form of sound words.' We talked about the importance of *sound words*, a sound mind, and sound doctrine and so forth. You hear sounds words, don't follow unsound things..."

"Next is II Timothy 3:14: 'Continue you in the things you have learned and have been assured of knowing of whom you have learned them.' Do you do that? You didn't learn the truth from me, brethren. You learned the truth from an apostle who walked among us. You know who you learned it from..."

"If you are going to take a view of Church history, it starts with the Church in the wilderness 3,500 years ago. We have to take the 3,500-year-view of Church history. Starting with the Old Testament Church in the wilderness, the last 2,000 years of which have been God putting His Spirit in people. But you have to go to the Old Testament record as well. And when you do, you will find that there has always, *always*, ALWAYS been a battle internally for the soul of the Church, between those who would change and those who would not.

"Frankly, history is that those who want to change usually 'win,' and I put that in quotes. They usually 'win.' And they usually outnumber those who don't because of the drive—the need—in human beings to go along to get along. To not be willing to disrupt the status quo is great. If you doubt that, look at how many stayed behind [in the WCG]...Look at how many held on. It's just a fact. There's been a 3,500-year battle for the soul of the Church. And if I read prophecy correctly, the battle is going to intensify, brethren, not diminish.

“I sort of used to think that when we came to Global we were in the kingdom of God. But then I began to realize, ooh, maybe we’re just in the Place of Safety. Then I realized, ‘No, maybe we’ve just come to a place where we’re stable.’ We’re not in the Place of Safety yet, and we’re not in the kingdom of God. Then I’ve had to back off a third time and realize, you know what, it’s going to be war, and that’s why we’ve been chosen to be soldiers. We’re called and told, ‘We must war a good warfare,’ and it’s going to be that way to the end...”

“Listen, I’ve been fired, brethren, three times in my life for obeying God directly when my salary was on the line. Do you think I fear being fired a fourth time when my salary *isn’t* on the line? I don’t. I don’t fear it at all. I don’t give it a second thought.

“I’m not trying to lay any ground work. I’m just telling you, you better make your own decisions as to what you’re going to do. Are you going to hold fast? Or are you going to sort of, over course of time, become hybrid brethren? It’s a danger for Global. We have to be very careful that we don’t want to be part of the ‘broad Sabbatarian brotherhood...’”

“But the point is, ‘They shall turn away their ears from the truth and shall be turned unto fables.’ We’re in that time. We no longer can say the time *will* come. Now brethren, we read that verse and let’s face it, the time *has* come. People won’t endure. It’s not, ‘it came and went.’ It is *now* come. And people are out there looking for teachers. All you have to do is read *The Journal*. Or read the Internet. And listen to the banter and the junk that goes back and forth as people pontificate to each other about this, that and the other—all kinds of ideas. The time is here *now*...”

“It will take courage, brethren. We’ve all had to exhibit courage already. Do you think we won’t have to do it again—before the seventh trumpet blows—

that there won't be other opportunities where you have to show courage? What if you're in the presence of somebody, just you and one other person, in the presence of somebody who's teaching something that's wrong? Are you going to show courage?

"Look, let's lay it on the table. What if San Diego teaches something that's wrong? Are you going to buy it because it's San Diego and, 'Hey, we survived the apostasy, and now we don't have to fasten our seatbelt anymore, everything's fine.' I won't. If San Diego tells me to teach something that I do not agree with, I won't do it.

"Now what would you do? What would *you* do?

"You better be careful though. Did you ever think, 'Well, I don't know, maybe I better leave?' There's this little detail though, where are you going to go? You better be sure that God has put His name somewhere else, if any of you who think you're going to leave—you better be very, very careful because chances are you'll go from the frying pan...to the fire, for sure. Unless God puts His name in another place...

"Will you ever go away? Well, I hope we never have to go away from this organization. I'm not planning to do that. But I'll tell you what, I'll go away from this organization before I'll ever go away from the truth. Because the truth is where the Church is and God will put His name someplace else..."

"The above sermon carefully laid the groundwork in my mind for what God might require me to do. If He did, I had to be prepared to save the flock."

### **Crucial Council of Elders Document**

As the sermon demonstrated, things were heating up faster now. The following is an email that Mr. Pack sent to the

Council of Elders secretary just one month after his sermon. If the sermon of January 17 was what Mr. Pack was saying publicly about the false doctrine in GCG, this memo is what he was doing privately to try to correct it.

It was his duty to do all that he possibly could to bring Global to where and what it should be. Of course, the end of Mr. Pack's sermon makes clear what he was willing to do—should it be necessary. Mr. Pack sets up the email.

“The first note is a cover note to the second note and list that follow. The list of 21 doctrines references UCG in point number two. Understand that it is written as though it is a *topic* for discussion, not a suggestion about combining with UCG. Just the sermon of a month earlier would make clear that I could NEVER go along with that.

“There were various proposed ‘ways’ that some leaders in Global wanted to combine activities and/or projects with United for cost-saving reasons. They had started their own quiet dialogue with UCG representatives unbeknownst to the rest of the Council, including me. I was deeply troubled that this was happening, and that combining *anything* with UCG was under consideration. I wanted the Council to address it, along with the other issues.”

“To: \_\_\_\_\_

“Date: 2/16/98, 11:45 AM

“Re: COE Agenda Note #1

“Greetings \_\_\_\_\_,

“I am very sorry to respond so late to your request for topics for the agenda for the upcoming meeting. As you no doubt now imagine, this last week has been extraordinarily hectic for all of us—8-10 hour days on the phone nearly every day. Therefore I thought I'd put

this cover note away [separate] from the actual list of topics for discussion so that no one could ever see the following remarks under any circumstances.

“Because of the overriding concern driving our thinking this week regarding authority of the Council versus authority of the presiding evangelist—and even whether to remove the presiding evangelist—many of the two dozen topics I had listed for consideration by the Council somehow now seem less important. As a matter of fact, what and how we discuss many topics from here on will change depending upon whether things become merely [the leader’s] call (totally unacceptable) or decisions rendered by oversight of the Council. So, clearly, we need to talk soon—today. I will also be touching base with \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. I’ve spoken at great length to \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. I’ll fill you in. \_\_\_\_\_ and I spent four hours on the phone yesterday discussing the plan as it now exists. I’m aboard. However, I wish to discuss verbally some caveats. The following list reflects items I would wish the Council to discuss in a perfect world.

“Thank you for your input to \_\_\_\_\_ regarding UCG/GCG combined services. Though it leaves some considerable questions that the Council can discuss, it certainly helped, and I sensed that you must have talked to \_\_\_\_\_ about our call—which is fine.

“Warm regards,”

“To: \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_

“Date: 2/16/98, 12:09 PM

“Re: COE Agenda Note #2

“Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

“The following items represent a complete laundry list in my mind of topics that we need to button down over course of time, and they represent far more than

what we can cover in two days. I misplaced this list and reserve the right to add more items to it later as they come to mind—but there's no hurry.

“1. The role of the presiding evangelist and the Council as per church, Work and executive oversight. As you know, the bylaws are bipolar with statements on the matter. I do however think a powerful case can be made in the Council's favor even from the bylaws themselves.

“2. Combining with UCG in the various ways this can happen.

“3. Dress codes

“4. Earrings for men

“5. Hair length for men and women

“6. Women writers for World Ahead of GCN.

“7. Financial disclosure and debt retirement progress report—interest paid, current budget, projected hires, pay raises, current income YTD, reserves, compliance with California skilled labor laws, etc. etc..

“8. Pending idea of some to have a Global chat forum website.

“9. [GCG] Ministerial Journal ????????

“10. Our profile in *The Journal (In Transition)*.

“11. Divorce and Remarriage (this was on the last agenda and we did not get to it. I'm interested now in why it was on the agenda.).

“12. Interracial marriage

“13. Dating between baptized and unbaptized.

“14. Tolerating heresy among the brethren and ministry (also: formally inviting it.).

“15. Five resurrections [instead of three]

“16. Was HWA Elijah?

“17. Third tithe

“18. Update on status of [pastor's name] various prophetic scenarios.

“19. Birthdays

“20. Bylaws (inconsistencies, irregularities, ambiguities, legalities)—this all springs from where point #1 goes.

“21. New moons

“———, I trust your judgment to either select or file the most important points for consideration. I’m completely comfortable with any prioritizing you must do in order to marry my topics to prevailing concerns among others for the meetings this time. I will be arriving Sunday night and staying at the Radisson Monday if you wish to meet with me privately—I guess I just made this memo for your eyes only.

“Warm regards,”

The Council of Elders meeting in February that followed was an unpleasant affair. At times, it grew acrimonious. It set the stage for more confrontation three months later. But some in the Council were also discussing unpleasant and serious events building up in the United Church of God.

### **The United Church Splits**

An overt power struggle was developing in the Global Church of God between two blocs of men, neither of whom saw this struggle as *primarily* over doctrine. But it was not the only organization in similar distress. The United Church split in March of 1998 in a power struggle between the leader and a Council (and Board) there of whom the majority had come to be against his actions and his leadership.

This would send a false message to the Global Council!

About 10 percent, or 2,000 people, of the United Church followed its former leader. Some on the Global Council took this as encouragement that most would not follow the GCG leader should he similarly leave. However, the United President had been in office for less than half as long as the Glob-

al leader, he was not a longtime “name brand” among WCG evangelists, and the UCG *Council*—which was also the UCG Board, meaning it had the authority to terminate—was able to remove him as president with a *simple majority vote*.

He chose to leave that organization.

## *Coming to a Head*

Not everything happening in the Pack household was difficult or unpleasant. Their youngest child, Jennifer, was approaching high school graduation. A form of *déjà vu* was presenting itself. It would be a respite from doctrinal and administrative storms.

### **Another Baccalaureate 5/98**

Six years after the well-received 1992 baccalaureate address at Rob's graduation, Mr. Pack was invited by the high school to deliver another address for Jennifer's graduating class of 1998. It was a bright spot in a dark time.

This would be another opportunity to address a sizeable audience beyond the Church. For the first address, a good deal of time and effort was invested, and Mr. Pack determined to again maximize the positive impact of the speech.

In 20 minutes, Mr. Pack wanted to convey important elements of God's truth, while also being careful not to take a sermon-like tone. Preparing for the address, he could appreciate the challenge Mr. Armstrong faced as he preached the

gospel to secular audiences, “selling” God’s way of life to those who may have closed minds.

On graduation day, he stood before a crowd of about 4,000 in the high school’s gymnasium. Here is the message included in its entirety because of who the audience was:

“Good evening everyone.

“I’d like to start by giving you a couple of facts after I tell you I am truly honored to be here.

“In 1977 there were 180,000 millionaires in this country. Twenty years later, in 1997, there were over 2 million millionaires in the United States. Now in 1977 that would make one, less than one, in every 1,000 people, but by 1997 that’s one in every 100 people. Now for the young people, who are sitting here this evening, let’s project for a moment. Let’s say that in 20 years when you are all approximately 38 years of age. Let’s just say that the trend continues. If the goal is to be a millionaire, and a lot of people think it is, that that’s the definition of success to achieve financially, and let’s say that the trend continues, and one in 10 improves at the same ratio, one in 10 people is a millionaire, that means if that’s the goal, nine out of 10 are still losers.

“So, let’s assume for a moment that’s *not* the goal. You are all in a different sort of way, millionaires. You are all absolutely millionaires in time. You all have exactly the same amount of time every day, and your time is your life. There are all kinds of ways to spend that time and some people have the ‘time of their life’ but some don’t understand that they’ve been given those 24 hours.

“So I want to give you three points tonight.

“It’s hard to think of what you can say in 15 to 20 minutes, and that’s when the bell rings and I’m done,

but what can you say in a short period of time like that that can maybe make a difference?

“It’s hard to believe, and this is kind of the way I want to introduce the three points, it’s hard to believe it’s exactly six years that have passed since I stood right here and our second son and our second child was graduating. I had the baccalaureate address. It was the evening of May 31, 1992.

“Our ‘caboose’ is graduating tonight, this is the end of the line and I had a decision to make then. My mother was dying of cancer in North Carolina. She, it turned out, had days to live and I called her and I talked with her about whether or not I should give that baccalaureate address. I knew that I would leave the schedule here in the lurch if I didn’t show up. We discussed it and I knew that there was a chance that if I waited until after the address and took off to see her she would not live. It was that touch and go. We made the decision together, and I decided to stay, sleep a few hours, and take off through the night and drive to North Carolina.

“Shortly before I got there my mother suddenly, in the middle of a sentence, had a seizure; went into a coma, never awoke. I arrived a few hours late, never got to talk to her again. Now I don’t say that story because I regret it. Certainly on a night like this, exactly six years later, I remember it. I don’t regret it and she had no regrets in making the decision with me, but it does introduce the first of three points I want to make to you.

“Number one: Your life is made up of an endless list of decisions that you will make. Make good decisions, they will define you more than you know. You’ve been making decisions all day today. You may not have thought of them as decisions but that’s exactly what you’ve done from the moment you got out of bed, and

frankly that was a decision. When you were going to get out of bed was a decision you made. You may have made a decision to hit the snooze button and go a little longer. You may have made the decision to jump up at the crack of dawn and get ready for events this evening, and you made a lot of decisions from then till now. You're going to make more decisions before this day is over. You may have made a decision to have pizza later tonight. You may have made a decision to have dinner or not have dinner because your stomach was a little too churned up to think about that. You've made decisions about where you're going to go to college, or whether you're going to go to college. You've made decisions and will make more decisions about who you would choose as friends, when and who you will marry, and whether you'll stay married.

"I've been a marriage counselor for 27 years and, sadly, I've talked with a lot of people who have jumped into marriage with a tremendous amount of promise and commitment, and they fell into that 50 percent who didn't continue for whatever reasons—some beyond their control—and they made the decision to end their marriage. You will make a decision to have children or not have children or how many children. You will make career decisions. Every time you get behind the wheel of a car you will have made the decision to do it with a belly full of beer or to do it sober, and if you've had too much to drink, you will make a decision as to how fast to drive. I've buried kids who didn't make that decision the correct way. People make decisions about drugs they'll take. About places they'll go. About movies they'll see. About things they will or won't do because life is an endless list of choices or decisions that you will make.

"Some people are afraid to talk about right and wrong. I'm not. Right and wrong exists, and you will

make decisions through the balance of your life. You will find that the consequences of those decisions are very, very real. Sometimes those consequences come over an extended period of time and sometimes they are immediate. There is cause and effect in your life. Good causes produce good effects and bad causes produce bad effects. If you follow enough good causes, you'll have a life that is happy, peaceful, productive, successful, interesting and full. If you make bad decisions, or enough of them, you could potentially wind up emotionally, mentally, physically, spiritually and psychologically bankrupt.

“Make good decisions. They will define you more than you know.

“Life is tough. Anybody tells you otherwise—they are conning you. Life is tough, but the rewards to the strong are absolutely more than worth it, so you've got to learn to be tough.

“My father was my best friend for 40 years. I think it was a friendship that started, sort of started, when I was seven years old and it ended when he died and I was 47 at the time, about two and a half years ago. We used to take walks together starting when I was that age, and I guess I would have to look back with somewhat the normal bias of a son toward a father, but I really believe my father was a remarkable and a special man.

“There are three things he said to me constantly as a child and all the way up to the time where I got on a plane and flew away to college in California. He put his hands on my shoulders and he'd say, 'Son,' I don't know where he got this but I never forgot it and I heard it often, 'Son, if you're going to walk among lions, you must be a lion.' Well, I was a little seven-year-old kid. I didn't know what that meant, but I heard it. Another thing he said was, and he would always make a fist, but

he'd say, 'Boy, when the going gets tough,' and he'd say it just like this, 'the tough get going.' He'd say it slow, and low, and firm, and the third thing he would say, 'Son, you've got to know when to have the guts of a burglar.'

"These sayings stuck with me. They really did. I have appreciated the fact that my father taught me to be strong because I found out later, life was hard. The rewards were very great, but life was hard. And you can't make it if you aren't strong. It's not a magic carpet ride, and since I'm a minister, I hope I will be allowed to quote a verse here. 'What your hand finds to do, do it with your might,' Ecclesiastes 9, in verse 10 says that, written by the wisest man who ever lived, King Solomon.

"Now many of you are going to go to college and you're going to earn, learn and will be taught how to earn a living. But colleges do not pretend to teach you how to live, merely how to earn a living and that's not such a bad thing. There will be many people in your life who have and who will shape you and will teach you how to live, but you're going to run into a lot of road blocks.

"One in three people, in a society where people are not as strong as they used to be, one in three people will suffer a major mental health crisis in their life. One in three. One in five will suffer from severe depression. Oh, by the way, if you have two friends and they're normal—it's you! Couldn't resist that.

"One in three people will get cancer in their lifetime, do you know that? I have a mother who died of cancer, and her mother died of cancer. I have a father who got cancer and his father died of cancer and my brother's had cancer. So I live with the reality that there may be a genetic strain there, and I try to adjust accordingly.

“I own a company in North Carolina and we just buried a beautiful young 28-year-old girl. She was an actress and worked for us and was an absolute jewel. One of the most vibrant, excited, beautiful little creatures you ever saw in your life, and oh boy did she want to live and have a lot of tomorrows. She had the time of her life, except that her life was only 28 years long—and she lived it fully. We buried her a few weeks ago.

“I sat where you are 31 years ago and I never dreamed that my life would take the path that it did. I won’t bore you, but I will tell you two things about my life:

“First, I have faced a tremendous number of hardships, more than I have time to recount. I’ve sat in a wheelchair for three and a half months. I’ve been given up for dead with illnesses twice, given three days to live and seven days to live and I’m still here. And I sat in a body cast for six months one time. If you’ve ever got six months to spare and you’d like to try it give it a shot. I’ll tell you, I remember my father’s words and I’m eternally grateful for them, but I look back and I will say this. Second, I’ve had an absolutely exhilarating life. A thrilling life, but oh am I glad I was taught that life was tough. Yet, the rewards exceed the difficulties.

“So, you’ll have trials and tests and setbacks and reverses, but you can get through them.

“Now number three—the final point. You truly are the captain of your own ship. So, chase your own dreams and chase them relentlessly. Don’t let anything stop you, fire, hail, wind or storm, come hell or high water, or all of the above at the same time. You go after what you want to go after.

“Remember, there are good ideas and bad ideas out there. Good pursuits and bad pursuits. Oscar

Wilde once said, ‘Some ideas are so absurd that only intellectuals believe them.’ So don’t follow every idea. Test them. Check them. Think them through. Think expansively. There will be enough people that you’ll meet that think very small. Learn to think and practice thinking, and make yourself think big.

“Set goals: Some small, some medium, some large; career goals, family goals, educational goals—hobbies, travels, books, experiences. You’re the captain of your own ship. Your hands are on the wheel. Others may shape you, but if somebody tries to take the wheel from you rather than help you hold the ship steady, know the difference.

“You chase your own dreams.

“One other verse I will leave you with because it has such a practical application beyond just the things of the Bible, ‘Prove all things and hold fast that which is right.’ The apostle Paul said that in I Thessalonians 5:21. Do it, both ends of it. Prove what you’re doing—and hold fast what’s right.

“In conclusion, I don’t want to sound like a coach, although that’s not such a bad thing. I’ve been a coach for many, many years. You can only be limited by your imagination and your motivation, coupled with your decision making and your toughness.

“At this time, we’re going to have a special dedication service. Each of the seniors will present a flower to the person in their life who has most shaped, most influenced them to this point in their life and made them who they are. This is kind of a special occasion, and so at this time I would like to ask that the first row come forward and the dedication will begin.”

Mr. Pack discovered through the years that if an audience did not feel preached to, they found messages positive and inspiring. Many Catholics, Baptists and Methodists

thanked him for the address. It was encouraging that, despite the vast differences in belief with the audience, the broad principles of God's Way overarched them. This message would return years later.

Through his children's athletics and other avenues, Mr. Pack could build a relationship with many in the small community of Wadsworth.

"My wife and I considered the opportunity to give the baccalaureate address, and twice, to have been a great honor. A different principal had approved the faculty's selection for me to speak, a man who was not attending the Church. He had been the vice principal in 1992. This meant that the message delivered six years before had had an effect. I learned much from these two baccalaureate addresses about how Mr. Armstrong must have felt when he spoke to foreign audiences, not in the Church.

"There was also another occasion when a local attorney asked me to speak to the Lion's Club in Wadsworth. This would come some years later, and would be another opportunity to learn more about how Mr. Armstrong handled such audiences.

"This was an extraordinary time in our lives. Our last child was graduating from high school, and would go away to college in the fall. The baccalaureate took me backward at the same time to my mother's death six years earlier. On my next birthday I would be 50 years old. There was the sense that time was passing and generations were moving on, and new ones were replacing them. I have always tried to live each day in the fullest possible way. But by this time in one's life, such thinking takes on a little bit greater urgency.

"Such was the case with me.

"There was also the fact that the Global Church of God was now in very deep crisis. A split was imminent.

It was evident that, one way or another, my days were numbered under the current leader. It was at these moments—these kinds of intervals—where I would often think about the fact that Herbert Armstrong was never going to return.”

### Sending Sermon Tapes

It is now evident that throughout 1997 and 1998, Mr. Pack continued taking an ever stronger stand regarding error, and teaching correct doctrine in its place.

An important policy was implemented in Global in 1996 or 1997 that had both good and bad impact. The leader no longer wished for *any* pastors to independently distribute their tapes within Global. There were to be no “churches within the church (or tape ministries).” This was in part to limit Mr. Pack’s tapes from distribution, but it was also to at least curb a little the popular “prophecy ministers” from distributing their false ideas. These men *were* permitted to freely preach such ideas in their own areas, so the “locals” with them would continue in GCG. But these rules were bent to the point of being completely broken, however, as certain men “blew off” the policy—and were permitted to get away with it. Mr. Pack did stop sending his tapes.

When the apostasy struck, Mr. Pack had primarily sent his book and tapes to confused brethren still in the Worldwide Church of God. But by 1998, 12 years since Mr. Armstrong’s death, few in the WCG were any longer much concerned with holding to sound doctrine. Most had embraced the changes. Those struggling with them were either at home waiting for God to show them where to go, or scattered through the large splinters. There were also those attending “slivers”—the smaller or even very tiny groups that left a splinter or formed independently from their beginning.

“I made a decision in the fall of 1998 that I had to send out my tapes in defiance of the Global leader’s policy. I was not going to have a heretical leader muzzle one who preached uncompromised truth. Large numbers had come with Global because, in effect, I urged them to. I felt duty-bound to warn them of what was happening. Headquarters looked the other way when certain false teachers in GCG did it, so I determined to ‘answer the challenge’ with the truth. My sermon tapes again went out.

“Of course, this would not last long.”

### **True Colors**

Ministers and members in the field began hearing reports that Global’s headquarters was a divided camp. The repeated questioning of the leader, and the portion of the Council that stood with him, badly polarized the Council. A serious rift existed. Eight Council members stood against the presiding evangelist, four stood with him, and one was undecided. This at first centered on the man’s teachings, but eventually broadened to include his personal conduct.

Some supported the GCG leader, regardless of doctrinal or behavioral mistakes. Others saw similarities between him and the apostate leaders in the WCG.

Any remaining hope that this man had changed evaporated in those with eyes to see. Some were even learning that the presiding evangelist had actually explored starting his own organization during the mid-1970s.

More than a few understood that the man viewed the apostasy as his chance to finally get his due—to attain final power and authority over his own church.

Also, in late 1991, *a year before* he was fired from the WCG, this man stated that he was waiting to be fired, and did not desire to yet “start his own group,” reportedly stating to those close to him, “I need an income. There are not yet

enough tithe-payers ready to act.” But plain facts existed that the man had reserved the corporate title “Global Church of God” *over a year before he was fired!*

Mr. Pack now understood that the facade of a reluctant warrior was altogether contrived to gain a following.

### **Setting a Trap**

The leader believed Mr. Pack to be at the heart of dissension against him. Not surprising, a stronger move to terminate Mr. Pack developed. Rumors had been circulating for a solid year that the leader was plotting this. But each time Mr. Pack approached GCG’s leader about what he had been hearing, he denied the rumors, always saying they were “false.”

“Some background. Our daughter entered Hillsdale College in Michigan in the fall of 1998. We decided in September to visit her on the first weekend in November. She was attending services under the very liberal pastor who was handling Michigan. Of course, this man was now reporting to the liberal regional pastor. That man was reporting, however, to a new Director of the ministry, at that point supportive of me. I wanted to visit and speak at what would be a combined service, one comprised of many brethren I had invited to services in Michigan over the years. The Sabbath chosen was November 7.

“What I did not know was that beginning in September, two months before, the plot to find grounds to fire me became known in Michigan. A member was selected to help create a ‘sting’ operation.

“A week before my trip, a man I knew well called me in a very troubled state of mind, complaining about doctrine and about his pastor. We spoke for hours, and he was *very, very* upset with headquarters for doing nothing about either. He wanted me to ‘speak out’ during my trip. I assured him that I would. Moments

before services started, he came up and urged me one last time to ‘Let it rip’—his words.

“I did.”

### “Eight Signs of a True Philadelphian”

Mr. Pack prepared a powerful sermon for the Michigan Sabbath, titled, “Eight Signs of a True Philadelphian.” Just as he understood what was at stake almost six years earlier in the WCG when he gave his “Truth” sermon, it was clear what was likely to happen if he gave a strong sermon.

“At the last minute, on the night before I was to speak, a move was made to block me from speaking. The new CAD Director had to intervene to reverse the regional pastor’s decision not to permit the sermon to go forward.

“Knowing I was under leadership irretrievably off-track, I was at a crossroads. Things had to be said artfully, but forcefully.”

The following are important excerpts from Mr. Pack’s sermon that reveal its flavor and candor. They are extensive because this sermon changed *everything* regarding his status in Global. The first thing to understand is that it was a previously given sermon in Akron, and therefore one that had once been acceptable in Global:

“The subject I want to cover today, I covered the second week I came with Global. Now for me that was early in the ball game, so to speak. I got shot out of the shoot very early, the second day of March 1993. I gave this subject the week after the first week we met together, as separated brethren at that point. And I think I probably learned more about the subject of the two eras of the Church—once again the sermonette

today introduced it beautifully—in the last five and a half years than I’ve probably learned in my first 27 years in the Church. I’m 32 and a half years in the Church and my wife is almost 40 years...”

“It has been my experience, and I have worked with almost 8,000 people directly as a minister—I probably have known 10,000 to 12,000 in my ministry because I served in big-city areas many of those years and got to know other people—it has been my experience that most people do not have ears to hear. They do not have eyes to see...I’ve noticed sometimes they’re just asleep...”

“Now, if this is the Laodicean era, I asked Mr. Armstrong more than once directly in conversations, just one-on-one with him, ‘Mr. Armstrong, how do you see the birth of the Laodicean church?’...We often talked about prophecy, and he always said the same four things [about Laodicea]...”

“I probably asked him twice, maybe three times, over a period of perhaps seven or eight years starting in 1978, the first time I asked him. He said, ‘1) It will rise suddenly, 2) it will be the dominant era because Philadelphia is just a group with little strength, 3) they won’t do much of a work, if they do any work at all, and 4) they will arise directly out of this Church.’ And I would come back a couple of years later and ask him again. I can’t remember if I asked him a third time or not, but boy he hit the same four things. And then he would always say, ‘That’s about all I can see.’

“Now, if we believe the Bible, and we believe Mr. Armstrong, then the practical scriptural reality is that most of the converted minds at the end are Laodicean. That’s just reality.

“Now, the British Rule of Law [was once] different than the American Rule. The American is you’re

innocent until proven guilty. And the burden of proof is on the prosecutor to determine if...you are guilty. You are presumed innocent, and we have this thing called the ‘presumption of innocence.’

“I deal with attorneys a lot. I own a company and I have to talk to attorneys about various things. I spent four hours this last Monday with an attorney, who was probably going to be the next governor of the state of Virginia until God called him. The British Rule was you are guilty until proven innocent. Fundamentally different—and the burden of proof rests with the defense attorney. All the prosecutor has to do is hold his ground. The defense attorney has got to turn the tide. It was a totally different method of a still adversarial relationship...”

“On the one extreme, we’re warned over and over again, and which of us would forget the lesson so recently in our rearview mirror that proved this. There are, whether you call them wolves, tares, Paul called them false brethren, whether you call them flatterers, Daniel said many would ‘cleave with flatteries’—they are not converted. They were sewn into the Church. Matthew 13 says absolutely not converted.

“It’s shocking who some of them turned out to be. They are ‘filler’ in the Church, and the Plan of God has nothing to do with them, except you leave them there, assuming they are...not a *noisy* tare, they’re a *quiet* tare—because if you root them up...then you root up wheat with them...the wheat can’t tell the difference, but those who tend the field can...”

“I’m going to give you...*eight points* that are signs of a true Philadelphian. People want to make things complicated. We live in the information age when things are complicated. My father-in-law followed the old K-I-S-S (Keep It Simple Stupid), and it’s a great way to live.

“When you just let the Bible tell you exactly what it says and you don’t get ahead of Christ...and you just follow what He says, it’s not complicated. So let us see if we can uncomplicate something that most people apparently, prophecy shows us, will never figure out. Yet, the differences between the two groups are so profound in the mind of God that one group is protected in the worst time of horror and pain for this world of all time, and the other group is spewed right into the heart of it. And one of the reasons is because they are blind...”

“Let me make a statement. Some say, ‘Well, do you think there will be a big Work? Do you think there will be a little Work?’ Some people don’t want to do the Work, because they say, ‘Well the Two Witnesses are going to do it.’ ‘We don’t have time to do it.’ ‘We don’t have enough money to do it.’ ‘It was Herbert Armstrong’s job.’ ‘We’re not big enough to do it.’...

“It’s our responsibility to be found so doing. I’ve talked to many senior ministers. I was talking last night with some of them in a conference call. ‘How big are we going to get?’ I have no idea. I will give you a personal opinion...Forty-five baptisms in six years isn’t very much. But, it’s irrelevant. We have to try to do the Work...The true people of God will be doing the Work...”

“‘You have kept My Word,’ and there is a difference. If you study all the Bible has to say about patience, it’s an enormous, big topic that has branches and tentacles going all over the place...Now let’s look at something fascinating. That is the only biblical statement about the doctrinal position of Philadelphians. They are people who hold fast *what they have*. Now why is that significant? I’ll show you why.

“Revelation 12 is really a 2,000 year picture in 17 verses of the entire New Testament Church period. Of

course, in verse 14 it talks about the Church going to Her place, the place of safety, for a time, times and half a time from the face of the serpent—three and a half years where we will be protected...”

““But the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed,’ because they don’t get protected ‘which keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. Another way of putting that is they have the core doctrines in place, but somehow they fall far short of this thing called holding fast to which your crown and mine is tied...”

“Let me make a statement. Some people are afraid to say this, I’m not. Herbert Armstrong was clearly the final Elijah. There is not a doubt in my mind, and there are some among us who don’t believe it. The implications of believing what he said in *Mystery of the Ages*, what he said many times, what I talked to him about, and what you heard him say and write are staggering. Because if he was the Elijah to come, he restored all things, not most things, he restored *all* things.

“Well, there was one guy who stood up and started a church and said, ‘You have to profess it as a litmus test before we’ll even let you in the door’ and we haven’t said it that loudly. Well, I will.

“He was the Elijah and he restored all things. Now, if you don’t believe he was Elijah, then maybe he didn’t restore all things...Do you see what I mean?

“I will tell you, there have been a number of doctrines changed. How many of them have you caught? Changes that are wrong! How many of them have you caught? Are you even aware that any of them are changing? [I could] give you quite a list—profoundly wrong.

“Titus 1:9. What’s my responsibility when that happens? I personally, brethren, invited probably

about 1,000 people to Global, and several thousand others know that I have collated and documented 280 doctrinal changes at that point. I can't come over here and just stop looking and give 90 reasons to follow the truth, and then say, 'But now that you're here, don't worry about anything,' because the responsibility to me, Paul writes to Titus, a senior minister, when he tells him how to select ministers, is 'Hold fast the faithful word as he hath been taught.'

"I know who taught me. I know who my father in the gospel was. I'm clear on that. That's not a mystery to me. He was an apostle. He was the final Elijah who restored all things. Not a perfect man, don't misunderstand me. He made mistakes..."

"But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived. What do you do? K-I-S-S. We keep it simple. 'But continue you in the things which you have learned and have been assured of.' All of you have stood up at least once for the truth. Some of you have had to do it twice..."

"Why continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of? Because you know of whom you learned them. Why do I preach the Word faithfully, as I have been taught? For the same reason. I'm told to continue in the things which I have learned, knowing of whom I have learned them.

"I might be shocking some of you here today. But 'the righteous are bold as a lion,' and 'in the fear of God is strong confidence.' I don't bend. Do you bend? Will you bend? Are you going to hold fast because God says so, if changes start coming? Are you going to continue in the things which you have learned, knowing of whom you have learned them?"

"A Philadelphian is able to strike a balance between absolutely bending on nothing—say that as often to yourself as you have to—but not being arrogant,

militant, bitter, accusative. He is known for brotherly love.

“They should harden themselves on doctrine, but still be as kind, loving and patient. And you can’t be in the era known for that...quality if you don’t have it. On the other hand, you can’t possibly be in it if you start dibbling around with the details of doctrine and just say, ‘Well, the core ones are important, as long as I keep the Commandments and have the testimony of Christ, and don’t eat any ham sandwiches, and tithe now and again, and don’t believe in the trinity, and I guess I’m not born again now. Then I’m okay...’”

“The Laodiceans are told to be *zealous* and *repent*. The implication is they do not have *zeo* in the Greek. You know that zeal comes from the Greek work *zeo* and means ‘to be hot, to boil like a liquid.’

“You know you can be around some people in God’s Church and you can just tell they are boiling. Call it first love, call it the first love that they never lost. You can have your first love for 30 years. If it’s the same love, you can have it.

“But they’re boiling and they’re excited, and they’re studying, and analyzing and they’re watching, and nobody is going to fool them. They’re not ever going to let themselves become blind, or poor, wretched, miserable, naked, lukewarm and all the other descriptive words that are there.

“It has been my experience, brethren, back to the statement that I have invited 1,000 to Global. I was just the first guy shot out of the shoot. I think I started 45 churches in Global. My experience, I must say, is the majority have gone back to sleep. That’s my opinion. You can say, ‘Well, that’s your opinion.’ It *is* my opinion. There is a minority who have not. The majority have just said, ‘We’re here, we made it to the island, we crawled up the sand, got into the palm

trees, the ship sank and I'm here—it's over. Put it on autopilot and cruise control, and I'm never going to let myself feel anything but warm, fuzzy and cozy again.' And that's just wrong! It's wrong.

"Some want smooth things to be preached. It says in Ezekiel: 'Preach unto us like a lovely song.' I have found that sometimes people don't want the facts. You know there is an old saying, 'The facts, though interesting, are irrelevant.'

"You know the facts are it's hard to be a Philadelphian. People don't want to take correction. We live in the age where everybody does their own thing. That statement has been around 25 or 30 years. If people get corrected, they react like a scalded cat...

"Go read Philippians 3:15. It's a fabulous verse to live by. It's a promise from God that if you keep going to him, and you keep asking him to help you see things, He absolutely promises He will do that. But there is nothing that you will ever need to know about yourself, or life, or His Plan, that you will not know if you follow that verse. Most of the time, by the way, you will find people stop at verse 14. But then you read the next verse 15—an extraordinary promise from God.

"Ministers are warned in I Corinthians 3. I'll just talk about me for a moment, because the warnings to me are right there in the Bible. Not only are the warnings to *you* there, but how *we* are to minister are right there. If I don't hold fast the faithful word as I've been taught, you'll know it. If I'm not a lover of hospitality, or I'm out getting drunk, or doing all the other things that would disqualify me as a minister, you'd know it.

"You know if I'm not building gold, silver and precious stones and my ministry is producing wood, hay and stubble. You might not necessarily know it

right away, until fire comes and burns it up and the gold, silver and precious stone remains.

“The toughest job of a minister, and it really defines true ministers from false, is whether they will always be willing, as God leads them—and they certainly have to be led of God—to tell people what they *need* to hear, not just what they *want* to hear. I will tell you that is a difficult thing to wrestle with...”

“There are people who watch. Luke 21:36: ‘Watch you therefore, and pray always, that you may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.’ How many verses could we go through, brethren, and this is a whole prophetic picture in itself of just why it is that Christ is described as ‘coming as a thief in the night.’

“You would be amazed if you saw the whole picture. Why is it half of the virgins—they’re called virgins—are still asleep and didn’t figure out when the bridegroom was coming? Literally, five prophets of God asked the question: ‘How long until these things end?’

“That’s exactly what the apostles asked Christ in Matthew 24. It’s what Daniel asked: ‘What shall be the end of these things?’ How does it play out? And God told him, ‘Go your way, I’m not going to tell you.’ But we are told, ‘The ends of the world are come upon us’ to quote Paul in Corinthians.

“Watch—be vigilant. Ministers are told they have to be vigilant. There is a responsibility to be vigilant, to watch carefully.

“I will never spend one more minute—and God help me to be this way, and you ought to say the same—on cruise control. Don’t do it. It’s the most dangerous mindset. Yet we live in the age where it’s just drowsy. ‘There’s just so much going on out there,

I can't keep up with it all. I so want to sleep. I've been up all day.'

"You know that feeling of being drowsy..."

"Turn to Daniel 11. Every single era of the Church is told at the end—it must be just for dramatic emphasis—'He that has ears to hear, let him hear what the spirit says to the churches.'

"You better have ears to hear brethren. You better recognize we live in a time where seduction gets worse and worse—betrayal, offense, lawlessness, heresy—worse and worse and worse. That's what Jesus said. The wise will understand."

This sermon ignited a firestorm that raged for two days until Mr. Pack arrived in San Diego (on Monday, November 9) for the regular, quarterly, three-day Council meetings.

"I learned when I got to San Diego that the man who had poured his heart out to me and urged I 'let it rip,' had been a set-up from the beginning. He, his father and his brother all sent faxed reports to the presiding evangelist, stating that I had 'sown division.' They used the strongest language possible.

"I was to learn what it meant to be the victim of 'sons of Belial'—the purest form of false witnesses, crafting deceit from the outset."

Four days after the sermon, at a previously scheduled Council meeting, Mr. Pack was put on trial. It lasted for eight hours—all day!—for the sole reason that he had told the church not to compromise doctrines being trampled by Global. The usual charges of "sowing division and discord" were leveled, with the above letters read aloud before the Council.

"A great deal happened during those days. This volume might contain them if it covered little else.

But an eight-hour period, breaking only for lunch, dedicated solely to putting me on trial in front of 13 other men, tells its own story of what the day must have been like.

“Some details. My first Global trial occurred on the second of three days of the conference. This was so the leader could garner more letters stating that I sowed division in Michigan. On Monday night, a group of Council members gathered to discuss strategy. We knew I was to be ‘tried’ on Wednesday, and we understood the awfulness of where everything had come to be. The clear decision was that the leader would be put on trial the day after I was to be. A typed list of *61 charges* against HIM was formally drawn up for presentation on Thursday. Sadly, most who followed this man on over to LCG never knew this. But he did, and acted accordingly.

“During the trial, the Council was bitterly divided. A great deal of acrimony came out in that room. The leader was calm, but implacable—I had to be gone. The evangelist with the typed report pulled it out at a strategic moment and held it up. He stated that charges would be brought against him the next day.

“At a certain point, one evangelist in the room, the oldest by far, asked that I be permitted to make a summary statement in my own defense.

“I spoke for about 30 minutes on doctrine, and the truth of what had happened in Michigan. A tape of the service did not arrive in time for the ‘trial,’ but I made plain that my statements were along the lines of the sermon quotes related above. I also made clear I did not care what the Council decided. I did know the trial of the leader would immediately follow.

“I was asked to leave the room while the Council ‘deliberated,’ as would a jury. The deliberation lasted about an hour and a half. I was then called in and given

my sentence—suspension from the Council, pending an ‘investigation,’ to be carried out by two ministers chosen by the Council of Elders. (But these men would be chosen solely by the leader. One was the regional pastor who loathed me.) I was not permitted to respond, but I had nothing to say. I did not care—and they knew it.

“A detailed report of what happened when I left the room was soon given to me. First, facts were reviewed. Next, the leader asked the Council to disfellowship me. He could not get the necessary two-thirds vote. He then asked it to fire me from the ministry. Same result. He then asked it to remove me from the Council. Same result—three times.

“This left the idea of suspension from the Council—a matter of no consequence to me—to investigate the matter—something I very much *wanted*, because I knew what it would yield. It would create a roaring fire throughout the church *over true doctrine*—my goal!

“And I knew that the Board would likely soon remove the leader, anyway.”

Afterward, a chain of events was set in motion that led to a massive explosion in the Global Church of God. First, the next day, the presiding evangelist suddenly promised before the entire Council to “behave himself.” This was a charade purely designed to buy time for one week.

## *Post-split Global*

Soon after Mr. Pack's trial, the GCG leader was himself fired by the Board of Directors. Not on the Board, Mr. Pack was not party to this decision. In fact, he was deliberately screened *completely out* of the course of events.

Developments at GCG's headquarters created a schism in congregations around the world, as the ousted "presiding evangelist" sent a secret letter to the entire GCG membership to rally support and to divert contributions. He reduced events to another Korah's rebellion against Moses (Num. 16).

The ex-GCG leader established a new organization, the Living Church of God (LCG)—an ignorant reflection of I Timothy 3:15, which refers to "the church of the *living God*," not "the *living church* of God."

Chaos erupted on the American Thanksgiving weekend. A 62-year-old Council member, an evangelist, suddenly died that Sunday. Nearly six years together, confused ministers and brethren split. Local services were held in a bigger hall because a large crowd was anticipated. Mr. Pack explained the split, and listed *all* the doctrinal changes for which he could not continue under the same leadership.

Falling prey to the idea that their leader was the victim of a rebellious conspiracy, most blindly followed him. It was the easy path. Eighty-one percent of Global's members (but only 65 percent of ministers) departed, meaning the 19 percent left behind were, in effect, really the *new group* under the *old name*. In Mr. Pack's congregation, the numbers were flipped. Twenty percent left, 80 percent remained.

The original designated successor in GCG remained with Global, and was *assumed* to now be the leader. Because he had a longstanding reputation as a doctrinal conservative, Mr. Pack, as the man closest to him among the 35 percent of ministers who remained, hoped he would set the Church "back on track." He was the only other senior minister alive—in any group—who any longer firmly believed that Mr. Armstrong was the Elijah.

During this period, Mr. Pack never considered starting an organization. While this may confuse some who think he should have done this earlier, the timing would have been wrong. The new Global "leader" was just as senior an evangelist as his predecessor—and much sounder in doctrine than that man.

### **New, Small, Divided Global**

The weeks that followed were ones of bitterness, division, broken friendships and families, charge, counter-charge, accusation, counter-accusation—and widespread confusion. Tragically, most again picked up their phones instead of their bibles. Even more tragically, many of the two-thirds of ministers who followed the Global leader *openly* did so based on size—meaning, went with who best had the ability to provide a paycheck. Issues of truth, and right and wrong, did not enter the equation or even the discussion with most.

A longtime GCG member who initially went with LCG offered this description:

“The following Sabbath after the split, our local congregation underwent only one change—the name of the church, ‘Global,’ became ‘Living.’ We had the same pastor, we had the same hall, we had the same tape library, we had the same people (with one exception). Our minister stood up and made the announcement that he could not tell anybody what to do or where to go, but he personally was going with ‘whoever was larger.’

“It took me a period of time to understand what was really happening, and I eventually found myself leaving LCG in March 2000.”

This was a microcosm of halls and congregations everywhere—but the most senior ministers were also the most troubling to watch.

“The oldest man on the Council, an evangelist since 1966 and a longtime friend of the leader, had been terribly upset with many of his friend’s actions. He made no bones in private meetings, sometimes using the very strongest language about the GCG leader. At the very last minute, he switched sides, reportedly telling a group in the office, ‘I’m going to ride the big horse.’ I took the time to research the facts of this.

“Another man on the Council who stood with the leader was at the same time unhappy with him. He burst into tears, stating, ‘I don’t know what to do, because if we split I will lose my house and my life savings.’ He had told me repeatedly of his dissatisfaction. He went with LCG, but later left to start his own group.

“Locally, an interesting thing happened that was not lost on me. Almost without exception, the worst problems that I had dealt with moved away to LCG. Almost nine years of struggling with a local church elder who had worked behind my back all through the

Global years (and even in Worldwide), particularly with the new regional pastor, had come to an end. I was so very relieved to be done with his constant resistance and sour face at every turn. There were other faces who departed for LCG, but who would over time, at least locally, mostly soon trickle away from them for ‘parts unknown.’”

### **Terrible Mess**

For the ex-GCG leader, starting the Living Church of God certainly had its organizational challenges. However, it also had advantages. The debt he had incurred as GCG leader could now be left behind. This left Global with big debt, and a series of long-term financial obligations—but only a small tithe-paying base. There was little real chance of repayment.

Having been immediately reinstated to the Council, Mr. Pack lobbied hard the next week at a hastily called Council meeting for doctrinal purity and financial prudence. There was no reason not to have faith that, once Global got on track doctrinally, it would not only survive, but prosper. There were clear promises from God.

It quickly became evident that the new headquarters GCG leaders were still not exercising proper financial stewardship. There was actually for a time a plan underway to sue the Living Church of God and/or its leader. Mr. Pack went on record that he could not participate in such an action. First Corinthians 6 clearly prohibits initiating the awful spectacle that this would surely become.

The flock was now divided and scattered after the traumatic split. Mr. Pack again worked long hours to hold brethren together, and to answer questions. He simultaneously worked from within on the Council to fight doctrinal error. He believed this was what God wanted him to do. After the split, there seemed to still be *some* chance the remaining

leaders would deal with errors. He would exercise patience—but not without end.

“The new Council of Elders convened in early December. But as far as I was concerned, it was a house badly divided. The Chairman of the Council and Board agreed with me, but there was little additional support for, meaning stomach for, any immediate doctrinal correction. The Council had what they would probably call ‘bigger fish to fry.’ Yet, the Chairman did plan to ‘get to it’ at a point.

“I fully expected to be put on the new Board of Directors. There was now one opening—and I was the only minister in the Church with business experience, having now run a good-sized company for over three years. Strangely—and I would later attribute this to God’s intervention—I was *not* put on the Board. Instead, they added *three* men so the Board had seven, not five, Directors.

“After a time, I discovered that the existing Board literally did not want a strong business mind present who could hold their feet to the fire. Anyone could see that all seven of the Directors were basically little children lost in a very big, dark woods. But I thought that most, not all, of them were at least essentially *honest* men.

“The biggest wrong decision, screaming in my face, from the December Council meeting, was that some of the very worst heretics in Global were not only the ones *added* to the Board of Directors, they were also *added* to the Council of Elders. This was entirely financially driven. One of the men chosen, the worst false teacher in the church by far, was openly tepid about remaining in GCG, and he had joined it late in the game—after it was evident that even the United Church would likely not accept his theories.

The remaining CAD Director calculated that they needed the tithes of his followers to survive. To me, this made everything impossible.

“The decision was made that a general conference would be held in February for all ministers and elders who could attend.”

### **Error Spreads**

Despite Mr. Pack’s initial hopes, things did *not* improve doctrinally under the new leadership. This is the biggest single reason that he had stayed in GCG. He expected the older evangelist would *immediately* at least lay the *ground-work* to “put the Church back on track.”

The only other reason, and it was a very big one, was to try to bring a business mind to the terrible debt problem that a false leader had saddled upon brethren who trusted him.

“I immediately went to work trying to get people to understand the need to conserve and cut costs in every possible way. I had learned a lot of lessons in House of Health about *greatly* reducing costs so that an expansion of the business became possible. I learned much about how to improve the cash position of a corporation through basic, tried and true maneuvers. I tried to talk about—and teach about—projections and forecasting.

“I could not really find *any* ears to hear. The new Director of the ministry was trying to maintain a good relation with departing ministers. But his actions bordered on administrative insanity. He immediately chose, basically of his own action, to give all these men—who had sought to destroy the very corporation that would repay loans to people who were following them out—large and unnecessary severance checks. This badly depleted Global’s reserves—the only

thing that gave it a hope of surviving until matters stabilized.”

Mr. Pack faced a stark reality. Not only was Global still off course doctrinally, but it seemed probable that it would collapse because of the tremendous financial burden—and other financial problems—that ensued from the Global/Living split.

Also, history shows that in the absence of the government of God, and the resultant doctrinal harmony in the Church, *any* organization will implode given enough time—even where there is “faith.” Mr. Pack simply believed that God blesses those who please Him—nothing more or less.

“After the November split, I supported the remaining older evangelist as the decision-maker. It was not until April 13, 1999, that I learned we did not even have a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) making final decisions on behalf of the corporation. (Not often realized, Mr. Armstrong has also been the WCG *CEO*.) When I complained, I learned soon after that they had quietly appointed one. *Three* men had been sharing the leadership, with no one man taking responsibility to do what needed to be done. Time is never kind to organizations led this way.

“Christ said, ‘For the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light’ (Luke 16:8). Even in ‘this world,’ no successful corporation is run by committee. Mr. Armstrong strongly disliked committees. Councils and boards, holding final authority, are just nice words for *committees!*”

### **Last Global Conference**

The February 1999 conference came. The new streamlined Global ministry was also a house badly divided. With the

Chairman presiding, but not in agreement with the consensus—but also not fully in control—men were openly permitted to give their opinion of “how things should be done” and “what should be taught.”

“One minister after another paraded to the front of the hall to make ‘comments.’ Others stood and offered opinions from their seats. It was near chaos, with the purpose of the conference basically to ask the question, ‘What do we do now?’

“Near the end of the day, I asked for the floor again. My purpose was twofold: (1) somewhat briefly at least *openly cry out* for financial sanity, and (2) state declaratively that Mr. Armstrong was the Elijah, and that this better get settled. I gave reasons—and was blunt. This brought a culmination of what the conference came to mean.

“The man who had once been the insubordinate Cincinnati ministerial assistant of five years earlier asked for the floor. This ‘youngster’ was unhappy with my remarks about Mr. Armstrong, stating in conclusion that ‘the Council has not decided on whether Mr. Armstrong was the Elijah.’

“When he concluded, I asked to return to the front. I virtually thundered at the whole group that this matter had ALREADY been decided a long time ago. The Council’s opinion was not needed—by me or anyone else. I chided the now ordained man as a ‘green youngster’ who needed to work at sitting quietly. I concluded by stating that I would publicly teach that Mr. Armstrong was the Elijah, regardless what others did. Further, I would not dignify opponents with a discussion of what should have been seen as settled.

“I was not yet quite ready to leave the organization, because I followed up this final meeting with a dinner with the chairman. He was unhappy with what had

happened—and how some had talked down to him. But he urged that I be patient.

“One other very interesting experience occurred during this conference. GCG still had a contract with WGN, the superstation in Chicago, for the *Global World Ahead* television program. It had many expensive weeks to go. The decision was made that I would do two half-hour telecasts while in San Diego. This was quite an experience. It would permit me to have a sense of looking into a camera, and working off of a script, which I was required to do. I would have to later regret not better protecting them, because a man who worked in our office would steal my copy of those broadcasts about one year later.”

But it was now clear that the new “consensus” of headquarters leadership was also willing to tolerate false teachers. In fact, these teachers had now been emboldened to go further. They seemed to perceive the rebellion as an opportunity—a ticket out of all restraint. And the new *leaders* compromised almost as much as their predecessor, holding a variety of doctrinal stances. Some Global ministers did not even believe Mr. Armstrong held the office of *apostle*. Others were deep into unsound prophetic ideas, and so much more.

### **Sheep Left Unprotected**

By March 1999, it became apparent that certain GCG pastors were now openly teaching *mass* heresy (now in the *remnant* of GCG) completely unrestrained. They were not going to be reined in by the new leadership anymore than the previous leader would rein himself in.

Some members contacted GCG headquarters to report false teachings heard in sermons. After leaders ignored complaints, some immediately called Mr. Pack to offer a

report. Many who did not know him personally were at least familiar with his books and sermons. He answered questions, and tried to help them cut through the confusion.

Mr. Pack also began to increase complaints to headquarters, talking *many, many times* to the top man privately, and each time receiving reassurance that he would ‘deal with the problem as soon as he reasonably could.’ He also started to warn brethren about the numerous false doctrines (large and small) that were still spreading like cancer within the Church.

“I made sure to send a steady stream of emails to San Diego. There were times I seemed to be filling up computers. I wanted to be on record that I had tried as hard as possible to say as strongly as I could what needed to be done.”

Termination now seemed inevitable. Headquarters was not protecting the sheep from error, and some of the Council members were the same ones who had *also* accused him of running off the conspiracy theorist tithe-payers before the ex-GCG leader was removed. Their view of him had obviously not changed.

Mr. Pack knew he had to consider *all* potential paths that God may have in mind for him.

### **Probable Termination**

By late April, one pastor, actually a largely untrained local church elder who had been hired and quickly promoted to pastor by his friend who continued to direct Church Administration, would bring formal “charges” against Mr. Pack before the Council of Elders. He would be once again officially *put on trial* for another several-hour period, spanning parts of two days.

“On Friday, April 23, I got a call from the Boston pastor challenging me about ‘sowing division’ in GCG. His accusations were somewhat formal, and the conversation lasted perhaps two hours. He was adamant. But some set up is needed.

“Two men, one in Boston and one in Long Island, had become fed up with the tapes circulating from the ‘prophecy ministers’—chiefly the one who taught that there was no coming captivity on the nations of modern Israel, and that America would be allied with the beast, etc., etc., but also another man who taught such insane ideas as the cherubim have a face of a gorilla, not a man, and the gospel might be preached on Mars, and ministers could carry guns (he did), and so much more. These two members both resided under the Boston pastor, but, interestingly, rather than calling him with their concerns, they called me—and often. (I should add that of course there were many others calling me about the same things, but these were men in the accusing pastor’s area.)

“My counsel to these callers was simple, and relatively brief. I told them that what they were hearing was absolutely and provably wrong, as was a policy that would permit it. No punches were pulled. I sent them back to their pastor in Boston. They did go to him—and I got a phone call telling me that I was sowing division.

“Nothing I could say to my accuser meant anything. He did not care about false teachings, but was rather focused on the two words ‘division’ and ‘discord’—as per me—‘among the brotherhood,’ as he put it. He could not see the *false teachings* were sowing division, and that I was trying to *preserve unity in truth*. I spent two hours trying to convince this man of something so basic I would have thought a child could grasp it in the wake of the apostasy.

“But he could not. Rather, he continued over and over—time and again—trying to get me to acknowledge what I had supposedly done. It was pitiful. At a point, we ended in disagreement.

“On Tuesday, April 27, during the day, I got a call from both the chairman and the leader of the ministry. The Boston pastor was also on the phone. He had flown to San Diego to address the matter. (I really only learned after the call that these men were the Boston pastor bringing his ‘two witnesses’ to confront me.)

“A long, blunt discussion ensued with these three men about matters in Global. The charges of the Boston pastor came up early, and I rebutted them again. This was the call where I got everything off my chest to the two ministers who essentially held the highest positions in GCG.

“It was interesting that on Monday, April 26, I had taken the time to write a letter resigning from the Council of Elders. But it was a letter I never really had to deliver. I was prepared to carry this resignation out simultaneously with a warning to my congregation, and any others I could reach. It is important to note that I was not going to agree to anything that bound me in an unrighteous manner or compromised position.

“I was also prepared to resign completely from the Global Church of God on the spot—at a moment’s notice—if, as circumstances dictated, I deemed it strategically advantageous to fight for my flock. I was prepared to do absolutely anything necessary within God’s Law to stay a step ahead of these men, many of whom I no longer believed to be of God, men that I also, therefore, no longer believed would comport themselves ethically—meaning, with integrity.

“Having the Council resignation letter ready, in hand, would allow me to move swiftly, without even needing to take the time to resign, and having to write

out reasons. I could easily add to my existing letter that I was also completely resigning from the organization, not just the Council, if necessary.

“I received a call from someone at headquarters later that evening, asking me to be by my phone the next day. The man explained that I would be confronted the next day by my accuser in front of the Council—that the Boston pastor had now ‘taken the matter to the church.’ I must admit to actually chuckling when I heard it.

“On Tuesday *night*, the chairman called back alone. We spoke for over two hours. He was in almost complete agreement with me on the matter of false doctrine being permitted to be taught by rogue ministers freelancing through the church. He shared my frustration—and made a point of telling me that I was ‘the strongest warrior in the church for the truth’—that he ‘needed me in the all-out battle that was going to follow.’ He understood that Mr. Armstrong was the Elijah. He ended with reassurance that ‘It will all work out.’ It was midnight my time, and the call was going to come the next day, late morning my time.

“The next morning, the phone rang right on time. My wife and I were present and ready.”

### **Put on Trial**

Mr. Pack spent over three hours on the phone with all of the GCG Council of Elders present during his trial, either by hookup or from San Diego. Many lies would later be told about the proceeding. The entire procedure was permitted to be a Matthew 18:15 event, a verse so obviously not applicable.

There were 10 men on the Global Council at this point. Four present on the phone in San Diego, five others conferred in from their residences, and Mr. Pack. His accuser

was also present in San Diego. This man first primarily cited two members as his sources—his proof against Mr. Pack. Outraged that they had been used to prosecute Mr. Pack, these men would almost immediately after publicly support him with letters posted on the Internet. But, as with the bogus charges in his termination from the Worldwide Church of God, the facts were irrelevant “after the fact,” meaning in this case, “after the *non-facts*” had been presented.

Mr. Pack kept his notes from the trial, which opened with the accuser quoting three verses. First came Ephesians 4:11-14, with the idea that Mr. Pack was not edifying the Body of Christ with his supposed “divisive” remarks to the brethren. Then came Proverbs 6:19, with the point being that God hates the tongue that “sows discord.” Finally, came Matthew 18:15-17.

“I was stunned at the outset by the fact that the chairman had completely ‘flipped’ in less than 12 hours, and was actually now *leading* the tribunal. It was perhaps the most cowardly act of collapse into betrayal, or the purest act of deceit begun the night before, that I had ever experienced. A friend and family member for almost 30 years, I did not let the man get away with it. At a point in the trial, I made sure that everyone knew he had called the night before, in complete agreement with my position.

“I opened by saying this was an obvious ‘kangaroo court’—and one led by ‘feckless cowards’ (my words).

“Early on, I made plain that Matthew 18 did not apply, but that the other two verses did—to the men who were teaching false doctrine. I explained that *they* were ‘scorners’ who should be ‘cast out’ (Prov. 22:10), and that *they* should be ‘marked,’ according to Romans 16:17. I made it plain that the wrong people were on trial. No one had ears to hear.

“There were three quotes from Mr. Armstrong that I used. Having my books with his statements present was helpful. I tried to emphasize the words where he used italics, small caps or all caps.

“First was the one quoted earlier in the biography from *Mystery of the Ages*—‘It is the duty of Christ’s TRUE ministers (and *how scarce today*) to PROTECT the begotten but yet unborn saints from false doctrines, from false ministers.’ No one batted an eye. There was literally no response. The men had no concept of how a minister could ‘protect’ his sheep without telling them certain doctrines were *wrong*. All they could see was that such a man was ‘sowing division.’

“Next, I showed how *Mr. Armstrong* defined division, by quoting this precisely from *The Good News* of March 1979—‘This group of liberals assumed the authority of setting Church doctrine [with the goal of unity in mind]...that is, unity in watered down doctrines that older loyal ministers did not and never would accept! THAT WAS NOT UNITY—IT WAS DIVISION!’ Yet again, apparently not one man could even comprehend this passage—what *was* unity, and what *was* division. They had no idea one from the other. Not one commented on it, or asked about it, or even acknowledged that I had read it.

“Finally, I made it plain I could not compromise truth in any amount by quoting Mr. Armstrong a third time from one of his Personals in *The Good News* of 1976—‘I have frequently been pressured to compromise—‘just a little’—with God’s TRUTH. Nevertheless, if we begin to compromise with God’s TRUTH, even in smallest, slightest manner, we have allowed Satan to get a foot into the door of the Church, and soon he will push open the door (he is stronger than we) and take over the whole Church.’ Again, no comments—and no comprehension.

“I spent a lot of time explaining that Mr. Armstrong was the Elijah—and that this meant he ‘restored all things’—and that this in turn meant we could not go playing around with the ‘details’ of doctrine, as men might choose to define such—that no one had the right to decide either that only ‘core doctrines, essential for salvation’ were untouchable, or what were the boundaries of these so-called ‘core’ doctrines, if this were the case.

“Not once did a single mind listening on the other end of the phone register even one moment of recognition of the things I was pointing out. It was simply tragic. I have many times thanked God for the boldness to go forward that was engendered by my last memory of these men as weak, muddled, blind, confused non-thinkers who seemed utterly unable to comprehend the most basic ministerial and scriptural ethic—and all of this after we had just experienced the worst apostasy in 2,000 years.

“Their weakness made me stronger!”

After the trial, came the “sentence.” There were four features to Mr. Pack’s punishment:

(1) He was removed from the Council of Elders. (2) He was put on probation and had his pastoral responsibilities significantly reduced by taking away the Canada portion of it. (3) He was to apologize for the way he had spoken to his accuser, as well as he was to go to and formally apologize to the very men who were most teaching the false doctrine that he had warned about. (4) Finally, he was told to “back off”—to be quiet and go along with headquarters doctrinally, not saying anything more to brethren about where he felt doctrines were incorrect.

Knowing the terms were impossible to comply with, Mr. Pack needed three days to respond. He told the Council that he would consider their judgment. This was a Wednesday, and he would notify them by Saturday.

“When they asked if I accepted the terms of my ‘sentence,’ I promised to get back to them before ‘doing anything.’ I needed a short space of time.”

The leader of the Council said the details of the meeting would be kept quiet until they heard from Mr. Pack. However, on Friday, the Council blindsided him by announcing this disciplinary action throughout Global and on the Internet—meaning they told all of the splinters and *the whole world* what would always have been internal details (false at that) and an announcement that God’s Church would never in the past have divulged publicly. It was unethical and deceitful in the extreme. In response, Mr. Pack posted a letter on his personal website (previously started for him by a local member in his Akron congregation) on the Sabbath of May 1, 1999, right after services. Contrary to conflicting reports, he did this *after* notifying the GCG headquarters that he could not accept the terms of their judgment.

Although he did not resign, he fully understood the implications of his actions.

“My wife went home after the regular service, during the potluck meal period before a Bible Study that would follow, and posted my response to events, as well as my resignation, sent to each member of the Council. Her return from home told me that I was no longer a member of Global, and I was now prepared to explain details of what would happen going forward.”

### **The Global Council**

The record of what happened to all of the members of the Global Council is its own story.

“Despite what the reader might think, I had shared many happy moments with the members of the Global

Council. We had certainly stood up for certain truths when the WCG had taken the path of destruction to all that we loved. I bore my ‘adjudicators’ no ill will. I recall telling them at a point that they had done me a favor, and they had. Half a dozen or more men would actually call me at different intervals later, from both the 1998 and the 1999 Councils, and apologize. Hating or resenting them for what they were probably guided by God to do, albeit for completely different reasons than they would assert, would make no sense. But what happened to them later was an eloquent—although unpleasant—sermon that would play time and again in my ears. It was truly instructive.

“Ten men had been present during my trial—nine Council members and my accuser. One man, the chairman, went (back) to the Living Church of God about a year and a half later, before leaving them again in worse bitterness. He later died, bedridden for years. Two other men on the Council also died—in different organizations from each other, and from the first man who died. Of the remaining seven, four went to yet another organization—the United Church, after which two of these were almost immediately ‘retired.’ My accuser is a pastor there—which is its own statement of what he believed—and the only other man still active there—the one who had in writing sold Joe Tkach to the church as an apostle—made it to the UCG Council, before being voted off after one term.

“Each of the remaining three participants broke away at different times and started his own tiny, separate group. All were in disagreement with each other, and with the other seven. One left right after I did. Others left after Global very quickly did go bankrupt.

“But, as explained, the other six earlier (1998) Global Council members fared little better. One died *10 days* after my trial—he had planned to stay in GCG

(his wife did). Two others died later, and another went his own separate way from LCG some years ago.

“This ending was terribly, terribly sad—and never had to be. By contrast, I think of the daily thrill and excitement of where I am today.”

### Termination

Mr. Pack was terminated five days after the trial, on May 3, 1999, after six years and two months in the Global Church of God!

Two summary statements complete the picture of Mr. Pack’s termination from the Global Church. Here is what he wrote in his book *The Work of God—Its Final Chapter!*:

“I was terminated from the Global Church of God on May 3, 1999 for defending truths that its leadership would no longer teach. This followed a major split that had occurred in this organization about six months earlier. Though that division eventually culminated in a struggle for power in late 1998, my concern centered on the many *false doctrines* that had crept into that Church. I said this very loudly at the time, but few listened.

“During this difficult period, and for some time before, I became increasingly aware that *all* of the splinters were compromising many doctrines restored by God to His Church. Some were admitting they had made changes. Others (like the Global Church of God, which became the Living Church of God) were deceitfully claiming they had not. All were growing worse! I knew something had to be done.

“Of course, from 1999, I was able to speak much more loudly about doctrinal compromise throughout the splinters...”

Here is what he wrote in *Why The Restored Church of God? – Should You Join?* in a section titled “Why Did You Leave the Former GCG?”:

“I did not leave the Global Church of God voluntarily, but rather was fired and disfellowshipped for taking a stand and defending the flock against false teachers and doctrines. Any minister or elder in any organization who *truly* does this should expect the same! John 10:15 and 15:13 tell ministers to *give their lives* for the sheep, and I have striven to do this. The charges against me were described as ‘sowing division and discord.’ Of course, I was not charged with ‘defending the flock,’ and I certainly *was* ‘guilty’ of this!

“In early 1999, many members had been contacting GCG headquarters to report false teachings being heard in sermons by various pastors. After leaders ignored them, some called me. Faithful ministers never refuse to discuss such concerns. I always referred them to their local ministers.

“At this point, GCG trumped up charges against me. But Mr. Armstrong’s instruction from *MYSTERY OF THE AGES* was, ‘It is the duty of Christ’s TRUE ministers (and *how scarce today*) to PROTECT the begotten but yet unborn saints from false doctrines, from false ministers’ (p. 262). Obviously, Mr. Armstrong agreed with both Christ and Paul. Knowing these instructions, I could not have done otherwise!

“In spite of grave internal problems, which their later collapse and disintegration into numerous groups bore out, I would not have left GCG as soon as I did. Although aware that it was tolerating false teachers and doctrines, I first tried to work from within by appealing to the leaders to address the issues. To simply depart, without trying to convince those at the top to correct the organization’s

wrong teachings and problems—and to help in this—would have been reckless and irresponsible.

“However, when the headquarters would not take action to protect the sheep, I realized that either I would soon be forced out, or GCG might collapse for financial reasons—or both! I wanted to be careful that I did not become the *cause* of the financial collapse certain to come. (Later, a Living Church of God [LCG] elder essentially sued GCG out of existence.)...

“Some claimed I left that organization because I ‘lacked faith that God would provide the funds to keep GCG going.’ This is silly. Impending bankruptcy is not a reason to leave. Actually, if the leadership had been making every effort to save GCG, then leaving—at least at that time—*would* have been abandonment.

“History shows that poor stewardship eventually implodes *any* organization—even where there is ‘faith.’ I have faith God blesses those who please Him—nothing more or less. I certainly did *not* have faith in the leaders of GCG. In time, as mentioned, GCG did collapse and break apart. But the disintegration of any splinter is bad because people involved are further hurt and scattered!

“I was fired and disfellowshipped from GCG for the same reasons I was fired and disfellowshipped from the WCG—and said so both times. Many will recall my first ‘30 Reasons to Follow the Truth’ sermon (of May 15, 1993). It made clear to thousands of witnesses that I believed then as I did in 1999. The Bible teaches that when an organization becomes Laodicean, we leave for the place Christ provides...”

“Having been on the GCG Council of Elders from its inception, I tried as hard as possible to work within to get the Church back on track. I sincerely believed this was what God wanted me to do. I had a ‘voice’ in the Council and I used it—a lot! Later,

after the split and the previous leader's departure, I initially thought that many problems would be alleviated. I was wrong!

“After three months, I saw that the new leader was also willing to tolerate false teachers and was compromising almost as much as his predecessor. Also, other leaders at headquarters were still not exercising proper stewardship over tithes and offerings. (In the event a plan was underway to possibly sue LCG and/or its leader, I went on record that I could not participate in such an action. First Corinthians 6 clearly prohibits initiating this...)

“I recognized that the flock was being divided and scattered. However imperfectly, I worked diligently to hold them together until I was *driven out*. However, I acknowledge that I FORCED THEIR HAND by confronting them, because I could no longer accept false teachings that were being so comfortably tolerated.”

## *The Restored Church of God Begins*

**A**fter almost 29 years in the ministry, and a roller coaster tenure in the Global Church of God, Mr. Pack knew God would not leave His people without answers to the great questions facing the Church.

No other organization was following the correct pattern of government, or teaching all that had been given to the Church, among many other glaring problems. So many evangelists and senior ministers had compromised. What was occurring was a doctrinal *and spiritual* holocaust.

There now appeared to be no choice other than to press forward alone. As Mr. Pack accepted that Christ had selected him for an extraordinary purpose, the magnitude of the task ahead had not yet sunk in. But it was one he could not ignore.

### **Another Leader**

God had been preparing *another* man to direct His Church under Christ! This man would have been on a different path from the other, and his training would have begun long before Mr. Armstrong died. Whomever God was training to be

the *true* succeeding leader—the *faithful* leader of the Church in the end-time—would have to meet a very different set of criteria than Mr. Armstrong’s successor.

During this time of uncertainty, Mr. Pack realized that intense analysis of all the splinters and their leaders was helpful. He had long before examined these other “options,” and they were *not options*. If he went to another organization, he would have to be completely convinced its leader was committed to truth. There were no such groups.

The leadership landscape was disappointing. There were charismatic men who knew how to make people feel good. Many “name brand ministers” had smooth, comfortable personalities. Such were good at telling people what they *wanted* to hear, instead of what they *needed* to. None would faithfully administer God’s Word. None would hold people accountable for conduct. It was too unpopular.

These men were once perfectly willing to change at least some existing doctrines at a false leader’s behest. Mr. Pack came to see that the two largest organizations that had left the Worldwide Church of God both believed doctrine was voted in or out of the Church by a consensus. The largest group believes all ministers participate, and the second largest believe the top 12 decide! It was obvious these men did not know their bibles. Neither had they ever been grounded in—or in some cases, even been aware of—the greatest doctrines in the Church.

It was clear that such leaders automatically drew large followings simply because they were familiar names.

### **Must Stand on Truth**

All current splinter leaders had either compromised doctrines, were blind to the age or lacked training. Of those who knew Mr. Armstrong personally, or had worked with him in the early years, these proved they never understood the example of his leadership.

God would eventually *have* to make His choice known for those actively seeking His will. Some of God's people understood that just because they had left the Worldwide Church of God, they had not necessarily stepped out of confusion. But before they made another move, they wanted to be sure they were entering an organization that really *was* a continuation of *God's Church*.

The primary reason so few held to the full truth—members or ministers—was, again, because they had never truly proven it. Many brethren made their decision to join God's Church after glossing over doctrines—never *actually* proving anything, but often thinking that they did! The majority accepted doctrine through the process of reading Church literature and attending services each week, never opening their bibles.

Mr. Pack learned that most followed parents, spouses or friends into the WCG, taking the path of least resistance with regards to their future. Many made their decision to enter based on the initial excitement—emotion!—of being exposed to new understanding.

When the easy path became that of almost fading out of the Church during the apostasy—this is what most did. If they had deeply proven God's truth from the beginning, they would have searched for it then, or do so today.

By late April 1999, it first occurred to Mr. Pack that this also applied to the ministry. Not one senior minister or organization was holding to all that the Church learned through Mr. Armstrong. The realization hit:

None of the leaders had even proven *basic* doctrines!

### **Longtime Position**

Years later, in his book *Why The Restored Church of God – Should You Join?* Mr. Pack wrote about what has always been his approach to God's full truth, and the lack of doctrinally sound ministers he saw around him:

“I decided years ago that I would compromise nothing. I have certainly not always done this perfectly. Some claim I allege that I have *never* compromised doctrine, but that is untrue. I accepted a couple of false ideas in the early nineties. I apologized to my pastorate *in writing*. That letter was once cited as ‘proof’ that I ‘compromised.’ I freely admit this, and took responsibility for what I did.

“*Where are the others who have done the same?* I am not aware of any other minister who wrote a letter of apology to his congregation. As the first WCG pastor fired (for the right reasons) for not supporting the apostates, I taught *much less* that was wrong (two doctrines)—and for a far shorter period of time—than any other minister. Most taught *many* wrong doctrines, *and still do*, and have apologized for *nothing!* Certainly no one can accuse them by pointing to their letters of apology.

“Such letters do not exist!

“It is a source of continual amazement that ministers who still teach *many* false doctrines get a virtual free pass merely because they are not *claiming* to hold fast. Four former ‘friends,’ who all later went with the biggest splinter, turned me in to Pasadena and secured my termination from the WCG. These same men taught, *and still teach*, MANY false doctrines. They have never apologized. But I have had to realize that the longer I will not compromise, the more I will probably be attacked by certain people for having done this imperfectly. Having no choice anyway, I accept this as a cross I have to bear.”

For the first time, it struck Mr. and Mrs. Pack that God’s purpose may be for Mr. Pack to lead the final Work of God.

Initially, this sounded *terribly presumptuous*. But he began to think about the attributes and training a man would

need to lead God's Work. Just as Mr. Armstrong had learned a great many of life's lessons, and received specific training before assuming a leadership role in God's Church, Mr. Pack understood that he had also received unique training—yet he was still hesitant. Humbled that this could be God's will, he began to view his life through a new lens.

### Summary of Training

Mr. Pack's mind flooded with the first 50 years of his life. From the beginning, his father had instilled a sense of determination and toughness in him. His mother had forced him to stimulate his mind and organize his thoughts in a constructive way.

Through his swimming career, he had built an intense desire to excel, and he coupled this with the willpower to follow through on goals.

Giving up opportunities at the highest athletic levels had required a greater level of proof of God's truth than normal, before making the decision to change the course of his entire life. This was Mr. Pack's first difficult decision in a lifetime of following the path of *most* resistance—*if* the path was the correct one—as opposed to the more often traveled path of *least* resistance most others choose.

Leaving a swimming career behind greatly affected his AC experience, and he seized every opportunity to learn.

Four years later, after giving up everything and committing his life to God's Work, he was laid off as a test of his commitment to being a living sacrifice.

For someone who had reached a level of physical capacity through his athletic endeavors, the intensity and debilitating nature of the intense health trials forced him to acknowledge the temporary nature of his physical existence beyond what most experience.

In addition, Mr. Pack had learned to trust God's government through both tremendous opportunities, and then dif-

ficult setbacks, as well as painful demotions—even as a senior minister.

Through these experiences, Mr. Pack resolved to always turn to the same source when faced with adversity—God’s Word. Beyond just simply reading it for inspiration during these times, he delved into his Bible at a depth few do, once writing hundreds of pages by hand as an exercise to memorize God’s Word.

Mr. Pack slowly began to see that he indeed had traveled a unique course. Now it appeared to have a purpose.

As he formed a relationship with Mr. Armstrong in the late 1970s and early 1980s, Mr. Pack could not have fully understood what watching the aging Church leader during these times of great adversity would mean to him later.

Mr. Pack wrote about this relationship in 2000 in his book *Why The Restored Church of God? – Should You Join?* Some of it is repeated from Volume One, but even these parts are helpful to review here in the context of what Mr. Pack was facing:

“I had the unique opportunity to have had a close personal relationship with Mr. Armstrong. I was not as close as his most personal aides at headquarters, but I was privileged to spend many wonderful hours discussing with him doctrine, prophecy, administrative matters, and numerous other things, over a 15-year period. This relationship began when I married his secretary (the former Miss Shirley Ochs) in 1971, and it slowly grew from that time.

“In late 1978, Mr. Armstrong made me promise, personally, that I would never preach anything other than the truth. Though I never dreamed this promise could lead me to my current position, it is one that I am still determined to keep.

“I treasure the hours spent with Mr. Armstrong during the time he was putting the Church ‘back on

track.’ We sometimes discussed this process at length. More was learned from this time with him than I could possibly relate here. He would occasionally write articles and letters, and then call to read them to me. We also discussed strategy, liberalism, job appointments, and much more through those years. Obviously, although I was certainly appreciative at the time, this experience has vastly more meaning and value to me today than it did then.

“I watched Mr. Armstrong courageously face and make bold decisions time and again. He *never* shrank from the ‘tough calls,’ and always strove to do what was right! I observed his unwillingness to compromise—no matter the cost. He did not care if people left the Church or income dropped due to doctrinal or administrative decisions. He absolutely would not *ever* compromise on *anything* doctrinal. He was concerned about pleasing God—not men!

“I have learned that many will *say* this, but Mr. Armstrong **PRACTICED** it—and simply did not fear men!”

For years before Mr. Armstrong responded to God’s calling, he was exposed to the corporate world. He developed a multitude of skills related to marketing and had many opportunities to develop his communication skills in the process. Although not exactly the same course as Mr. Armstrong, Mr. Pack had also found himself overseeing multifaceted projects in the business world.

These circumstances resulted in a crash course in corporate training, and provided him with a variety of skills to organize and implement large undertakings.

The man God would eventually raise up to lead His final Work *had* to have a background in the field ministry. Some believe whomever God would choose would need Headquarters experience, perhaps a great deal. However, most of

these men were administrators, and often found it hard to relate to the problems of local brethren when they left the protective oasis of the Headquarters campus.

What about Mr. Armstrong?

For many years *before* taking on the more administrative role of leading God's Work, his experience was in the field working directly with people. This is what made his training so unique. For years, his early—and very lengthy—ministerial experience in Oregon included only working with tiny flocks of people. This all transpired *before* God ever considered him “qualified” to lead the Work.

### Long Talks

On April 13, 1999, Mr. Pack began considering for the very first time whether it was God's purpose for him to rebuild the Work. At first, the idea was almost too overwhelming to even think about. But as he surveyed the “splinter” landscape, he knew he had to explore it. There seemed to be no other options.

Throughout this turbulent time, Shirley Pack stood at her husband's side, offering her constant support. She shared her husband's unwavering commitment to the truth and they were of like minds in their understanding of God's truth and their concern over the current state of Global. For the first time in his ministry, she was the only voice of reason or sounding board he had. Mr. Pack was on his own, with only his wife to support him.

“The thought that I might have to start *everything* all over again first occurred to me on a walk with my wife on about April 13, 1999. I posed a series of ‘what-if’ questions to her. She was completely supportive—and understood.

“We went through the list of names out there as a kind of formal exercise to remind ourselves where all the

other, shall we say, ‘candidates’ stood. We recognized it was largely an exercise in futility, but we wanted to carry it out nevertheless. After all, we had just spent five and a half extra months in Global being patient because we thought the former leader’s successor, however weak a personality he was, was going to hold fast. We determined that after coming so far, it would be foolish to stampede at that point. If I stepped out alone, I wanted to be sure—absolutely sure!

“Also, remember that my wife had worked around Mr. Armstrong before I knew him, and done so for years. She had her own *very* strong sense of what various senior ministers would—and would never—do!

“For me, another important point to relate at this juncture had to do with something my wife told me on our drive home after the Feast of Tabernacles in 2001. She suddenly explained that she strongly sensed, as early as the mid 1970s, that God was going to use me in a way that was unusual. I was surprised, and asked her why she never told me this until 25 years had passed, or even at the point two and a half years earlier when we were talking about whether God now wanted me to lead His Work. Her answer was blunt. ‘I did not want you to get a big head.’ Knowing me in my 20s, it was hard to argue with that. It is also interesting that my father mentioned sometime in the early or mid 1980s that he thought God had something unusual in mind for me, in terms of a role that He might use me to carry out. He was no more specific than that, and I did not think more about it at that time or later.

“What was most important about these two comments, particularly looking back from 2001, was how Mrs. Armstrong had an unusual dream—this was related in Mr. Armstrong’s *Autobiography*—that God was going to use the two of them in a special way.

“There seemed to be a parallel.”

Both Mr. Pack and his wife felt that, from the beginning, God played an important role in bringing them together. Mrs. Shirley Pack recalled the following about the beginning of her relationship with her husband:

“Even though we came from such completely different backgrounds, and were quite different in many ways, it is amazing and inspiring to me...to see that the one area we never had any differences was when it came to obeying God and our commitment to the Work of God. From the earliest parts of our marriage when my husband was laid off, to the times when he was demoted, until he was fired from the Worldwide Church of God, we always did what we had to do to stay focused on God’s will. We knew God would work things out. That is the one thing that has kept us strong together through the years.”

For the Packs, it was easy to look back at all the reasons God brought them together in 1971. Repeatedly, in ways too numerous to recount, they witnessed the hand of God in Mr. Pack’s ministry, guiding, sustaining, teaching, blessing, protecting—and never abandoning them! They both recognized that they were joined together for God’s purpose. Whatever path He had in mind for them, they were in agreement over one thing—they were going to walk it unified in the truth.

### **Mr. Armstrong’s “Final List”**

Mr. Pack first examined the circumstances surrounding Mr. Armstrong’s death and the reasons he chose Joseph Tkach as his successor. This decision paved the road to the Laodicean era and the deplorable state of the splinters that comprised it—including Global. Considering *God’s* mind on such a matter was *most* relevant and *most* crucial to Mr. Pack’s decision.

God's first purpose was to actually choose a man who would compromise truth—and in the worst possible way—to serve as a great test to the Church. A minister loyal to the truth would never have worked for this role.

God led Mr. Armstrong's mind directly *away* from anyone who might be even a little faithful!

Many of God's people still have a misguided understanding of how the top leader was chosen. It is not a monarchy, where rule is passed from king to prince, father to son. Nor is it like the Catholic Church, which comes to a consensus and then hands the baton to a man. God works very differently, sometimes in "mysterious ways" that at the time may not be understood.

After studying the process of how Mr. Armstrong chose whom he did, and fully understanding what that person's role was in the Church, Mr. Pack's vision cleared.

"The central question in my mind, and it should be at the center of anyone's mind in my position, was whether or not I was being presumptuous—whether I was selecting and appointing myself to a task not given to me by God. That spells disaster—eternally.

"But there simply was no one else to follow. God knows I wished at the time that there had been. How much simpler would have been my life from that moment forward."

### **Not a New Church**

The new organization that Mr. Pack was being led to form was not a "new church." Rather, it would be the reconstitution—the continuation—of the only one Jesus Christ founded nearly 2,000 years ago (Matt. 16:18).

A statement of centuries earlier illustrates the ebb and flow through which the Church of God has flourished at times, and then receded at others, until a subsequent resurgence. It

was made in 1404 by Waldensian converts (followers of Peter Waldo, who led God’s Church in the latter Middle Ages):

“We do not find anywhere in the writings of the Old Testament that the light of truth and of holiness was at any time completely extinguished. There have always been men who walked faithfully in the paths of righteousness. Their number has been at times reduced to a few; but has never been altogether lost. We believe that the same has been the case from the time of Jesus Christ until now; and that it will be so unto the end. For if the Church of God was founded, it was in order that it might remain until the end of time...”

“We do not believe that the Church of God absolutely departed from the way of truth; but one portion yielded, and, as is commonly seen, the majority was led away to evil” (*History of the Waldenses...*, Comba, pp. 9-10, as cited in *Where Is the True Church? – and Its Incredible History!*).

After the apostasy, God had to eventually provide a place for those willing, and strong enough, to stand up for the truth. All who wanted to hold fast and continue the Work now had a place—the only place.

More than doctrinal correctness needed to be recaptured. A duty still existed to explain to God’s people what had happened, and to warn of the consequences of ignoring Christ’s warning to the Laodicean era of the Church in Revelation 3. All who would hold to the standards of what the Church understood about Philadelphians had to be gathered by God out of their Laodicean organizations—and condition.

### **Not Another Splinter**

In *Why The Restored Church of God? – Should You Join?* Mr. Pack explained how The Restored Church of God was

not just another splinter. This quote comes from the section, “Is Restored Just Another ‘Splinter’ Group?”:

“Initially, some expressed sorrow and even anger that The Restored Church of God appeared to be another ‘split’—‘more division.’ It is true that the leaders of many groups *have* split their organizations for wrong or even outright corrupt reasons. Internal civil wars, driven by personalities, administration, politics or other non-doctrinal issues, have multiplied the splinters. Those privy to the facts recognize this. However, Restored is not ‘just another split.’ Why?

“When one teaches false doctrine, *he* is the one causing division!—not those actively resisting it! Was Mr. Armstrong ‘divisive’ when he left Sardis over seemingly *minor* truths? When I left the WCG over false doctrine, did I ‘divide’ the Church? When *you* left family and friends there, did *you* cause division—or stand up for truth?

“Here is what this means: Each splinter upholds some or much truth. (The amount is diminishing.) As a rule, the later that individuals or groups left the WCG, the more doctrinal baggage they carried with them. A second rule is that the more false doctrines people pick up, the less they seem to see it...”

“Most simply do not recognize the danger of entertaining even one false doctrine. God only authorizes *apostles* to introduce new doctrine—even ‘minor’ ones. (And this only applies to matters that do not alter old understanding.) Missing this vital *key* has unlocked the ‘Pandora’s Box’ of doctrinal confusion and division so widespread today. Neglecting to HOLD FAST has repeatedly split God’s people, with devastating results—and this process has only been growing worse!

“Restored is *gathering* brethren—not dividing and/or scattering them. Let me explain. God raised up this *reorganization* of His Church for all who are determined to fellowship with others who care about the *precision* and *exactness* of true doctrine as all of God’s people originally learned it.

“...Many have sought a place where the FULL *restored* truth is upheld. Ever growing numbers have been learning where this is. To others who remained in larger organizations, it is becoming much more obvious to many that their leaders will not hold to and defend everything the Church once believed...”

### **Chosen—Never Elected**

Most of God’s people had become conditioned to expect a degree of—or even wholesale!—democracy in church governance. God’s Work over the years has been located in the United States, a nation with a sense of duty to spread democracy. While this sounds noble—and while it could be said, as did Winston Churchill, that democracy is the worst form of government, *except for all the others*—it is nowhere near the biblical pattern of God’s government.

The following quote about how God does and does not select leaders comes from Mr. Pack’s book “*Anoint Your Eyes*” – *Christ’s Warning to His People*:

“Where *God’s* chosen leader is not present as the human leader of an organization, and a board or eldership has selected the *spiritual* leader, that leader has, in fact, accepted the authority of the board over him. He has no right to claim that the same board cannot remove him—particularly since he cannot possibly claim that *God* installed him as the leader of the church he presides over—or that he solely reports to, and takes direction from, God. It would be utterly

dishonest for a man to claim that *God* installed him into leadership, when it was a board or committee of men who cast ballots placing him into office over the organization he ‘leads’!

“This is the very premise used by the ‘leader’ of one of the bigger splinters today, who rebelled and left the largest splinter because it no longer endorsed his leadership, and removed him in March of 1998. He went on record as saying, in effect, ‘Since the board installed me *twice*, this means I was *God’s* choice.’

“Ridiculous! But upwards of 2,000 people initially followed this man!

“The leader of *God’s* Church—the man that *God* has chosen—would NEVER allow himself to be voted into office by a group of *any* kind in the first place. *God’s* leader is always placed into office by Christ *after* he has been carefully trained and prepared—*after* he has endured numerous trials and tests, designed to ensure that he would never compromise, with either the truth or the Work, once *God* installs him into office! This training process, of necessity, ensures that *God’s* selected leader must lead an organization coming from the humblest possible beginning—where the fruits of growth, works and truth expand around and under him, after he began essentially *alone*—as Mr. Armstrong did. He cannot rise through the ranks of an already-existing organization run by committee without always having to derive his authority from the committee’s—instead of from *God’s* lone chosen leader’s—decision to hand him the top position.

“What committees of men can give, they can also take away!

“Any large organization, one *beginning* with hundreds or thousands of people, and involving many ministers, like the biggest splinter, would automatically face the difficult question at the outset of ‘Who is in

charge?’ Of necessity, because it started *this* way, such a group would have no choice but to *elect* a leader. Think this through, recognizing that God’s chosen leader would *never* participate in such a process. (Of course, once again, this largest group justifies its rejection of God’s method of selection, in place of its own, by continuing to mindlessly assert that God has not yet made clear His choice for them to follow. But I ask one more time: Who among them is looking to see if God has sent another chief shepherd today?)...”

“I implore you to carefully consider the spiritual logic of what Mr. Armstrong understood when he left Sardis with only thirteen brethren joining his family of six. This represented truly the humblest of beginnings, yet it began an organization that eventually grew to enormous size, and had a global impact almost beyond imagination. This was because of the miraculous *power of God* working through the man that *He* had chosen and sent. Be careful of what you may overlook in the message this sends!”

### **A Transition Period**

Mr. Pack’s Global years were much the same as Mr. Armstrong’s transitional period when he associated with the Church of God Seventh-day, before Christ used him to begin the Radio Church of God (the early WCG, now renamed). Mr. Armstrong’s time fellowshipping with the Sardis era of the Church (Rev. 3:1-6) took on new meaning.

“It took me some time after my ministry was completed on the payroll of the Global Church of God to understand why Mr. Armstrong stressed he was never ‘in’ the Sardis era of God’s Church. As the years went by, Mr. Armstrong recognized that all he had ever done was cooperate with them.

“I struggled to understand this for a long time, because he was paid by the Church of God Seventh-day (the Sardis era of God’s Church), they ordained him, and he pastored congregations for them. It was hard to understand how he could have done all this with them, and even been one of their 70 elders, and not have been with them.

“But later, I came to understand what Mr. Armstrong meant. I began to wrap my mind around the subject of where the Body of Christ was from 1986 to 1999. Until that point, I had thought that the Body of Christ was the Worldwide Church of God, and it had been until the release of the *God Is...* booklet. Once the new administration threw out the true God in late 1992, at best, it became the Worldwide Church of *another* God, and *another* Jesus. It was then I realized that the unified and only Body of Christ had to be somewhere else.”

Mr. Pack adds more details to this statement.

“The Body of Christ came for a time to be inside the Global Church of God—and this is obvious. In fact, there is no refuting it. This is not just because my wife and I were there, although, exactly as with the Armstrongs, this was a related point. Later, many faithful people also moved with us into The Restored Church of God—in fact, many more than initially followed Mr. and Mrs. Armstrong out of Sardis as Christ’s Body. (The number from this *initial* group would slowly winnow down somewhat, while Restored was growing overall.) The departure was plainly the Body of Christ, at a natural juncture (as with the Armstrongs) separating from people no longer in that Body. (Of course, some tares also came.) There came a moment when people could no longer walk together because they disagreed.

“The biblical truth about the one true Church, the Body of Christ, and the Temple of the Lord, or House of God, *is what it is*. These all describe a single, unified organization. I am no more arrogant to state what is in the previous paragraphs, than is Mr. Armstrong for saying that he was not part of Sardis.

“I was ‘in’ and paid by a Laodicean organization, but only some there were in the Body of Christ. Besides, it should be quite evident by now to the reader that I worked very much independently in the Global Church of God. It should be equally evident, as with Mr. Armstrong, that I was never ‘of’ that group. We were *with not of* the Global Church.”

Mr. Armstrong learned hard lessons while being surrounded by doctrinally compromised Church of God Seventh-day ministers whom he thought were loyal. He cited four or five examples during his ministry of those who pretended to agree with him, but later attacked him behind his back and promoted their own brand of Pentecostalism. Many bitter experiences taught Mr. Armstrong that some ministers only cared about the truth on the surface.

As Mr. Pack readied to inaugurate The Restored Church of God as a new corporate entity, it was obvious that reorganizing God’s Church would be a challenge. But he took comfort in having God’s guidance, along with Mr. Armstrong’s example to look back on.

Simultaneously both daunted and inspired by what lay before them, the Packs headed into uncharted—or very much charted—waters, depending upon how one might view it.

### **Returning to Correct Doctrine**

Just days after his termination by the Global Church of God, Mr. Pack announced the beginning of The Restored Church

of God, again posted on his personal website, which soon transitioned to the first Restored website.

Zeal and enthusiasm filled these initial days, a feeling reminiscent of escaping the apostasy in the WCG in 1993. Two tasks were immediate: communicating to as many brethren as possible that there was now a place to find the uncompromised truth of God, and finishing the *two* commissions that Mr. Armstrong had carried out in the 20th century. The gospel would again be preached with authority—and great nations warned!—and God’s people would be fed with untainted spiritual food!

Mr. Pack spent countless hours communicating with individuals across the country and the world. About 200 people immediately indicated their intention to join The Restored Church of God.

For the first several weeks, the newly formed group met for services in the same hall Global had used for nearly six years. Mr. and Mrs. Pack quickly found that a group of local volunteers assisted with all that needed to be done!

Mr. Pack realized that he was finally unfettered in ability to communicate with brethren. This monumental turning point in the history of God’s Church was described to brethren via the website. All who chose to join The Restored Church of God had to know exactly what to expect. What follows are two of the very earliest updates. The first is from May 5, 1999, just two days after Mr. Pack was fired:

“I am part of a wonderful new organization that is going to hold to the precision of God’s truth as we received it from His servant. I am excited beyond words. I want to share that excitement. I do not want to remain bogged down by events moving deeper into our rearview mirror.

“It is on the above basis that we are moving to incorporate a new church. It will be called THE RESTORED CHURCH OF GOD (based on Matt.

17:11). This name will make clear for all just *exactly* where those of us that are part of it do stand!”

The second quote is from the May 7 update, two days later:

“It is NOT for everybody. Many people do not WANT everything back again. God allows them to choose their own alternative somewhere else. People are free moral agents and they will choose. The dominant era at the end is not hot enough to choose the more difficult path of holding fast. Many people prefer to ‘heap (Greek: pile) to themselves teachers having itching ears’ (II Tim. 4:1-3). They just do not have enough strength to care about ‘enduring sound doctrine.’ It is far easier to ‘go along to get along.’ I will never do that, and 28 years of my ministry proves it. I am going to lead this new organization. NO ONE will be allowed to change the doctrines we all received from a great servant of God—who himself received them FROM GOD. I may not change them either...I have no doubt God has raised up this organization to give people this kind of place to go.”

In his first sermon delivered in Restored, on May 8, 1999, Mr. Pack described how Philadelphians are “Known for Brotherly Love.” In another early sermon, he said that “there has to be a place” for those who wanted to cleave to all the truths restored to the Church.

### **Recognizing Jesus’ Voice**

In a September 1999 update, Mr. Pack wrote this:

“The precision of what God taught us through Mr. Armstrong is the only correct starting point...I

Corinthians 1:10 and Philippians 2:2-4 have become two of the most important verses in all of the Bible, in my opinion. If only people could remember to focus on these two verses alone, while recognizing that holding fast to EVERYTHING Mr. Armstrong taught us is the only correct starting point and doctrinal position that we ALL (the WCG membership of 150,000) believed just a few years ago.”

Shortly after, in an update of November 18, 1999, he wrote this to the Church:

“The Restored Church of God is going to be built and structured, as much as possible in every way, exactly as Mr. Armstrong instructed us...”

Mr. Pack also stressed these verses to members: “The sheep hear [Jesus’] voice: and He calls His own sheep by name, and leads them out” (John 10:3), and “To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is *of the truth* hears My [Jesus’] voice” (18:37).

The task before those with God’s Spirit was to recognize Jesus’ voice, heard above the cacophony of human opinion and wrangling emanating from the splinters.

“The first few sermons I gave I felt to be supremely important because they set the pace for the years ahead, and all that God would accomplish through us that would follow. The three Elijah sermons set the table. The very first sermon needed to reflect the importance of brotherly love, since so much had already been said about doctrine. The next week, I wanted to talk about how to recognize the voice of Christ. This sermon explained for the first time (that I had heard) exactly what *is* that voice. I titled it ‘The Great Shepherd’s

Voice.’ Other sermons were also similarly selected over the next several weeks with the above priority in mind.”

The apostate leaders of the Worldwide Church of God, mirroring Protestant theology, effectively used a “straw man” tactic in denigrating the truth of the Bible. They attempted to place doctrinal correctness, and doctrinal unity, in *opposition* with love. Many of God’s people had by this time been conditioned to focus on “love”—or, more correctly, *tolerance*—while downplaying the importance of holding to and living by *all* the truths found in God’s Word.

Countering this fallacy, Mr. Pack wrote and spoke of a threefold focus that would define The Restored Church of God: “Doctrinal unity, zeal to do God’s Work and brotherly love. Upon these three pillars Philadelphians stand.”

Mr. Pack was determined to bring back God’s truth in detail so doctrinal standards could be maintained. The following quote is from the January 14, 2000 *Member/Co-Worker Letter*.

“People must be fed properly so that they can determine where Christ’s voice is leading them to be in order to really FULLY hold fast to all that we once believed. In many of our sermons we intend to literally strive to ‘restore what has been restored’ so that people need not be shaken from it ever again...I believe that a systematic approach to God’s true doctrines must be taken.

“So, we will strive to feed God’s flock in a clear, strong and bold fashion each and every Sabbath.”

### **Must Not Want Other Groups to Fail**

While Mr. Pack had been frank and direct in spotlighting the doctrinal errors within the splinters, he did not, and still

does not, wish them to collapse entirely—and neither should any Christian. This is dictated by outgoing concern for the sheep in those “corporate folds.” Mr. Pack wrote this in his book *Why The Restored Church of God? – Should You Join?*:

“Many organizations formed in the wake of the apostasy. They play a role in prophecy, and are home for the vast number of true Christians—those who are not fully holding fast. Together, they form Laodicea—God’s people! These people need a place to go or they will give up and quit. No Christian, let alone one with brotherly love, can hope any of these groups fail. These attitudes are incompatible, so we hope they survive.

“But consider! On the other hand, those who: (1) Will not do the Work, (2) reject God’s government and all ministerial authority over them, (3) generally do not assemble together, (4) do not pay God’s tithes, (5) reject the One True Church doctrine, among other teachings, etc., are simply no longer Christians. In addition, these tend to accuse and slander others, and almost by routine. No one has to wish for their demise because they have already passed beyond the seventh era and out of Christianity altogether. Lacking deep repentance—they are gone!

“We in Restored want all lukewarm corporate groups to survive—in whatever doctrinal state. The alternative is that many there would otherwise fall away completely, no longer even being part of the last era. A Christian prays for all God’s people, no matter their spiritual condition. We should want to see all brethren repent and in the kingdom of God. God is ‘not willing that any should perish’ (II Pet. 3:9) and would ‘have all men to be saved’ (I Tim. 2:4). You cannot want less!”

### **For Those Committed**

Mr. Pack made clear that a full commitment to God's Way is necessary, and that God requires His people to sometimes make *hard* choices. As he explained to early members later in his Restored-one-year-anniversary May 2000 *Member/Co-Worker Letter*, The Restored Church of God would not be a place for religious hobbyists.

“The Restored Church of God is not a tape ministry. Therefore, we do not want to build up a lot of subscribers consisting of many people who, seemingly, take everybody's tapes but never take action to actually hold fast to the full truth of God as we all once learned it. We want to help people know who and what we are. Then they need to make a choice and either take a stand or move on.

“While this may offend some who want to ‘halt between two opinions’ as long as they possibly can, we do not want to encourage people to do this by doing them the disservice of sending them tapes and materials forever so that they never have to make a decision...They should never feel ‘rushed.’ This leads to bad decision-making. But once they have all the facts, a clear and determined decision can be made...”

Although assisted by a small volunteer staff, the Packs had to do most of the early work. But soon, financial support through God's tithes and offerings began to arrive.

As projects piled up, it was time for the Work to take the next step—finding a new Headquarters office space.

## *Early Challenges— Against All Odds*

This was truly a time like no other. Mr. Pack now faced the monumental task of structuring the final Work of God—from the ground up. Although the work involved in starting The Restored Church of God was different from developing a pastorate, organizing activities or managing the House of Health, Mr. Pack’s broad organizational training was put into practice in the very first weeks and months of Restored. He implemented the principles and lessons learned at AC, in the ministry, from Mr. Armstrong, while running a business, and from participating in organizing the Global Church of God. Mr. Pack reflected on lessons learned through “Observation 101” and forged ahead.

“Only a person who observed life along the way—who paid attention on the highest levels—could be expected to know what to do in this situation. It was not as if a book, manual or guide existed titled, *How to Rebuild the Church of God After an Apostasy Enters and Multiple Corrupted Versions of God’s Church Form in a Time When Society as a Whole is Declining*.

“When I was at Ambassador College in Pasadena, I paid attention. I have never implied that Mr. Armstrong trained me directly regarding administrative aspects of organizing or building a Church—he didn’t have to. I paid attention. Yet still, when I became the leader of The Restored Church of God, there were things I did not know.

“So how did I learn from Mr. Armstrong now that it was 1999? I went back in my mind. I have revisited the past many, many, many times. I could not observe the present around me anymore, so I observed the past. I forced myself to study the past in great detail through hours of organized meditation. I thought for hours about how Mr. Armstrong handled adversity during the receivership, and I scoured my mind for guidance from the past words of my father, who taught me so much about how to handle adversity. Combined with my own experience, I knew this was the most effective way to restore everything from the past—from the ground up.

“There are people who are observant, who are quick, who analyze, and who pay attention to their surroundings, and there are those who don’t—and they are left behind. One of the favorite sayings of my father-in-law, Peter Ochs, was always, ‘There are those who watch things happen, those who make things happen, and those who don’t know anything is happening.’ It was clear to me that this was a time to make things happen and this was only possible because I had watched things happen and observed so many different situations for so many years.”

### **Headquarters for God’s Restored Work**

One of the first matters requiring attention was incorporating the Church. This was first necessary in the United States, and then in Canada since many brethren from Southern On-

tario had already left Global for Restored. Attorneys on both sides of the border provided counsel regarding this process.

Mr. Pack was again *immediately* grateful for the corporate experience gained as president of House of Health Inc. This business knowledge expedited an already complex process. Within weeks, The Restored Church of God was incorporated in both the United States and Canada.

Phone calls were still coming in constantly, with brethren inquiring about The Restored Church of God. A small staff was still volunteering a lot of time, but Mr. and Mrs. Pack could only answer so many phone calls and write so many emails to members and prospects.

They needed help desperately!

Time did not permit a slow, methodical screening process for Headquarters applicants—vacancies needed to be filled *immediately*. Mr. Pack had no choice but to choose staff from those in the new Headquarters congregation, meaning they all had to be locally based, at least initially. But an advantage was that these members *already lived in the area* and could be ready to start working.

A local member knew of space available in one of Wadsworth's finest office buildings, situated in a prime location adjacent to the interstate. They met with the owners of the One Park Centre Building in Wadsworth, Ohio, and examined the available 5,646 square-foot office suite on the second floor. Mr. Pack concluded the space suited the needs of God's Work.

In the first month of existence, Mr. Pack shared this exciting news with the brethren in the field in a May 25, 1999 update:

“Please pray about an upcoming meeting on this Thursday. We will be sitting down to negotiate the details that precede entering the office complex that has been opened up to us. There are so many things that tell me this facility is of God.

“We are rapidly being overwhelmed and we do need an office from which to function. The layout will also allow us to hold services for up to 150 people in a central area.”

Not long after, on June 1, 1999, he wrote a little more description about the moment—of how everything was happening so nicely:

“Once again, I find myself asking how everything could be working so quickly and so smoothly. But it is and I am very, very grateful...Please pray about the negotiation on all of the equipment. The Headquarters congregation will meet in our new facility for the first time on the Sabbath of June 19...”

“This morning we finalized an agreement that will allow us to move into our new office space...We are, of course, very excited. This move will allow us to pool all of our efforts under one roof.

“With growing lists of congregations of brethren who need to be fed with tapes and other material as well as others who are asking to be ‘put on our list,’ circumstances demand that we be ever more and more efficient.”

The Restored Church of God officially moved to its new Headquarters the week of June 14, 1999, beginning with Sabbath services. It would be its corporate home for at least 10 years.

The first business day in the office was Monday, June 16. The staff of five, and a few members volunteering, was hardly able to keep up with the workload. They sometimes worked 50 to 60 hours a week. Though zealous, they were relatively inexperienced. Because of this, the Packs had to work 80 or more hours each week to even begin to keep up with the workload.

It was clear to Mr. Pack that the staff needed time to gain experience. Everyone had much to learn regarding what it meant to do God's Work!

“Many more people came with us ‘out of the gate’ than any of us anticipated. I had initially believed that maybe 50 or 60 local brethren might come with us, plus a few others in different places. But the larger numbers demanded a bigger approach right away.

“It meant hiring people *fast*—starting with people I thought I knew. Of course, this would come back to bite us later.”

### **An Instant Flock!—Beginning to Use Website**

Initially, most local members who had attended Global moved over to Restored on the strength of what Mr. Pack had said about the purpose for starting The Restored Church of God. While some were merely swept up by excitement, others understood God was reestablishing His Church and Work, beginning from their area.

At the same time, a number of God's people scattered in various organizations around the world were tracking the collapse of Global. They soon learned of Mr. Pack's decision to reconstitute the original Work done under Mr. Armstrong.

The relatively new medium of the Internet made this information easily accessible. Through a simple website, the Church shared news and updates with members. This was the smallest of beginnings for a powerful tool that would eventually bear tremendous fruit. Monthly Member/Co-Worker letters and weekly sermons were soon being posted online, eventually leading to an archive unlike anything that had been available in the 1980s, or ever.

Unlike Mr. Armstrong when he left the Church of God Seventh-day—with only 13 *local* people—Mr. Pack had an

instant large flock, and it was not limited to northeastern Ohio. People from other parts of North America also quickly came with Restored. Small groups, families, couples, and individuals from Texas, Oregon, New York, Pennsylvania, Washington, Ontario, Canada, and elsewhere were finding their way back to the truth.

This quickly became what Mr. Pack called a “wonderful problem.” In short order, there were hundreds of people with whom to communicate, but only one other minister to help him—a local church elder in the Niagara region of Canada, Mr. Peter Denee.

“I was ecstatic that an experienced local church elder, and very savvy business leader, Peter Denee, of Ontario, just above Buffalo, New York, came with us within about three or four weeks. Besides being an interesting man, and about my age, plus his love of business, he was immediately able to help with the crush of phone calls and other duties. He also was instrumental in setting up the Canadian corporation. He would later go on to be my best friend, and my daughter would go on to marry his son some years later.”

### **Increasing Workload**

Regardless of the effect on personal time, Mr. Pack sought to maintain the heart of a shepherd. Here are his thoughts from a June 25, 1999 update posting.

“I am determined that the number one priority that I will always strive to deal with are the emails and phone calls that I need to answer from all the brethren who are inquiring about The Restored Church of God. I must realize, that with so few ministers with us, this has to be my responsibility and first priority

at all times. Probably five or so people a day seem to be coming with us and I am absolutely going to be available to help them through this process.”

A steady stream of new members continued to arrive, and Mr. Pack’s intense schedule continued to be a constant, daily juggling act. He wrote the Church in an update on August 6, 1999 to inform them about the progress of the new Headquarters’ team coming into place.

“It does appear that we are BEGINNING to be able to say that we are ‘catching up’ with endless details involved in restructuring the Church and Work of God. This is a far more staggering task—and we have done it primarily with volunteers up to this point—than anyone who has never done it could possibly imagine. I have at times felt more overwhelmed by the great workload than I could have ever prepared myself for, simply because of the wonderful response we have continued to receive—virtually from the moment I was fired.”

Much later, he would add this description to what continued for years.

“Writing literature for years was only part of the writing requirements for approximately the first five years of Restored. After writing books or booklets all day, I would then roll right over to writing the average of about eight to 12 emails that had built up over the last 24 hours. I would answer them all because I knew the next day there would be 20 instead of 10 waiting for me if I did not. It never paid to delay.

“Many were the times that my wife and I stayed until she literally could not see the screen to type anymore. Tears (not crying) would start coming from her eyes from looking at the screen all day. I would have to watch

carefully for this every day, because she would never say that she could not see anymore. Sometimes I missed the signal because I was racing through emails.

“I estimate that I wrote about 50 emails *every* week for four years. You can do the math just for those years. It did gradually slow down through about 2005 or 2006. People tried to say we were in this for ourselves—or I was in this for myself. What lunatic would take on such a schedule, working 80 to 85 hours per week—for years? Understand that the workload also required that I go home and work until approximately 11 p.m. *every* night, editing what I had done during the day.”

### **First Booklet!**

Within a few months of the new beginning, another need became evident. Mr. Pack realized it was necessary to write certain booklets and articles to carefully explain who and what The Restored Church of God was. Although communicating directly with potential members was rewarding, he now had very limited time. The same questions could no longer be answered time and again, on a one-on-one basis.

This was a similar realization to when the need to produce the “30 Reasons” sermons and *There Came a Falling Away* arose in GCG six years earlier.

Mr. Pack carefully considered the topic of the first booklet. It was eventually decided that its purpose should be to explain to confused, scattered Church of God members *how* and *why* The Restored Church of God was different from other groups. What follows is a progress report from the June 1, 1999 update.

“I have just finished the third draft of a thorough new booklet I hope to be releasing before the month of June is out. It will tell the story of the birth of Restored. It will also answer many, many related questions that are on

people's minds at this time. The booklet will probably be entitled *Why The Restored Church of God?*"

Next is a report of just one week later from the June 8, 1999 update.

"It will be very comprehensive...This booklet is intended to answer as many of the introductory types of questions that people could possibly have. No single booklet could say it all, but it is intended that this one come as close as possible on such matters. It will be a signature production that introduces the reader to all that God is leading us to do. It is my hope that it will fall into the hands of any who are curious about us and exactly what we are doing."

Mr. Pack wrote the following in *Why The Restored Church of God? – Should You Join?*:

"There are over 300 offshoots of the Worldwide Church of God. Most believe there are much too many groups—and already 'something for everyone.' Was another really necessary, particularly when many are trying to 'get the groups together?'"

"The answer is a resounding 'Yes'!"

"This short booklet introduces The Restored Church of God by answering the most basic, commonly asked questions about us."

"We have carefully produced this material for all who want to understand the Worldwide Church of God apostasy—and what to DO about it!"

### **Reproducing Mr. Armstrong's Literature**

After making this book available within two months of beginning Restored, Mr. Pack knew he must move on to the

primary job of God's Work—preaching the gospel, along with warning the nations of the West. Mr. Armstrong had carried this out in a powerful way, and Mr. Pack knew it was his duty to resume this job.

Recall that shortly after Mr. Armstrong's death, the new leadership in WCG implemented a systematic plan. First, they discontinued printing, and then destroyed all stockpiles, of Mr. Armstrong's literature. The first book disposed of was *Mystery of the Ages*, which had been the crowning achievement of Mr. Armstrong's ministry.

By 1999, several organizations had begun to print his books and booklets. A legal battle was underway between one of them and the Worldwide Church of God regarding copyright law and the rights to distribute Mr. Armstrong's literature. Mr. Pack understood time was short. He believed it was God's intention to "resurrect" these books "back to life."

Next is from a little earlier update, May 25, 1999. It describes something that was happening in the background on the publishing front regarding Mr. Armstrong's literature.

"I alluded to the hope and plan that we have here to reprint as much of the wonderful literature that Mr. Armstrong wrote as Christ makes possible. I fully plan to do this..."

"There is a legal battle being waged between the WCG and one of the 'splinter' groups. It is over the copyright to all this literature. I believe that God intends that the WCG will LOSE this fight. Indeed, they have already lost in the lower courts. *If* they lose all appeals it may be because God wants this literature reprinted. *If* He does, He will both show us and make it possible to do so! Of this I have NO DOUBT...Please pray about this idea becoming a reality, *if* God wills."

On December 2, 1999, Mr. Pack elaborated with many more details about the publishing plan:

“It’s time to announce more specifically our upcoming plans for publishing. I have often referred in my letters and updates to our plans to publish the treasure of literature that was left to us by Mr. Herbert Armstrong. Until our recent surge in income, I could not have dreamed that we could be so close to seeing this become a reality. This exciting possibility has become a reality that is now upon us. I will shortly describe our plans.

“When Mr. Armstrong died, we all watched a process play out that slowly eliminated the flow of restored truths in this age being made available to all whom God would call. For some years there has been no real plan in place to reproduce much, let alone all, of the literature that was in place at Mr. Armstrong’s death. One group intends to, and is, producing some of it. Scores of books and booklets that covered a host of subjects were once in existence. Probably 95 percent of you reading this letter are reading it because you received these books—and acted on them—and it changed your life forever. The god of this world, who hates this truth above all else because it offers to people within God’s Plan an eternal reward that he can never have, successfully destroyed the production of all of it.

“I do not suggest or believe that this did not happen without God’s express permission. It certainly did have God’s allowance for this to become the great defining test we all had to face! This is an ongoing test. In some ways, a portion of the test comes down to whether or not a group will have the courage to reprint this lost literature.

“I say courage because the fury this will bring from the devil against any such determined group will

be unbelievable. Have no doubt of this fact! I am living proof of this hate, vitriol and venom from the devil and his agents. None of us should expect any less. As God builds our house, Satan wants nothing more than to destroy it. That's his role—the destroyer!

“Now, the time has come rather quickly to be able to once again see these truths reprinted in an unrestricted fashion. It's going to be done! Now for a description of our intentions.

“Hopefully, with my next letter approximately a month from now, you will receive the first two booklets that we are reprinting from Mr. Armstrong's writings. We intend to start with the booklets that are the most important specific tools which bring people to baptism over time. (Incidentally, I am counseling a number for baptism and, perhaps, so are others of our ministry.)

“It is our intention to try to send out one new book or booklet with each and every member letter that you receive. At this point, we have every reason to believe that our income will sustain this. However, we do not intend to ever let ourselves get ahead of what the Living Jesus Christ sends us to do His Work and to feed His Flock. Of course, we must always be careful of this if we are to remain good stewards of His tithes.”

### **Learning Process**

Mr. Pack and the fledgling staff soon encountered a steep learning curve as they began reprinting and publishing literature. What follows is from a *Member/Co-Worker Letter* of January 10, 2000.

“We felt it absolutely essential to strive to maintain the level of quality in the printing that Mr. Armstrong always demanded. The printer's first effort was clearly not acceptable. The reasons were complicated. After,

believe it or not, five separate print runs, we did, at least, get relatively close to the quality that we sought. However, we realize that there are some uniformity problems even with this final attempt. The printer has been more than gracious and really lost significant money in this first contract. He is even giving us a break on our next contract. Current state-of-the-art technology allows us to literally ‘photograph’ original versions of Mr. Armstrong’s booklets. The advantage to this is that it cuts costs and speeds up printing schedules significantly. The disadvantage is that it picks up even the tiniest defects from any original that we ‘shoot.’ Therefore, it is incumbent on us to try to get copies that are in virtually ‘mint’ condition. Throughout this entire process, we are all still learning.

“We carefully selected, after much thought and counsel, *Does God Exist?*, *Why Were You Born?*, *What is the True Gospel?* and *Did God Create a Devil?* God may now once again use this material to yet bring brand new people to His truth...”

“So, in three ways we find ourselves ahead of any schedule we thought possible. First, we are actually producing this literature after eight months instead of at about the one-year mark, which was our original goal. Second, we are sending out four booklets to start instead of one. And third, it appears that we will be sending out materials more often than we had originally thought we would be able...”

“We have always planned to ‘do the Work.’ These booklets, and these particular titles that we chose, are further proof of this commitment.”

### **Makeup Correction**

Amidst the administrative challenges of reconstituting the Church, and counseling, Mr. Pack realized the need to re-

evaluate the Church's position on makeup. This was in late July, about 10 weeks after Restored began.

The use of cosmetics had been tolerated in the Worldwide Church of God from 1974 through 1981, and many thought Mr. Armstrong's position had changed several times. The Global Church leader had used this assertion in GCG to justify permitting it.

The issue reared its head.

Upon very thoroughly researching the subject, Mr. Pack discovered that makeup was only permitted during a time when Mr. Armstrong was away from Headquarters for long periods. He had not "gone back and forth" on the matter as so many wished to assert. For 80 percent of the year, Mr. Armstrong was traveling, visiting heads of state. The liberalizing of standards had actually begun with a decision that his son Garner Ted rushed through, without his father's authorization.

Mr. Pack assembled an extensive collection of Mr. Armstrong's audio quotes on the subject of makeup, some from sermons and others from Bible Studies given during the Church's "back on track" years. Mr. Pack played the tapes during the sermon period. They were very strong—and clear. Some were offended.

The use of cosmetics was the last issue Mr. Armstrong addressed in rooting out liberalism from the leadership and teachings of the Church. It was actually the final capstone in putting the entire Church back on track doctrinally. The facts were plain, and the doctrinal correction was made official. Mr. Armstrong corrected the error in November of 1981—exactly three and a half years after he had begun the process of putting the Church back on track in May 1978.

Sadly, a small number of women in Restored—with husbands following along!—took exception to this doctrinal correction and left Restored. Mr. Pack was saddened some would leave over such a small issue, but not surprised. It was a pattern he had seen time and again. Many were willing to

give up everything over twiggy ideas or minor administrative decisions.

“The use of cosmetics was a subject not on my mind in the Global Church of God. I had basically accepted the idea that Mr. Armstrong had changed his mind on the subject over the years. Since he apologized to the Church for having allowed the change to happen on his watch, I had to do the same.

“I had said we were going to hold fast—period! It became clear that we had to know whether this included returning to the non-use of cosmetics. I dug very, very deeply into what Mr. Armstrong wrote and spoke. This took about six weeks until early September, just four months after The Restored Church of God had begun.

“It cost us a few members, and some income. But God would have to know whether I would pass a test that the Global leader failed, now that I was in his shoes—would I put retaining members and their tithes above pleasing God? Would I admit being wrong?

“I was reminded of how Mr. Armstrong said, ‘God never permits us to decide *what* is right, only *whether* we will obey it.’ The facts were conclusive. There was no decision.

“I am very thankful for this early period of intense research because it eventually led to a thorough booklet on the subject of make-up, as well as a detailed article to the splinters on the step-by-step trail—with facts—of exactly what happened to this doctrine from 1954 to 1988. Also, as with the old divorce and remarriage booklet from before the change was made, Mr. Armstrong had never found time to update the retired make-up booklet that he had written so long before. WCG members knew the policy only because of *Worldwide News* articles and sermons. A booklet was needed going forward, so I had to write it.”

### Early Attacks from Within

Mr. Pack has described the beginning years of The Restored Church of God as his “Oregon years.” Just as Mr. Armstrong had to learn bitter lessons during his early ministry—often accompanied by setbacks to God’s Work—so did Mr. Pack.

Early staff members were equivalent to an unqualified “bucket brigade”—the nearest available people who could figuratively “grab a bucket” and help put out “fires” regarding the enormous workload. But one positive was that they *seemed* loyal.

This would soon prove not to be the case. Just as Mr. Armstrong endured certain outright betrayals during his “Oregon years,” so did Mr. Pack.

While early staff *professed* support for the Work and God’s government, their fruits soon demonstrated that their words were hollow. Their actions made it clear that they were of an altogether different spirit. Most of the early staff proved to have wives who refused to give up use of cosmetics. These would attack with a vengeance!

Almost all original employees left the office within the first 12 months—either over personal offense or getting caught up in doctrinal error. Worse, they were determined to cause as much damage to God’s Work as possible. On more than one occasion, staff who left sent accusatory letters to the entirety of Restored’s membership. This was after the involved parties stole the Church’s mailing list, technically theft of corporate property.

These attacks were bald attempts to destroy the Church in its corporate infancy. Although the harassment failed in this regard, the bitter ex-members did succeed in severely draining, albeit temporarily, Mr. Pack’s time and energy.

Remembering how Mr. Armstrong dealt with accusers—not answering them—Mr. Pack informed the brethren in a December 1999 *Member/Co-Worker Letter* of what

would become a standard policy regarding attacks and accusations.

“As many of you know I have, once again, been attacked by 10 people from this area. Many readers are awaiting my ‘response.’ Any response is contained in two recent sermons that I have sent out titled ‘Beware of False Brethren’ and ‘Straining at Gnats...’”

“It is my intention next week to write our policy statement toward any and all false charges leveled against us. It will be titled ‘Should Accusers be Answered’ and will be sent to everyone on our mailing list. It will also be posted on our website. This will be a very, very comprehensive statement. I have already put in a lot of time in its preparation. When it is done, it will represent a kind of a one-time-for-all-time approach and policy to what the devil throws at us.

“As I have written before, if I continue to have to answer each and every charge written about me from now until Christ returns, one person after one person after one person at a time, the Adversary will have effectively rendered me useless as a tool in God’s hands to serve His people.

“This policy may offend some people who expect me to answer every charge that human beings can dream up. But I have learned that if you can satisfy such people who may be ready to leave if they don’t receive an ‘adequate explanation,’ then if they *do* receive such an explanation, it will often only last until the next accusation requiring the next ‘adequate explanation.’ Besides, doing this endlessly is exhausting. I am a human being. Christ asked, ‘Are there not twelve hours in a day?’ in John. Not only is this task exhausting, but it will exhaust my time. I might add that I have recently reviewed Mr. Armstrong’s policy regarding answering accusers. I find it encouraging that he said

repeatedly why he DID NOT EVER DO IT. I intend to follow his wisdom.”

This policy *statement* would eventually turn out to be a not-so-small *booklet*, and later a small *book* with several short articles included.

### **Numbers Unimportant—But Growth Evident**

During this early time, Mr. Pack came to a realization that overarches the entire history of the true Church. This inspired him to give a sermon titled “God’s Way: Small, Little, Few!”

Commenting on this message in an October 15, 1999 *Member/Co-Worker Letter* to the brethren, Mr. Pack stated this:

“Most of God’s ministers have spent much of their lives ‘numbering the armies.’ The story of David shows how God hates this faithless approach to Him. Approximately 70,000 people had to die because David forgot that God, alone, formed his (David’s) army. I have probably been one of the worst at this ‘numbers game.’ Big pastorates, fast growth, and large participation in programs and events can be intoxicating. It certainly once intoxicated me as it did others. I am very sorry for this approach and have determined to never let it overtake me again.

“This sermon takes you into the subject of size and numbers from God’s perspective in a way that I never remotely saw before in Scripture. It explains how only two times in history has God ever done things in a big way—over a 6,000-year period. This tape will become a hallmark sermon for all those who wish to really understand how God views the subject of size as it pertains to everything...”

Later on, in the November 2002 *Member/Co-Worker Letter*, Mr. Pack would explain this further:

“During the time of the Philadelphian era, when Mr. Armstrong was alive and the Elijah prophecy was being fulfilled, size was important. Exact growth in numbers had a completely different meaning. Today, to a certain degree, size works against the Church. The seventh era is prophesied to be dominant and ‘rich and increased with goods.’ Those of the sixth era must then be a small minority, though we do not know exactly how small we will be in the end. Also, I realize that ‘small’ is a relative term. It is like ‘tall’ or ‘fat’ or ‘big’ or ‘thin.’ These mean different things to different people.

“I do want to be certain that all of us trust in God and not in numbers. We are Philadelphians because, and only if, we hold fast to the full truth—not because Restored is bigger than the various much larger splinters. I suppose I often think of us as simply the ‘biggest small group’ or the ‘smallest big group.’ Our numbers simply place us somewhere in between. We may never grow even nearly as big as any of the four groups that are currently larger than we are. But what does that matter? We should have no doubt that God will do the biggest true Work through our little hardworking, efficient, zealous, unified ‘Gideon’s army,’ in the end, than all the other groups combined.

“And this will probably be done against untold resistance and persecution.”

### **Early Growth, and Then International Growth**

Despite early setbacks, Church membership took off. This included interest from beyond the shores of North America. As more of God’s people came to understand what was happening

in The Restored Church of God, both through Internet exposure and word-of-mouth, congregations formed and grew.

Mr. Pack's first trip out of North America to visit Restored members was to the Philippines as early as July 1999. He described this trip in an update to the Church (his regular monthly letter) on August 6, 1999:

“To say it was a remarkable trip would be an understatement. I had never been there before. Over 5,000 people once comprised the number that was a part of the Worldwide Church of God a little less than ten years ago in the Philippines. Perhaps a little less than 1,000 people went with one group or another since the apostasy began...”

“The conditions in which these people live and travel is, in many cases, very different than Western standards. Yet they never complain. People there remain extremely courteous and respectful in the main by any standard, while living in the midst of sheer poverty and squalor, congestion and pollution, cramped living and oppressive heat. And yet it is a truly beautiful country in other ways. I must say that I left the Philippines with great admiration for God's people who reside there, but more fervently praying, ‘Thy Kingdom come’...”

“I feel very close to the small group of brethren in the Manila area with whom I was able to meet and spend many hours. I will never forget the experience and our prayers are with them as they are with the increasing number of scattered brethren that are coming with or inquiring about us from around the world.”

Other early groups sprang up in Australia, the United Kingdom, South Africa, New Zealand, as well as scattered people in the Caribbean and Latin America.

### Selling the House of Health

After his father's death, Mr. Pack had made a promise to God and the brethren that if his new business ever detracted from his ministry it would be sold. In July 2000, as the Work continued expanding, with Mr. Pack traveling, the size of the Church increasing, and an unending list of tasks stacking up, the time came to sell his parents' natural health food stores.

When Mr. Pack had been appointed the company's president, God had a clear purpose in mind—a crash course in corporate and business training. He recognized this period was now over. In fact, lack of time available to lead the company made continuance *impossible*.

Mr. Pack first approached his son Robert. His younger son had been managing the two existing stores, and also guiding the daily operations of the stores for now over five years.

Considering his family owned the company since the early 1970s, it pained Mr. Pack to think that the stores would fall into the hands of a different owner. It was also difficult to imagine cutting all ties to one of the few remaining physical reminders of his parents.

Regardless, Mr. Pack told his son that he needed to make a decision. "I would prefer that you buy the company from me so it can stay in the family. But, if you do not, then I still have to sell it—and soon! My life is God's Work, and nothing can distract me from it."

Robby liked the idea of purchasing the store from his father and completed the sale on July 31, 2000. This would end five years and three weeks of experience as company president. Mr. Pack informed the brethren in his regular letter (on the same date) of what had been developing behind the scenes.

"I have not even been able to give [the stores] even the proverbial 'lick and a promise' that I used to be

able to give them before God put me in the role that I now have, 15 months ago. While we probably could have sold the company for considerably more than we did, we chose to sell it to our son in order to keep it ‘in the family.’ I know that this would be pleasing to my parents, whom I expect to see in the Resurrection some day. They both died as faithful members of God’s Church. It was really my father who trained my sons in the business (and not me), anyway. I know that he would be honored to know that his grandsons are carrying on a business that he and my mother worked so hard and long to build. This gives ‘Mom and I’ great satisfaction as we pass the torch to them...”

“I wanted all of you, who knew I had promised to never let this business get in the way of my calling as a minister of Jesus Christ, to know that I have tried to keep my word so that I could remain a completely full-time minister and tool in God’s hands.

“There is one final thought before I leave this subject. For some time now the company has primarily been providing a nice income for our sons. The fact that little was left over after that was fine with Mom and Dad. Since you know I never answer my accusers, I hope you will understand that neither the income nor the sale of this business ever even remotely made us ‘rich’ or ‘millionaires’ as our detractors have alleged. Actually, I sort of chuckle at the thought of what people might think if they really knew how little extra income the company has made for us in the last several years. At least the issue is now ‘put to bed.’”

### **Personal Financial Sacrifice**

Despite the decision to sell the business, some years later, a baseless charge—that Mr. Pack was “independently wealthy” and leading the Church “for the money”—was leveled. The

now expanded *Should Accusers Be Answered?* book said this in the section, “Do You Believe Obvious Lies?”

“Let me give you one example of what I would call a ‘powerful lie.’ It has recently been said that I make ‘\$125,000 a year (tax-free), have a huge expense account, live in a mansion and have a palatial office.’ This has received rather wide circulation outside Restored. Some have been foolish enough to believe such stories. But they have been willing to believe them because they in the first place went to the Internet cesspool where such ludicrous charges are routinely posted. (Of course, the Internet is like the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. It is certainly not all bad. It carries much good and helpful knowledge, as well as much that is evil.)

“However, there is actually a plus side of attacks against us that are found on the Internet. Let me explain: They actually serve as a kind of ‘screen’ that blocks those who are not totally committed to following the full truth, and doing the Work, from joining us. If they cannot cut through the silly nonsense of attacks against Restored, or me, almost certainly they do not belong with us. Paul’s admonition that ‘All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose’ applies to us. These rumors perform a certain ‘good’ in this way. I hope we can all understand that God purposely allowed all of this as part of His great end-time plan for all converted people who must choose which era—meaning, condition—in which they will reside.

“Some facts of history would be helpful here. Mr. Armstrong was also—and often—accused of ‘being in it for the money.’ And he found it necessary to periodically speak very openly and frankly in the early years to the Church membership at large about

his own financial contributions to the Work. But he also decided to do this in a general way later so that others could understand WHY he could speak with such conviction to the entire Church about the need to sacrifice on a regular basis for God's all-important Work.

“In 1972, Mr. Armstrong decided that the Church should know certain facts about its leader. What he wrote served to neutralize what he called the ‘scurrilous misrepresentation of persecutors’:

“(From Mr. Armstrong’s Letter to the Brethren, May 31, 1972).

“‘My wife and I lived in real poverty for 28 years, in getting this Work developed into the powerful worldwide Work it now is. And not only that, I have been through the years the heaviest financial contributor to the Work. I only say that to let you know I am not asking you to do anything I have not, and am doing, setting the example—all scurrilous misrepresentation of persecutors notwithstanding...’

Mr. Pack continued:

“You may be surprised that Mr. Armstrong was this open with the Church about his personal contributions. When I first read what he described, I was. Yet, in the early years, Mr. and Mrs. Armstrong had to give sometimes seemingly beyond all measure. Their financial sacrifice was truly astonishing, and particularly so when he was so often attacked for having a personal or selfish financial motive. Believe me, I can relate to this.

“Here is just one additional statement from his autobiography (also included in our biography of Mr. Armstrong’s life) to demonstrate beyond any doubt

where his heart was, even from and during the most difficult early years of the Work. I was stunned at what he was also doing behind the scenes for the Work (Emphasis his.):

“(From Mr. Armstrong’s Letter to co-workers, April 2, 1940).

““The only way I have managed to keep the work going has been my personal sacrifice—taking money intended for our family living, letting my family suffer. One of my daughters has had to stop school. We are about to lose our home. We have gone without badly needed clothing. I could tell you more, but do not want to talk about ourselves—our heavenly Father knows. We are willing and glad to make any sacrifice. **BUT THE POINT IS, WE HAVE NOW COME TO THE END, UNLESS SUBSTANTIAL HELP COMES AT ONCE.** The work cannot be held up by this method of personal sacrifice any longer. As long as it was only us who suffered, I said nothing. But now the Lord’s WORK will stop unless substantial help comes quickly. For the work’s sake I must appeal to our helpers. I would starve, before I would ask one cent as charity for myself. But I’m willing to humiliate myself in any way for the gospel’s sake’ (Vol. 2, Ch. 40, pp. 8-9).”

“Probably very few remember or ever knew that Mr. Armstrong died with virtually no personal possessions he could call his own, other than a handful of suits, a watch, and a few other simple belongings, including almost nothing of worth. This man’s pattern of almost unbelievable sacrifice over virtually an entire lifetime was evident to all who knew him. Therefore, it should probably come as no real surprise how few possessions he had at the end of his life. Nothing was EVER more

important to Mr. Armstrong than God's Work! Yet, his motives were continually questioned, and by those who could not possibly understand them."

Despite the facts, disinformation regarding Mr. Pack's financial circumstances still circulates in the splinters. As the Work reaches new frontiers and moves forward, some detractors will probably continue to assert that Mr. Pack personally funds it, no matter how farfetched.

"There finally came a time when more needed to be said to the Church in a right *and necessary* context about what my financial means were—and, more correctly, were *not*. For the interested person, I covered in some significant detail the truth of my financial circumstances in a sermon. There was a purpose. My wife had demonstrated an extraordinary level of sacrifice in her life, and the context of that sacrifice introduced statements I needed to make. So, on the Sabbath of November 3, 2007, I gave a special sermon that changed the ability of The Restored Church of God to carry out the Work ever after.

"Those who feel that they would like to, or somehow need to, hear the facts of my financial circumstances can listen to this sermon. The biography will say more of this sermon later."

With the early staff betrayals behind him, and the business sold, Mr. Pack moved forward with renewed energy.

## *Watershed Court Decision*

**B**eginning in January 2000, The Restored Church of God printed and distributed a number of Herbert W. Armstrong's booklets, and requests for this cherished literature steadily increased.

In the meantime, the Philadelphia Church of God (the splinter based outside Oklahoma City) had become further entangled in a court battle with the Worldwide Church of God, now in California's Ninth Circuit. That organization had been printing and distributing Mr. Armstrong's final book, *Mystery of the Ages* (later altered to reflect their doctrine).

### **Details of Copyright Case**

Less than one month later, Restored received a letter from the Worldwide Church of God's chief legal counsel demanding that it cease distributing Mr. Armstrong's literature. He advised that this infringed on WCG's copyright, violating federal law. This prompted correspondence between Restored's legal counsel and WCG's legal department.

The thought of Mr. Armstrong's writings being locked in a "copyright closet" by enemies of the truth was painful.

Nevertheless, Mr. Pack's approach to all financial and legal matters applied, often stated, "Not clean—*squeaky* clean!" There was no question that the Church would abide by the law of the land, as long as a matter did not conflict with God's Law.

After weighing the circumstances, Restored's attorney advised Mr. Pack to comply with the WCG's demands. In May 2000, Restored ceased publishing Mr. Armstrong's works pending the results of the lawsuit. Through the spring and summer of 2000, Mr. Pack awaited the court's decision. He knew the outcome was not a matter of obeying God.

On September 18, 2000, a three-judge panel for the liberal Ninth Circuit Court of California decided—two to one—that reprinting Mr. Armstrong's literature was a copyright infringement, and therefore in violation of federal law for anyone other than the copyright holders. The United States Supreme Court chose not to hear the appeal.

Mr. Pack wrote of the situation in his book *The Work of God – Its Final Chapter!*:

"Though I had come to expect this decision (for various reasons at the time), it was still extremely difficult news to hear—and even more difficult to *personally* accept.

"I had deeply wanted the ruling to go the other way and told myself many times afterward, when it was announced that the decision was 'split' two judges to one in favor of the Worldwide Church of God, how this landmark decision turned on the opinion of *one man*—a single human being! Naturally, I experienced a broad range of emotions—some not very good.

*"I told myself that if ONE JUDGE—just ONE MAN!—had decided differently, I would not have needed to rewrite all of the books and booklets that Mr. Armstrong published (plus many more by other*

*authors). These could have been subtracted from the many more he was NOT required to write, but that I was!”*

The plan to reproduce Mr. Armstrong’s books and booklets was dead! No one anticipated this—and initially neither had Mr. Pack. This landmark event would have enormous implications for the Work, and for him personally. This quote also comes from *The Work of God*.

“Shortly before establishing Restored, I envisioned reprinting Mr. Armstrong’s literature and using it to rekindle the same Work. This seemed the most natural and desirable way for an organization believing all that he taught to continue Christ’s commission as God used him to do it. It would have been the most correct way to go forward—and much easier, faster and less expensive than any other approach.

“But Federal Copyright Law eventually prohibited us from republishing Mr. Armstrong’s material. (We had already reprinted eleven of his smaller booklets, but were forced to stop.) A Federal Appellate Court initially upheld the WCG’s copyright, and the Supreme Court then refused to hear the appeal of one organization. Because that organization was not willing to rewrite the literature, it pressed on blindly, wasting years and millions of dollars in legal expenses, in hopes of overturning the decision. The WCG later sold a number of copyrights to this organization for more millions.

“We were not so foolish—or so ‘patient.’ Understanding that it is the truth Mr. Armstrong taught that is important, rather than his precise wording, we accepted God’s will and proceeded with the only alternative: Take on the staggering task of rewriting all of the Church’s past literature!”

### Facing the Future

The outcome of this West Coast court case was a complete sea change for the Church. All elements of workflow and project flow would now have to revolve—for years!—around this task.

“I have always enjoyed a challenge. Some people thrive under them, and this generally includes me. But the thought that I had to rewrite all of Mr. Armstrong’s literature was the most overwhelming feeling that I had ever experienced. Nothing compares to the absolute shock that I felt when the realization finally came home of what this meant. It was as though a herd of African elephants was standing on my chest.

“And there could be no cutting corners. I knew that we were being watched, so I had to completely rewrite each book or booklet with words that did not sound as if they were plagiarized from Mr. Armstrong.

“Later, one of my assistants did an exact word count of all the books and booklets Mr. Armstrong wrote. It came out almost right at 750,000 words. I had him do the same with all that I had to write, including the splinter books, and my total was above 2.5 million words! I was glad to learn this *after* the fact.”

Mr. Pack shared the news with the Church in the March 1, 2002 *Member/Co-Worker Letter*.

“I have finally accepted the fact that I must re-write every one of Mr. Armstrong’s books and booklets, except for *MYSTERY OF THE AGES*. It took me a long time to come to grips with this decision. I believe that God, in His mercy, did not let me understand this

all at once because He might know that I would have felt even more overwhelmed.”

### **Establishing Priorities**

After completing this mammoth project, there came a need to address the overarching priorities of the Work. Many were declaring that continuing God’s Work was not a high priority to Mr. Pack and Restored. This was actually a bald falsehood told by some in LCG to dissuade people from looking at Restored, and from entering the true Church and participating in the true Work of God.

The following lengthy statement, again from *The Work of God – Its Final Chapter!*, describes why Mr. Pack made the decision to rewrite the books and booklets first—before pursuing broad media exposure:

“The Restored Church of God has operated under a long-term *Strategic* Plan. This plan has to do with our priorities at the beginning for preparing to continue the WORK, feed the FLOCK, restore the full TRUTH and rewrite the Church’s past LITERATURE. Some initially misunderstood our intentions. Others knew them, but found advantage for their own organization in misrepresenting them. This chapter looks more closely at where we have been, and where we are, with the next two looking more closely at where we are going! (Those discuss both of our *Operational* Plans, one for each commission.)...”

### **May 1999**

“The Restored Church of God came into existence in May 1999. Since its inception, many have asked that we explain the Church’s ‘strategic plan’ for continuing God’s Work and feeding the flock—the First and Second

Commissions. Most inquiries of this nature come from people who attend one of the splinters. Of course, we refer them to our extensive material designed for those with a Church of God background. Everything about who and what we are has been explained in exhaustive detail in our *Splinter Explanation Packet*...

“We did not formally present a synopsis or overview of our Strategic Plan until June 2002. At that point, because our enemies were taking delight in declaring that we were not going to continue the Great Commission, and had no plans for such, we revealed the plan. Obviously, it has evolved over the course of time, continually expanding as we have identified new publishing projects that God wanted to be carried out and as new opportunities—gigantic open doors!—have presented themselves. This ‘evolution’ has been dramatic and the next two chapters offer significant detail.

“Our plan will of course continue to change and expand...”

“Let me underscore again for emphasis that some other individuals and small groups, pretending to be independent Christians ‘defending the truth’ and ‘carrying on the heritage of Mr. Armstrong’s literature,’ even after the official legal ruling, today openly defy the law and publish Mr. Armstrong’s writings, anyway. They feel no restraint, nor will they accept any from anyone or any organization. Naturally, others are happy to link to these sites, thereby endorsing them—and themselves disobey Romans 13:1-7, among other scriptures. This includes the Eighth Commandment prohibiting stealing... We pray for all these people, because they are in more trouble than they know—with God and possibly man!

“Therefore, early on, I had to make a simple decision between two clear choices: (1) Immediately

re-start the First Commission, without either literature or a trained and faithful staff, or (2) *first* reconstruct the enormous amount of written material explaining all of God's doctrines (which no other leader or *entire organization* was willing to do), and *then* expand into what would be a *much larger* and *more effective* Work. While some organizations wrote a couple booklets and almost immediately started a 'work' on radio or television, we knew that approach would be unwise for a host of reasons.

"In addition, I recognized that when Mr. Armstrong left Sardis in 1933, only 19 people came with him (and six of these were his family). This meant he had no *immediate* pastoral responsibility to a shattered flock of hundreds following his lead—and to the thousands more left scattered and confused, with many of these wondering where to go.

"I did!

### **Why Rewrite First?**

"It became obvious the second approach was far better for several reasons:

"(1) It re-established, in writing, clear evidence of what the entire Church once believed and practiced. It also re-established where the *voice* of Christ was found, for those still able to recognize what it was and who were looking for it. All mystery about what we teach would also be stripped away.

"Consider again. Over time, it has become obvious to more and more of God's people that Christ is gathering His faithful flock to The Restored Church of God to finish the Work before flight to safety. This gathering has also sped up with time, and become another reason we had to make absolutely plain where Christ's voice is at work. Taken together, you have

learned John 10:4 and 18:37 explain who *hears* that voice—TRUTH!—and who does not. These passages remove any doubt about *exactly what it is* Christ’s sheep listen and look for. Most do not even know of these verses, let alone read them carefully! Do this if you have not yet.

“As vital as it is to finish the commission that Mr. Armstrong started, *no one* who loves the doctrines of God believes that the Work is *more* important than teaching all of the truth (including publicly establishing that one does). Nor would it be even *as* important. In addition, therefore, it must also be clearly established for all to see that we *never* compromise. This would be no easy task—we knew our work was cut out for us.

“Consider this to make a point. Many religions, including Protestants, Catholics and the WCG, are doing some kind of ‘work’—and are preaching a ‘gospel.’ Of course, no one would consider joining them to ‘support the work,’ because what they *teach* is wrong. Why then would one consider joining a ‘work’ that teaches *some* things wrong, reflecting the wrong ‘tree’ in the Garden (mixing good and evil knowledge)? How many times did Mr. Armstrong warn of this? If you have ‘eyes to see and ears to hear,’ you will understand this point!

“(2) We did not start with thousands (or even *many* hundreds) of people, as well as hundreds (or even dozens) of ministers. We also lacked the resources and funding necessary to *immediately* do anything that could have any impact.

“(3) During the extraordinarily challenging and difficult period of literature reconstruction—writing (and my wife typing) in only *four-plus* years what Mr. Armstrong and others wrote in *52* years—I realized that Restored would have time to slowly grow larger

while becoming more prepared to expand the Work at great speed.

“(4) A tiny early staff—now nearly 50, just at Headquarters, but at first only five with a couple part-time volunteers—of zealous, but initially relatively inexperienced, people would be insufficient to keep up with the truly enormous workload, even working 50-60 hours week after week as we had to. (I was *forced* to work 80 or more hours each week for years, and my wife the same.) The staff also needed time to mature and gain experience in what it *means* to reconstruct God’s Work. In addition, we had some initial start-up difficulties because certain of our earliest employees, unable to see what they had become part of, suddenly left us and did absolutely everything in their power to destroy The Restored Church of God and me through outrageous false accusations and lies. (In fact, if our early years had become a book or movie it would have been named ‘Against All Odds.’ And, part of God’s overall test and Plan—you probably are witnessing this—their efforts continue.) But when this happened, we simply followed Mr. Armstrong’s example of accepting setbacks as the cocking of a gun before it fires a bullet. But it did have some initial effect.

“We also already have plans in place to hire several more people by the end of 2009, with potentially many others who would be hired each year thereafter. This has been the pattern for year after year. (More and more pastors would of course be in addition to this number.)

“(5) For years, I was the only *full-time* minister in Restored. We have many more today (and there are many local church elders). Plans are to continue hiring many more trained, qualified pastors in groups of three or four, hired every two or three months. While we

are blessed with a growing number of faithful pastors, elders and deacons, I still work alone in certain regards.

“Certainly, we will continue to do much more as additional staff and elders come with us—but large numbers of these have not. Of course, while we know that prophecy is not encouraging in this regard, we also know that other (at least a few) leaders may come. This said, I recognize Mr. Armstrong also worked *entirely* alone for much longer than I. Therefore, understand this is not *complaining* (I deeply love my work), but rather *explaining*, because it was a huge factor throughout our start-up and reconstruction phase.

“(6) I knew that when the time came to begin a larger Work (in 2003), we would have virtually *every* piece of literature *already in place*, exactly as Mr. Armstrong did in his later years. This vast supply of material (over 600 separate items, some in up to six languages) would enable us to more efficiently help many more people, and be able to offer virtually *all* of God’s truth immediately. We would also have the staff *already in place* to handle the anticipated significant increase in mail. (Of course, this supposed ‘slower pace’ still put us far beyond parallel points of Mr. Armstrong’s time. It also ensured we could *quickly* explode to a size much larger and far beyond those with confused priorities. This happened—and is still happening as you will see.)

“(7) Finally, there has been one other large benefit to the path that we have chosen. Some, *professing* their love for the truth, refuse to join us because they incorrectly perceive that we are ‘not doing a *big enough* Work’ or are ‘not on television like Mr. Armstrong.’

“Understand. These people have not come with us for one reason—they do not sufficiently ‘love the truth’ (II Thes. 2:10), and by this I mean ALL OF IT. They seem unable to recognize how enormous has become the

Work and the ‘reach’ of The Restored Church of God. Sadly, they are also apparently unwilling to explore the *facts* of its present size, because if they did they would realize how immense this Work has grown. A big excuse for indecision would evaporate. Further, *closed minds* have kept many from recognizing the explosive dynamic effort of which they could be a part—if they would just anoint their eyes and open their minds. But, in fact, their attitude *toward the truth* means they do *not belong* with us—or at least not yet.

“Mr. Armstrong always understood this. First John 2:19-21 has a slightly different, but similar, application to such people and thinking. These brethren have literally *culled themselves* from participating with us. While we wish them well, God’s overarching purpose has been served. Paul’s statement that ‘all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose’ (Rom. 8:28) has worked on our behalf in this way.

“The weight and number of these points made easy our decision. I knew God was guiding us!”

### **A Systematic Approach**

Returning to the literature, Mr. Pack prioritized which booklets should be rewritten first. It was obvious that the first doctrine to be addressed was the gospel of the kingdom of God—the bedrock centerpiece of the entire Bible. He titled the booklet *Which Is the Real Gospel?*, later revised to *Which Is the True Gospel?* Other booklets on foundational doctrines followed in rapid succession, forming much of the introductory material still recommended to those who express serious interest in God’s Church today.

A rhythm was quickly established, crafting each booklet at high speed, editing it, handing it off to the print shop, and immediately starting the next one.

Through this process, Mr. Pack learned that he had to adjust his writing style to achieve the desired end result. He wrote this to the Church:

January 4, 2002

“Addressing the kind of complicated, convoluted and sometimes tortured reasoning of people in the splinter groups had a dramatic, though temporary, effect on my writing style—for the worse! Examining the style of Mr. Armstrong’s writing, not just the content, as we all once did, for thirteen months has returned my writing to a more *Plain Truth* style.”

While producing new pieces of literature, Mr. Pack reviewed and edited existing books, booklets (and articles) in evenings and on weekends, continuing to work up to 90 hours per week. Refining the material ensured that the final product reached a level of quality comparable to Mr. Armstrong’s.

With Mrs. Shirley Pack typing each keystroke, often late into the night, Mr. Pack rewrote booklet after booklet explaining God’s truth in painstaking detail. He strove to make each even *more* thorough and clear than its forerunner by Mr. Armstrong, since the truth had come under attack on all sides—first from the apostates in the WCG, then from self-appointed teachers in the splinters and slivers. This meant that, without exception, they had to be somewhat longer.

As he progressed, The Restored Church of God brethren were given an inside look into the process. In letters throughout early 2002 to members and co-workers, Mr. Pack explained more details of what was involved:

February 1, 2002

“On a personal note, I have been very excited to think that we are now producing booklets that are far superior to my/our earlier efforts. A number of key

elements in our process, coupled with growth and experience in how to write at least a little bit more like Mr. Armstrong, have made this improvement possible...”

“I believe that our product now is more pleasing to God and I am very grateful that I can now return my attention back to rewriting the remainder of Mr. Armstrong’s books and booklets in earnest! I am more resolved and excited than ever about completing this task...”

March 1, 2002

“I cannot tell you how satisfying it is to see each booklet come together to final fruition. My wife will tell you that I ‘walk on air’ for a day or two after the completion of each one. While I would never want to do this entire process more than once, it is at the same time both staggering and completely thrilling to see it come to reality. And may I never forget to thank the staff for their assistance and the many additional articles that they have written, or will yet write, over the next ten months.”

April 2, 2002

“First, I hope it is increasingly evident that we are more determined than ever to see the entirety of the truth of God ‘back in service,’ in writing. Second, we are covering topics that no one else—no other organization—is covering, because no one seems to even think about them anymore.”

May 1, 2002

“I feel that my last two or three booklets may represent somewhat of a turning point in my writing style. At least I hope they did. I continue to go back and look at things that I have written, even just a few

months ago, and find that I could have improved it. Sometimes the improvement could have been dramatic. But I know you understand that we all race against the clock here, while so many in other groups waste time and produce little, though they receive millions of dollars annually and have large staffs. Speed can come at a price, but it is not as great as the one that slothfulness brings.”

The determination to rewrite all of the literature established a pattern of high-speed productivity and efficiency that would characterize The Restored Church of God in the years ahead—and distinguish it from all other organizations.

## *Building and Leading an Office*

As he pressed forward rewriting scores of booklets, Mr. Pack also continued to lead an administrative office, train field ministers and unify brethren. Staff members had to be taught principles he had learned and employed over decades in the Church.

### **Building from the Ground Up**

A quality that Mr. Pack has stressed in every undertaking is *precision*. His parents instilled this characteristic in him at a young age. Even as a child, Mr. Pack employed a level of exactness and detail in his own life that most would not see as necessary. This approach would later define his ministry, and it has been a key factor in the development of The Restored Church of God.

As a growing staff was trained, Mr. Pack constantly emphasized attention to detail, whether in the Work or in their personal lives—called “minding the minutiae,” and thinking through every element of a task or project. The result was that the staff would learn to be able to simultaneously undertake many projects on parallel paths, and produce ma-

terials that are both correct in content and aesthetically beautiful.

This would be vital in the process of having to continuously do a great deal quickly in an age where little time is left. The staff always seemed to have to do, as Mr. Pack often described it, “too much, too fast, by too few.” However, by applying God’s government, an office environment was created in which tasks could be accomplished rapidly, with Mr. Pack setting a *very* brisk pace.

“I grew up with a basic understanding of right nutrition and diet. I am most grateful for this. It is one reason I am blessed with such extraordinary energy. Of course, I would learn much, much more about all facets of nutrition and good health as a result of inheriting my parents’ company. Could there be a better course than that one?

“At age 60, I find myself still bursting with energy. It is a daily marvel to me that I feel almost no drop-off in energy. It is hard to imagine what it would mean if I did. I am tremendously grateful that God seems to give me a level of energy that feels boundless.

“Mr. Armstrong seemed to have extraordinary energy—and everybody around him knew it, with many young people unable to keep up with him. He attributed this energy directly to God because of the Work he had to do, and that God knew he had to do. I feel exactly the same, and for the same reason.”

Another aspect of the staff’s learning about all-important efficiency springs from a continual emphasis on administrative *vision*. Proverbs 29:18 was often repeated—“Where there is no vision, the people perish”—along with Proverbs 27:12—“A prudent man foresees the evil [trouble], and hides himself; but the simple pass on, and are punished.” The latter verse is also found in Proverbs 22:3.

“There was no choice but to continually emphasize these passages. Most are never trained to do this, but Ambassador College training and field ministry training brought its own automatic emphasis on it for those who were listening and learning.

“Right principles of administration had to be *applied*, not just taught. The passing of time has brought Restored to be a very advanced, sophisticated operation.

“Try to imagine the following all in one organization. We are a Church, meaning we administer doctrine through ministers around the world. We are a publishing operation, and the largest religious one in the world. This includes three magazines, Bible lessons, books, booklets, brochures and articles.

“This necessitates having a very sophisticated internal printshop that rivals companies that do this and nothing else. We operate a worldwide convention service. We have and administer a small college. We have a significant-sized mailing operation, meaning we are like our own small post office. We have an internal travel bureau. We employ a lot of accountants in a large business office. We have a legal office, an insurance office, a public communications team and a human relations department.

“Then there is the fact that we have maintenance and custodial departments, and a building department—a virtual in-house construction company that does not do work as well as professionals, but rather *always BETTER*—and these are volunteers working ‘outside the lines,’ meaning after hours from their normal duties in the office. Just considering this, how does one find such people—human beings of such extraordinary zeal?

“We have a marketing department, or what amounts to a large enough internal advertising agency

that could stand alone if this were all it did. We employ a variety of artists, computer people, media specialists, and other specialists. We also operate a medium-sized, world-class television studio. Then there are the two very sophisticated, ‘top-of-the-world’ quality websites that we maintain.

“Where does it stop? There is no room in the organization for ignoring principles that lead to bad fruit. We cannot afford such cause-and-effect problems of modern society. They are too great, and would badly diminish the Work. I am so grateful that I had been handed such remarkable training by the time I was age 50, instead of older.

“As the organization has grown larger, we have at the same time been better able to find *unusual* people—the kind with very remarkable backgrounds who could make a difference—who carried either the managerial, executive or ‘niche’ talents and skills that were needed. These people always seemed to arrive right on time. The hand of God has been obvious.”

As Mr. Pack passed on the most necessary elements of training to the staff, it was at the same time obvious that only through God’s power could the organization effectively carry out its duties. As the Work developed, Mr. Armstrong’s adage of “*working* as though it all depends on us, but *praying* knowing it all depends on God” struck home as never before.

While a team approach was used for many Headquarters projects, the absence of committee-driven decision-making furthered productivity. The splinters usually run ideas through a gauntlet of bureaucratic “red tape,” which slows progress to a crawl, or sometimes to a complete standstill—or worst of all it can even reverse the direction of progress. Restored has the unusual ability to render and implement decisions “at the drop of a hat.” Projects requir-

ing months to complete in other organizations can be executed in The Restored Church of God in a matter of days.

“The Restored administrative ‘mechanism’ or ‘machine’ is one that is mobile, and really quite nimble, to the point of being what we commonly refer to here as ‘acrobatic.’ In fact, we must be seen in action to be appreciated. The government of God is the most marvelous mechanism in the universe. As we were taught by Mr. Armstrong, it has proven in our case to truly be ‘everything.’”

Even as the Work underwent incredible growth, some later staff members did occasionally quit, usually (but not always) choosing to leave the Church entirely. But God invariably “filled the empty seats” and kept His Work moving forward—usually with someone more qualified than the person who left, and sometimes two of these appeared as one left.

Regarding the process of building a staff, Mr. Pack once wrote about another quality necessary in these personnel. This comes from his June 7, 2000 *Member/Co-Worker Letter*:

“Do you now understand just how hard it is to find even a very small but complete staff of these same rare people who will compromise nothing? Then they have to be strong enough to handle the stress of doing the Work of God at the very end of the age. The task of finding such people is seemingly impossible, but I do now believe that God has done it. There is no question that I didn’t do it...”

After the initial waves of employees left, those who remained began to develop a smooth rhythm of production. As the office stabilized, Mr. Pack wrote the Church in a Sep-

tember 2002 *Member/Co-Worker Letter* about the real challenges that Headquarters still faced.

“The Restored Church of God is a small army. We do not have a lot of money. We need zealous participation by everyone who can help in even the smallest, slightest way. Gone are the days of 357 television stations and over 200 million dollars of discretionary income to do the Work. We must be smart, motivated, informed, efficient and relentless in our determination to help God’s Work in this and every other way.”

### **Providing Spiritual Food**

In the wake of the apostasy, the days of large congregations with local ministers (sometimes several of both) in every metropolitan area were long gone. Yet, Church members still needed to be spiritually cared for and fed. This presented a host of obstacles, but God provided ways for the staff to surmount each one.

Sermons were perhaps the most important tool for feeding brethren. And during Restored’s first several years, Mr. Pack had to deliver the message nearly every Sabbath. There were not always sermonettes, so he made *every* sermon at least 90 minutes long. These were then mailed on a cassette tape three days later to all congregations and isolated members, to be played two weeks after it was given. This allowed everyone in the Church to benefit from the same spiritual diet.

In contrast to the endless stream of generic, repetitive “Christian living” sermons found in many groups, Mr. Pack covered a wide variety of topics from the start of Restored—doctrinal, historical, prophecy-based or practical. Early messages included a three-part series on the “one true Church” doctrine, the purpose of suffering, Satan’s tactics, self-examination, proselytizing, methods of Bible study, the future of great nations, building faith, and a host of others.

This archive (accessible on the website) now numbers in the hundreds, and is of course still growing.

As Mr. Pack recalls, scores of Restored brethren who were once members of the Worldwide Church of God commented that they had *never* heard sermons on such a wide range of subjects.

Announcement Bulletins were soon being sent with sermons on a weekly basis. These contained news of the Work, prayer requests, a sampling of letters sent to Headquarters, notification of upcoming events, and more.

“The idea of a weekly *Announcement Bulletin* sent with the sermon meant a lot of work—we knew this—but it meant an equal joy and feeling of inclusion to the Church as a whole. It permits everyone to move at the same speed with information no matter where they live in the world. I know of no other organization willing to bite off the ‘labor of love’ our Church Administration Department so willing does every week, and for years.”

A quarterly magazine for members, *The Pillar*, provided additional spiritual food. Further, every new book and booklet was sent to the membership, with the expectation that they read each one to strengthen their doctrinal foundation.

In December of 2000, Mr. Pack also began delivering semi-annual update sermons. These messages kept the Church informed about developments in the Work. The first one was titled “RCG 2001: The State of the Work and the Church.”

Decisions to produce all of these tools stemmed in part from Mr. Pack’s longstanding preference of being open with the membership. Despite its liabilities, he made a point of erring on the side of saying too much. This openness helps prevent communication breakdowns, and also enables brethren to move forward in unison, with a clear understanding of where the Work is heading, as well as everyone’s role in it.

About nine months after The Restored Church of God began, Mr. Pack had informed brethren in a January 14, 2000 *Member/Co-Worker Letter*:

“Though it has never been God’s intention that people REMAIN in a scattered condition after they have determined where they ought to be, it is certainly helpful and right that such people must be fed properly so that they can determine where Christ’s voice is leading them to be in order to really FULLY hold to all that we once believed.

“In many of our sermons we intend to literally strive to ‘restore what has been restored’ [a theme that Mr. Pack would repeat often] so that people need not be shaken from it ever again.

“For instance, I am finished with Part 1 of a 3-part sermon that addresses the doctrine of One True Church. This 3-part series, in the spirit and format of much of my 30 Reasons sermons, will once again make absolutely clear this doctrine that we all once routinely believed and even took for granted. There can be no mistaking the central importance of this subject.

“I believe that a systematic approach to God’s truth must be taken. Tomorrow I am going to cover (in a sermon and Bible study) a comprehensive look at tithing. I don’t think I have actually preached on it in twenty years—certainly not in the way that I intend to cover it tomorrow.”

### **Shedding Baggage**

Members entering Restored faced their own unique challenge. New people entering from the splinters brought a variety of doctrinal baggage—and all of it needed to be what Mr. Pack described as ‘checked at the door.’ This was a prerequisite to becoming a unified organization. Through week-

ly sermons, brethren were admonished to shed wrong doctrinal ideas, traditions, attitudes, mindsets and habits they had picked up over the years. Mr. Pack addressed this very early on in his regular (May 25, 1999) update to the Church:

“Your circumstances are no different though your path may have been. We all have to shed the ‘culture’ that we picked up in our recent pasts. Jesus Christ will help us do this as we all become ONE—‘having the same mind and the same spirit.’ This will take time, but perhaps not that much. Just because brethren did not come through Global, their experience is no less ‘worthy’ than someone else...please, please do not descend into ‘critiquing’ one another whose ‘orientation’ and ‘culture’ may now be a bit different than yours...work very, very hard at this.”

He added this much later:

“The reconstitution of Christ’s Work and Church and Body was a learning experience for me and all others both in the office and in the ministry. The different corporate paths that people had walked had created unique, but typical, problems depending upon that path. We had to be ready to work with people who were from the WCG, PCG, GCG, LCG, UCG, COG-aic, plus those who went to tiny slivers, those who left the apostasy to go home for a time, those who attended a variety of groups, etc. Of course, the great majority (three or four to one) of people whom we *now* invite to services are coming from the world.”

### **Developing Leaders!**

Throughout the rebuilding of the Work, Mr. Pack stressed the need to train leaders. As the Church grew, and the num-

ber of members increased around the world, men and women with character, willingness to serve and capacity would be necessary to support and assist Mr. Pack in the office and to serve God's people in the field.

From 1999 to 2002, Mr. Pack was the only minister at Headquarters, besides one local church elder, with a few other elders assisting in the field. You have seen that an enormous workload faced him daily. Again, aside from re-writing literature, he alone had to handle email and phone inquiries, counsel brethren, prepare weekly sermons and perform anointings, among numerous other duties. No one else was yet trained for these tasks. For the Work to grow, other leaders had to be developed.

Therefore, in the spring of 2000, a formal Leadership Development Program was instituted. Mr. Pack updated the Church on this advancement in his August 2000 letter.

“A brief statement needs to be made at this time about the subject of leadership. Surely we all must understand that every one of us is in training to become leaders in the world tomorrow. None of us ‘old-timers’ can forget how often we heard this. Clearly, God’s Church needs more leaders today and we must have a program for developing them internally within Restored!

“It is unlikely that a great many truly faithful elders and ministers will ever come with us in the long run—though none of us can be certain. If this is the case, then we must live with this fact without lowering our standards (to attract more ‘leaders’) and proceed with the only other option available to us. More and new leaders **MUST BE TRAINED!**

“However, we must find the time to carefully produce a program for developing these leaders. I have been quietly working on this program for some time now. It is time to at least announce it. This Leadership Development Program (LDP) could conceivably

become quite extensive as time passes. I fully expect this to be the case. It will contain both taped and written lecture materials. The time has come that it now has a beginning...”

“Let me implore all of us to strive with all of our hearts to become leaders within the Church of God and the Body of Christ. ‘The harvest is plenteous but the laborers are few.’ [This means ministers.] I would be surprised if any of us doubt any longer the truth of this statement by Christ. More and more people are contacting us for baptism. Like Mr. Armstrong, when he was in Oregon, I am coming to realize that there is a limit as to how much I can do and do well. And I have not yet mentioned some of the really huge projects that I may be about to have to ‘take on’ in the very near future. You will be reading about them as soon as the time is appropriate.

“My wife and I have become consumed by the doing of God’s Work. It virtually occupies us day and night. We hardly ever rest. Here is the problem. We still cannot keep up. Believe me, I am not complaining, I am explaining—why God’s Church needs more leaders! If you want to grow into a leader—please seek God and ask Him fervently to help you grow so that you can be a better tool in time to come in His hands! God has always worked through human vessels and the end of the age will be no exception to this pattern.”

The LDP was only the beginning of all that would be created to build leaders. Beginning in 2002, annual Ministerial and Leadership Conferences were held each summer. All ministers, elders and deacons were brought to Headquarters each summer to listen to lectures on a variety of topics related to caring for God’s people.

Attendees appreciated the wealth of *practical* information that was dispensed. Some commented that conferences

in the splinters consisted mainly of discussions about doctrine—something not for debate in Restored—or general, theoretical messages. (In PCG, it was always about the leader’s latest office or title.) The crucial details of policy and guidelines, and why they were important, were rarely discussed. In Restored’s conferences, however, leaders were taught the things they needed to know to be *effective*.

Some of the lectures given at the annual conferences were “The Great RCG Administrative Challenge,” “Working With and Being a Host,” “Working With the Splinters,” “Working With Prospective Members,” “Working With Members,” “Wives in the Ministry,” “Youth Plans & Publications,” “Developing Your Leadership Capabilities,” “The Parable of the Sower in the 21st Century,” “Handling Offences Locally,” “Experience—Precious, Precious Experience,” “Speaking the Same Thing,” “Conforming Fully to God’s Standards,” “Ministering to and Working With the Weak,” “Proper and Improper Ministerial Roles,” “The Heart of a Shepherd,” “Maintaining Standards” and “Preach the Word.”

Mr. Pack also reinstated the *Church Pastor’s Report* (similar to the *Pastor General’s Report* in the Worldwide Church of God each month). Later it would again take on the name *Pastor General’s Report*. This critically important publication was introduced for Restored leaders through a letter (August 5, 2003) with some history included as a backdrop:

“This report [WCG’s] was sent to all ministers and elders in the WCG. It was full of helpful information on a host of topics, and included miniature reports from a variety of different departments within the Work. It generally had a cover letter from the Director of Church Administration, often having a cover letter on top of that from Mr. Armstrong. This report was a vital tool for educating, inspiring and communicating with the leadership of the Church scattered around

the world. We have a similar need at this point—and it is growing. While an annual Conference has been crucial for obvious reasons, this publication becomes a *regular* means, coupled with our expanding Leadership Development Program (LDP) going to an even wider group, of actually *training* more leaders who can carry additional responsibility as God’s Work continues to grow.”

### **Themes of Mr. Pack’s Leadership**

Even as responsibilities increased, Mr. Pack strove to avoid being an unreachable CEO in an “ivory tower.” True, he was no longer operating as a church pastor, but he still determined to retain the heart of a shepherd. He wanted to be available to anyone on staff who had a problem, or other concern, at any time of day.

He often stressed a wisdom passed on by his parents—“you are only limited by your imagination.” Every staff member was encouraged to be creative and to contribute ideas. Mr. Pack would often remind staff that he could not come up with every idea, and he regularly sought a multitude of counsel—when it was available—to look at his own ideas. Others had strengths, and these needed to be tapped for the benefit of the Work.

“Many people will not offer ideas in meetings for fear that they are ‘no good.’ I have taught our staff that there are *three kinds* of ideas—good, bad and in-between—and that all three are useful.

“Good ideas are obviously useful. In-between ideas merely require a separation of the bad part from the good part. Bad ideas can also be very helpful. This is because they will often trigger good ideas in response. I have even asked, ‘Does anyone have any bad ideas?’ Usually, someone obliges.”

Considering the seriousness of doing the Work and guiding brethren, one could assume the environment at Headquarters would be stoic and somber. Naturally, there is a requisite level of professionalism and gravity necessary, but Mr. Pack also made time for fun. He would often take a few minutes during the day to share laughter with staff members. Even today, his humor is most evident and greatly appreciated. Mr. Pack is also a list maker, as he indicated to brethren in his December 2000 *Member/Co-Worker Letter*.

“Brethren, we may have just completed the single most productive month since God established The Restored Church of God! My wife calls me the ‘list maker.’ This is because I have always carried with me a series of ‘to do’ lists containing various things that I need to accomplish. My wife is similar in this habit. These same lists serve a kind of dual purpose whenever I am able to cross things that are finished from the list.

“Everyone is familiar with the Proverb ‘the desire accomplished is sweet to the soul’ (Prov. 13:19). But seeing *many things* completed always inspires a sense of *gratitude* that God helped us get them done. I am very—very—grateful for the wonderful progress being made in Restored as the dawning of the new calendar year approaches.”

Mr. Pack has remained determined to avoid an overly compartmentalized staff, in which turf wars would occur and staff in one department would be unwilling to help those in others. The numbers in the following quote have changed, but the principle has not. This comes from his *Member/Co-Worker Letter* of March 1, 2002.

“The next item that I wanted to at least briefly mention is that we do things at Headquarters largely

on a ‘team’ basis. Of course, the entire Headquarters staff is a team. But, for instance, within a football team (American football), there are the offense, defense and special teams. Each has its own coach and each of these three groups has sub-groups or sub-teams.

“We have a Church Administration team of four, an Editorial team of nine, a Mail Processing team of four and a Technical team of about four. We have a foreign language team of three. We also have Accounting, Legal and Insurance teams that include people who are not in our office. We will eventually establish a Media team at the proper time.

“Each of these groups is learning to work together and getting ready to do a bigger Work—handling more people.”

Throughout the years in The Restored Church of God, this team atmosphere has remained—even with the staff tripling in size. When something needs to be completed, the staff often pulls together to accomplish it. The phrase, “That is not my department,” is *never* heard—never!—at least not in the sense of trying to hide from duty or shirk responsibility. Instead, there is unity and a desire to help others.

### **The Importance of Quality**

Mr. Pack has also sought to instill a mindset of quality in every staff member. His goal was to bring an Ambassador College-like atmosphere to Restored’s offices. Everything from the physical environment to literature and sermons had to reflect excellence. Responses to email, post mail and phone inquiries also had to exhibit quality and thoughtfulness.

The very highest standards are sought in *everything* that is done at Headquarters, including dress and even con-

versational grammar—these are things toward which the staff actively *works*, as would occur in the training to be kings.

In *Brethren/Co-Worker Letters* three years apart—December 2, 1999 and November 11, 2003—Mr. Pack reiterated the value of continuing to bring quality to every phase of God’s Work.

“We feel it is important to maintain the level of quality that Mr. Armstrong taught us. We serve a God of quality and this example and standard has been clearly set for us...I am personally determined not to compromise with quality.”

“Mr. Armstrong taught a virtual course on the need for *quality*—within a budget—for God’s Work, if we are to reflect the true God, who is surrounded by the ultimate in quality. This ‘coursework’ and training was inseparable from the Ambassador College experience, given to every student who attended any of the three campuses.

“As God’s Work becomes more prominent—more well-known—to people and institutions in the world at large—we have to *reflect* the true God, without becoming either lavish or opulent.

“Of course, our facility is far from this. However, I had long known that we would one day need to upgrade, as and when we could afford it, the overall presence of our headquarters. This is because God’s Work (not referencing the *Church* here) is not destined to remain tiny. In fact, as most of you have known for several months now, we are consistently growing at a greater rate than we have seen before. We are now into the fifth month of this greater rate of growth—and there appears to be no letup, but rather only acceleration in sight at this time!”

### The Potential of the Internet

As it developed, Mr. Pack came to recognize the potential—and *power!*—of the Internet to carry out God’s Work in a way never imagined. He saw this tool’s ability to preach the gospel and warn modern-day nations, and in a tremendously cost-effective way.

In 2002, a manager was hired to maximize the Work’s use of the Internet. This initiated the first of what would become several upgrades to Restored’s website, with a goal of ensuring the Church was on the cutting edge. Mr. Armstrong used the best and most efficient technology of his time—Mr. Pack was determined to do the same.

As explained in *The Work of God – Its Final Chapter!*:

“Technology in the twenty-first century has offered a very special vehicle—the Internet—for doing the Work on a worldwide scale that has never been available to the Church of God before now. Strangely, most seem unable or unwilling to grasp this, or to truly comprehend the potential that this medium carries.

“The Internet is a tremendously efficient, and very inexpensive, means of doing the Work on a grand scale. Coupled with our overall efficiency, and our ability to make and implement decisions quickly because of God’s form of government, we are able to respond almost instantaneously to what is happening in the world at any moment and put it before many scores or hundreds of thousands—and this within just the first few days, or even hours, after an event. While some seem to still believe that the best way to carry out the Great Commission is to secure television time (and perhaps radio), this is now far from true.”

Year after year, Restored's websites (including *realtruth.org*) grew at an incredible rate. Starting in 2000, website traffic more than tripled for six consecutive years!

### **Restoring What Was Restored**

Besides restoring the doctrines taught by Mr. Armstrong, there was much more to be re-established—or restored.

The “grand pattern” had to be retained—meaning all elements of the Work that Christ built through Mr. Armstrong's leadership. This meant the Work's *entire* infrastructure had to be rebuilt. Some elements would change with the times, but the 20th-century Work's overall profile was both effective and efficient. It was not necessary to re-invent the wheel.

Mr. Pack often told the brethren, “The Restored Church of God is going to be built and structured, as much as possible in every way, exactly as Mr. Armstrong instructed us.”

Anticipating all of the details that would need to be addressed would be nearly impossible. While there were many obstacles throughout the early years, steady growth continued. This comes from his March 29, 2001 letter.

“Growth is bringing its own ‘wonderful’ problem for me. I am rapidly reaching the point where I know that I cannot continue to work with people in the same personal, one-on-one way as much as I once did. I suppose this was always something that was inevitable. It is the biggest reason why I say that the two greatest needs for Restored are to develop both *literature* and *leaders*. We simply must continue to have more and more of each of these two things.”

### **Infrastructure and Tools**

As the corporate side (employees, office space, contracts, equipment needs, etc.) of the Church grew, Mr. Pack was

forced to increasingly shift from a pastor's role to that of a Chief Executive Officer. A variety of infrastructure needs demanded his full attention, including...

**Daily Mail Responses:** A policy was established of responding to an inquiry *within 24 hours*. He recalled his experiences in WCG when some ministers would ignore—or delay for weeks—a person's request for a visit. This was unacceptable, and Mr. Pack made sure this would not occur in Restored. Any staff member who became part of Church Administration, Personal Correspondence, or Mail Processing understood the need to respond to *all* inquiries within 24 hours.

In daily mail meetings, staff would assemble incoming emails and hardcopy mail, and a designated *group* would discuss each inquiry and appropriate responses.

Mr. Pack used these meetings as an opportunity to teach staff and ministers how to respond to many different types of inquiries. He sought to pass along his decades of pastoral training, including up to 25,000 personal visits, through these crucial meetings. Within a couple of years, the three departments responsible for handling inquiries had produced hundreds of form letters and responses—boiler plates—that could be used to speed up the request process.

**Literature Requests:** A specialized mailing department was created to handle distribution of scores of books, booklets, articles and a host of other items that would be produced later.

A system was implemented that enabled literature to be *mailed* within 24 hours. Staff can recall many times that a request would arrive at 4:00 p.m., and within an hour, a box would be full of literature, a label printed, postage applied and the package mailed by the post office deadline of 5:00 p.m. Headquarters still receives comments that its response time is *much* faster than that of any other organization!

A variety of literature packets were specifically tailored to benefit those learning the truth for the first time, as well as

those with a Worldwide Church of God background. These many specialized packages carried names, and several of each are kept on hand for short-notice mailing.

**Databases and Files:** Mr. Pack also emphasized the importance of never allowing a single person to be overlooked due to inefficient processes. To achieve this end, he oversaw the building of databases for all inquiries, members, co-workers, donors, etc. Paper files on each individual were also maintained. A constant theme of Mr. Pack is that “not one” person should ever be overlooked because of inefficient and sloppy processes.

**In-house Printing:** The advent of digital printing allowed Restored to eventually produce nearly all its literature “in house,” and at a price significantly lower than that of large commercial print shops. Besides cost efficiency, this allows constant close monitoring of the material’s quality, impossible with an outside printer.

While it started quite small, with a single black-and-white printer, Restored’s print shop now consists of nearly a dozen specialized print-related machines, including a high-speed binder, a three-sided trimmer, a one-knife trimmer and several digital printers. As mentioned, it is a highly sophisticated operation of its own. The result is that any piece of literature can be “built” on demand within a matter of minutes—or seconds—and sent anywhere in the world.

**Departments:** Though consisting of only a handful of employees in the early years, the staff managed to accomplish tasks both large and small as a team—and quickly. Eventually a number of departments were formed, the earliest of which were Editorial & Art, Church Administration, Personal Correspondence, Business & Accounting, and Information Services.

With all this in place, Mr. Pack was led to envision the Work moving to the next level.

## *The Work Transforms*

The years 2002 and 2003 saw the Work take a number of large steps forward. From the outset of Restored, Mr. Pack anticipated producing a magazine equivalent to *The Plain Truth* as it existed in the early to mid-1980s.

This “flagship” magazine had been a critical part of the Work under Mr. Armstrong from the beginning. It had proclaimed the gospel of the kingdom of God and announced the warning message to modern Israel. It also served as a door to more detailed books and booklets for those whose minds were being opened to the truth. A similar magazine—and of the same quality—was needed.

With more staff in place and many booklets completed, its time had come. Mr. Pack announced a plan in his August 2002 *Member/Co-Worker Letter*, with the first issue to be published in January 2003:

“I can tell you that we have already begun to hold meetings to plan the content, layout and printing of our first issue of *The Real Truth* magazine. We want to get an early head start on this large new undertaking for Restored. As we do this, we are also looking

at the content of issues for the entire year of 2003. Everything remains on schedule for a first-week-in-January mailing of our inaugural issue. As you can see from this letter (and from what we will give you at the Feast), we are still very much ‘on track and on time’ toward the launch of everything we hope to do at the turn of the year.”

In the book *The Work of God – Its Final Chapter!* Mr. Pack explains why this magazine is necessary:

“We made the decision in late 2001 to work toward a four-color, *Plain Truth*-style magazine. We stayed on track and all of the necessary editorial staff and writers fell into place to launch this ‘flagship’ magazine by January 2003. Called *The Real Truth*, this monthly publication reflects the quality of *The Plain Truth*. It educates mankind about *why* society is fast mirroring Sodom and Gomorrah. It explains *why* violent crime is exploding—*why* the breakdown of character and moral decay around the world—*why* America is plagued with evils of every kind—*why* the United States and Britain are declining in power and prestige, while the European Union continues to rise—*why* world peace has been so elusive. It explains *why* man cannot solve his political, moral, social, economic, criminal, educational, personal and *spiritual* problems.

“Like its predecessor, *The Real Truth* magazine offers humanity its only hope!

“With the arrival of this magazine, and our websites, we are spreading the good news of the kingdom of God to the world, and God’s warning to modern Israel—backed by the *fullness* of His restored truths—as a witness. *The Real Truth* is currently read throughout the Israelite nations of the United States,

Canada, Britain, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand...It is now also read by any number of the world's heads of state, among other leaders. Realize that it made much more sense to publish this magazine *after* we finished all of the other necessary materials to be able to properly follow through and *teach* all those who became interested through its message.”

First published on a bi-monthly basis, it would later begin a 10-issue-per-year production cycle. *The Real Truth*<sup>™</sup> was a huge undertaking, even with more staff in place. For the next several years, it would have a dramatic impact on workload, beyond any other single project. Staff members from every department were involved in brainstorming, article development, writing, multiple rounds of editing, illustrating articles, as well as cover selection and preparation. Naturally, Mr. Pack was deeply involved in the process, also writing a “Personal” for each issue.

### **Newsstand Distribution Program**

Coinciding with the launch of *The Real Truth* magazine was the Newsstand Distribution Program (NDP). Similar to the WCG's program, the NDP served a vital role in the First Commission. Brethren around the world participated in distributing free *Real Truth* brochures in retail outlets, libraries, office reception areas and other locations.

Mr. Pack described the program in the same August 2002 letter:

“The subject of *The Real Truth* leads me to a critically important announcement that has been timed with this letter. As all of you know by now, our ability to grow our *Real Truth* subscription list is directly tied to developing a magazine cardholder, brochure and booklet distribution program around the world—

wherever we have brethren who are willing to be ‘foot soldiers’ in our commission to finish the Work.

“I cannot overstate how necessary it is that as many of our brethren as possible *find a way* to distribute magazines in the cities where you live.

“It is incumbent on headquarters to train all who want to serve God’s Work in this way. We intend to do this. We are currently preparing a thorough *Newsstand Distribution Program Manual* (NDP) that my WCG experience and development of their manual trained me to now do, once again. We are blessed to have several staff members who have a passion for this integral part of what was the Work when Mr. Armstrong was alive. Incidentally, as with all God’s true doctrines, the false leaders of the WCG denigrated and eventually destroyed this program along with all the other policies and administrative decisions that ‘worked’ as Mr. Armstrong guided us to do the Work.

“This manual will answer the *who, what, why, where, when* and *how much* of the NDP. It will answer all of the pertinent questions that presented themselves during the years that this program existed. This manual will be ready for and distributed at the Feast...”

“Christ told His disciples that they would not finish going over the cities of Israel ‘before the Son of man come.’ This prophecy applies to us—it is also for our time! We have to reach the cities of Israel with the Ezekiel Warning and the gospel of the kingdom of God. By the time this program begins, the entirety of God’s doctrines will be available for all those who pick up *The Real Truth* magazine to be able to request.

“For the most part, at least at this time—and maybe for a long time—new growth in your part of the world will in part be directly dependent on whether and how you participate in our upcoming distribution program. As we do this, our collective light will shine

in a powerful way to all those in the splinters who are waiting to see if we truly intend to do the Work in ways other than the Internet. Not only will they see and hear of our direct efforts to do God’s Work, but they will recognize that most in the large splinters lack the *zeal* that Restored members demonstrate!

“Once again, I cannot overstate the importance of how this could impact the growth of The Restored Church of God—both with members from the world and from the splinters who witness our determined example to be found ‘so doing’ (Matt. 24:46).”

The time was always going to come when Mr. Pack would want this program in place.

“The original Newsstand Distribution Program felt the destroyer’s blade along with everything else. I had seen and felt in a personal way the end of the program while in New York City—just after witnessing it reach the near pinnacle of what it could accomplish. I never thought that I would witness—and personally participate in—its revival.

“The moment we were able to bring back this program, we did. But we did it in a way that was both more efficient and cost effective, while at the same time as effective as ever—through 8.5x11-inch folded, single-page brochures. These are much lighter in weight, and therefore much easier for anyone to be able to participate who wishes to.

“But more participants are always needed.”

### **A Second Website**

With the arrival of *The Real Truth* magazine came the need to produce another website: *realtruthmag.org*, which later became *realtruth.org*.

This would allow millions of people worldwide to access all articles instantly, 24 hours per day, seven days per week—with the goal of directing readers to deeper material on *rcg.org*. Jesus’ disciples are to be “fishers of men,” and the *realtruth.org* provided an effective means of casting “bait” to those seeking answers.

The website has steadily grown in size and scope since its launch, and was completely redesigned in April of 2009, taking its place among the world’s foremost news websites.

### **Beginning to Broadcast**

With the writing of detailed and complicated literature—including lengthy books—still progressing in the background, the next challenge to be undertaken was an Internet audio broadcast.

As the project began, Mr. Pack commented to the Church in a December 2, 2002 letter about this new development—*The World to Come*<sup>™</sup> audio broadcast—occurring early in the year 2003:

“I have never before done radio broadcasts (webcasting). I ask that all of you fervently pray about this matter, because it is something that I must learn to do. Mr. Armstrong had to learn it and so must I. I plan to listen to many of his broadcasts before doing any of my own. For this reason alone, the next several weeks will be unbelievably busy. The staff also must learn the technical precision necessary to produce quality messages. We must produce lead-ins and lead-outs, and possibly include some kind of music like Mr. Armstrong used. We have much to decide and learn.”

In the January 2003 *Member/Co-Worker Letter*, another update was given:

“Most of Thursday and Friday of this week will be spent reviewing old radio broadcasts and telecasts of Mr. Armstrong. Just as I need to learn to write effective Personals, I need to learn to webcast effectively. It is our intention to produce the first one or two programs by the end of next week. This will allow us to post them on the new website by our January 20th kick-off date. Some may wonder how fast I will produce them. I am wondering the same thing! God will guide me but, again, this is largely uncharted water for me (I have done some telecasts). I will certainly need your prayers because I know this is a grave responsibility that God has given me to do. I do not take it lightly!”

The naming of the program, called *The World to Come*, was its own inspiring story. Mr. Pack wrote this to the Church in his May 6, 2004 *Member/Co-Worker Letter*.

“It occurred to me recently that I should relate something inspiring that I discovered about the title of our broadcast—*The World to Come*. Early last year, we wrestled for some time with what name would be appropriate for our program, finally settling on this one. What did not occur to me were either of the two verses, Hebrews 2:5 and Hebrews 6:5, which, among several others, both speak of ‘the world to come.’ May I encourage all of you to read these passages.

“I was tremendously inspired to think that GOD surely thought of what we did not, when this name was chosen. We basically selected the name we did because it was the closest thing to *The World Tomorrow* that we could choose and be comfortable with. With so many who are ill and others having died, in the Church and in the world, coupled with the awfulness of this world, I find myself more often thinking of ‘the world to

come.’ Are we all yearning to see mankind’s allotted 6,000 years come to an end? Are we all praying ‘Thy kingdom come’ as often as we should?”

By the end of the first year, 77 broadcasts had been produced, addressing topics in series such as “What Is the True Gospel,” “Where Is the True Church?” “World Peace in Our Time,” and “Have We Entered the Last Days?” among others. These have served to introduce the truths of God to many thousands of people. There are now 112 audio broadcasts available on *realtruth.org*. (Many more programs would be produced, but a major step forward for *The World to Come* occurred in the fall of 2008. More on this later.)

### **Tools for the Church’s Youth**

As described in Volume One of this biography, throughout Mr. Pack’s ministry, an emphasis was placed on helping members’ children. He had been active in the Y.E.S. (Youth Educational Services) and Y.O.U. (Youth Opportunities United) programs in the Worldwide Church of God, as well as at S.E.P. (Summer Educational Program) camps during certain years. He also taught swimming again in 1995 at the Global Church’s youth camp in Missouri.

Special attention *had* to be given both to children of all ages and to their parents. Otherwise young people would inevitably succumb to the destructive pulls of the world around them.

In his April 2, 2002 *Member/Co-Worker Letter*, Mr. Pack informed the Restored membership of plans to begin producing literature for God’s youth:

“As the continuing extension of Mr. Armstrong’s Elijah fulfillment and ministry, we must be very careful to not forget or neglect the prophecy of ‘the heart of the fathers shall be turned to the children and the heart of the

children to their fathers' (Mal. 4:5-6). This means we must have a powerful childrearing booklet in place soon. It will be titled *Train Up Your Children* [later renamed *Train Your Children God's Way*], from Proverbs 22:6, and you should have it in your hands sometime in June. This will be followed by the first in a series of new Bible Story books, with the first to appear before the Feast.

"We are also determined to consider tackling Youth Bible Lessons sometime next year [2003]. But this is a big project for such a little organization to bite off. And whatever we do must reflect the kind of quality that Mr. Armstrong taught us. Once again, recognize that we are trying to do what nobody else seems willing to even attempt—let alone do."

The Restored Church of God would soon begin a "world-class" magazine for teenagers similar to those produced in the WCG in the early 1980s, as well as follow-through on the previously announced project of the *Children's Bible Lessons* (CBLs), which mirrored the "Y.E.S." lessons produced in the Worldwide Church of God.

Mr. Pack reported the following to members and co-workers in his regular July 2002 letter:

"At this point, I should explain that the next magazine we will mail to you will be sent August 1, 2003, and will be the first edition of our new magazine, *Ambassador Youth*. Like its counterpart *Youth 79...80...81*, etc., this magazine will fill a void in understanding, lost to the vast majority of young people and teenagers today. It will be filled with vital articles, explaining the truth of a host of different topics so necessary for God's youth to understand. We are very pleased that God inspired this title, because it upholds principles taught at Ambassador College and Imperial Schools when the Church was on track.

“About forty-five to sixty days later, prior to the Feast, we will be mailing the first lesson (Kindergarten through 6th Grade) of our youth lessons. I will have more to say about both of these items in the future. Suffice to say at this point that the true extension of the Elijah ministry must continue striving to ‘turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the children to the fathers’ (Mal. 4:5-6), as we all once understood this commission.”

A total of 84 lessons are now in place in the CBL series—and at the seven levels announced. From the moment a child in Restored enters kindergarten, he or she can look forward to receiving one lesson each month until finishing sixth grade, including two special Holy Day lessons each year.

Each lesson brings biblical stories and personalities to life, and makes learning about God and His Way fun and exciting. In addition to those received by families in Restored, tens of thousands of lessons are downloaded each month from the website by parents outside the Church.

“Volume One of the biography described my involvement in developing the Worldwide Church of God Y.E.S. program. Much like resurrecting the Newsstand Distribution Program, the Y.E.S. program, as well as one for teenagers, would be things whose time would come. While the splinters would start summer camps right away because they were less work, we prepared literature as soon as we could, knowing that a brief annual summer camp, however important, was merely icing on the cake.”

### **Miracles and Healings**

Alongside the increasing productivity of the Work, other memorable—and miraculous—events were occurring in the

Church. The Bible reveals that where there is the Body of Christ, there is authority—and miracles. The Restored Church of God would go on to be its own “story of miracles.”

For instance, in late December of 2002, Headquarters received an emergency email from the husband and father of a family far from Headquarters. The family had just received the Church’s Welcome Packet two weeks before and was in the process of examining the contents. Then something went wrong.

The father realized that his daughter, around age 14, had become possessed by several demons. The ordeal lasted slightly over a week. The entire family was deprived of sleep during this difficult episode.

When Headquarters first received the request for help, Mr. Pack commented that when such an emergency arose in WCG, a local minister was always within range to personally visit and deal with it. The Restored Church of God did not have that option at the time.

Following the pattern found in Acts 19:11-12, the child’s father requested an anointed cloth for his daughter, and Mr. Pack and the staff fervently prayed for God’s intervention. The cloth was sent via the fastest method available and was scheduled to arrive in two to three days. As the family waited for the cloth, they pleaded for more prayers, as the demonic harassment became more hostile.

Headquarters advised the parents not to converse with the daughter as long as these spirits (three were apparently present) had complete control of her. The father described some of the prior discussion he had with the demons before receiving this counsel.

He told the demons that he was now in the true Church of God, which followed the full truth, restored by God through His servant, Mr. Armstrong, and that God would deliver the family. The spirits knew who Mr. Armstrong was, cursing him and gloating over his death and the WCG’s abandonment of his teachings.

When the father mentioned that he was now in the Church led by Mr. Pack, the demons loudly cursed him as well and repeatedly stated how intensely they hated Mr. Pack, mentioning no one else.

Those at Headquarters were concerned how the father could apply the cloth when it arrived, since the spirits were violent. The ministry prayed that they would leave when the cloth arrived.

Miraculously, the moment the anointed cloth arrived in their *town*, the demons instantly left the young girl! God had miraculously intervened on behalf of this afflicted family—in the 21st century, as in the first.

### **Record of Healings**

There were miracles of other kinds as well. Another element of Mr. Pack's ministry, before and after the founding of The Restored Church of God, is the number of healings that occurred. CAD kept a formal record.

A member of the Headquarters staff who has been healed of a number of serious illnesses recalls dramatic developments stretching back to his time in the Global Church of God in upstate New York:

“My wife and I were married in 1991. Before this, she was told that we weren't going to be able to have any children. Physicians told her when her fourth child (from a previous marriage) was born that she wasn't going to have any more children. A while afterward, she was experiencing internal discomfort. I'm not sure what it was, but we asked Mr. Pack to anoint her.

“After the anointing in 1995, Mr. Pack said, ‘There you go, you're probably set for six more children.’ In 1996, we took a step back upon learning that she was pregnant with our youngest daughter. The doctors

were saying, ‘You’re going to lose this baby. There is no way you’ll be able to carry her to term.’

“But the pregnancy actually went 41 weeks, and we had another daughter in April 1997.”

In another remarkable intervention, a woman was having severe breathing problems at a high-altitude Feast site in 2004. She had lived with just one functioning lung since she was seven years old—44 years—when the other had collapsed during her childhood due to illness. The woman was anointed on the first day of the Feast and the non-functioning lung re-inflated—*on the spot!* She went immediately to the mirror just to observe her entire chest heaving with each breath. This story spread far and wide.

But there are many such accounts, some equally dramatic. A member of the Headquarters congregation sent this letter three weeks after being diagnosed with bone cancer, one of the most painful and lethal forms of cancer:

“Dear brethren from far and near: Thank you for your many cards and letters. A very special thanks for your many prayers for they have reached God and He has answered them. I can report that all my blood tests and extensive X-rays have turned out to be negative—no bone cancer, no cancer found any place in my body. Always know how important your prayers are!”

The Restored Church of God seems to regularly hear announcements such as these during Sabbath services:

“A local elder at Headquarters sustained a very serious groin injury during his relocation from Georgia. It was described as ‘severe and permanent’ by physicians, and visible evidence of the injury remained for years afterward. Following a pre-Passover fast this year, he awoke from a night’s sleep and soon realized

that he had been completely healed—that all signs of the injury were totally gone!

“We are very inspired by this example of God keeping His promises to His people.

“You may recall that in February we announced a prayer request for Mrs. ———. She was diagnosed with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), a serious lung condition with no known cure. She received an anointed cloth and noticed significant improvement within three days. X-rays then confirmed that her lungs were clear of any disease!”

Members of Restored have been completely healed of the after-effects of stroke—cancer of the kidney, bladder, skin, prostate, bone marrow, bowel and blood—a torn meniscus in the knee—dangerous swelling of the throat—disc injuries in the cervical, thoracic and lumbar spine, and many other injuries and illnesses.

### **Miracles of Providence and Protection**

One morning in the summer of 2004, in the course of Mr. Pack’s prayers, he asked God for a sizeable and very specific sum of funds so that a crucial step in the Work could be accomplished.

“One morning, I prayed a very specific prayer, one unlike any time before in my life, but one mirroring stories in Mr. Armstrong’s *Autobiography*.

“The Work had an immediate need for \$10,000. I do not remember the reason, but could never forget the amount. In over five years time, we had had only one check arrive that was over \$5,000 in size, and that was in late 2000. We were a Church of relatively small incomes, and relatively small tithe checks. I asked God fervently in a special long prayer for special

intervention because we urgently needed \$10,000. About the time of this prayer, the morning mail was probably being opened because I came in late due to extra time in prayer.

“Our treasurer immediately caught me and took me aside to report that we had just received a single check for \$10,008! I was stupefied—and God had even thrown in an extra \$8, perhaps just because He has a sense of humor.

“What mathematician could calculate the odds in the timing of such an event—and when it was occurring in the sixth year of an organization that had never experienced any amount close to it?”

Similar events happened multiple times, helping the staff learn to rely more fully on God. Another letter from a member living in the United States’ “Tornado Alley” is an example of a recurring blessing in Restored—God’s direct protection from dangers such as severe weather:

“Sirens were going off all around where I work and I was actually tracking the first tornado heading directly for my home...I was watching the tornado on Doppler radar and it was in a direct path to my home. I got a sick feeling in my stomach...and said a quick silent prayer and left it in God’s hands...

“The tornado was moving northeast directly toward where I live. At a certain point it hit the ground and was traveling in a straight line right toward my subdivision. About a mile away from my house, it was tearing up power lines. Then it lifted up over the subdivision, and a few miles after passing my home, it landed again and destroyed six homes and caused other damage to commercial areas...

“I went to my house the next day...and the house next door to my house had their fence (front and back)

destroyed. The amazing part is that we share the same fence to separate the yards, and not one slat of the wooden fence that we share was damaged, but both his front and back fence were blown down!”

### **Losing a Close Friend**

While inspiring news has been plentiful since the beginning of The Restored Church of God, its development—and Mr. Pack’s time as its leader—have also been marked by pivotal trials. Some were sore.

Recall that only a few ministers joined Restored in its early years. One of these men was a local church elder from Ontario, Canada, Mr. Peter Denee. As the regional pastor for the Northeast in the Global Church of God, Mr. Pack had known Mr. Denee over the years. Through 1998 and 1999, Mr. Denee closely followed events in the collapsing Global Church of God. He chose to come with Restored immediately upon its founding.

Peter Denee had a unique background, having immigrated to Canada from the Netherlands before starting a greenhouse business that eventually would sell many millions of plants each year.

As Restored grew, Mr. Pack and Mr. Denee built a very close relationship. Mr. Denee also had many years of Church experience, having been called to the truth in the early 1970s.

The men talked and met often. In 2002, Mr. Denee was instrumental in producing the Church’s Festival Planning Manual, as well as assisting in the *Real Truth* Newsstand Program.

In early 2003, Mr. Denee’s health suddenly began to deteriorate. At first, doctors believed it was a bout of shingles. But it was soon learned that the diagnosis was late-stage pancreatic cancer.

After only 33 days battling this disease, Mr. Denee was gone on June 18.

This was a tremendous shock to the Denee family, Mr. Pack and the entire Church. This was one of few leaders in the Church at the time. Mr. Pack tried to find a reason God would allow such a man to go to sleep when he seemed so vital to the stability of the Church.

This had an even greater impact on the Restored office because Mr. Denee's son Kevin had recently become seriously interested in Mr. Pack's daughter, Jennifer. The trial hit just as these two families were looking forward to coming together even more closely.

Mr. Pack had given Mr. Denee a pre-release version of "*Anoint Your Eyes*" while he was battling the cancer. The book had such a profound impact on him that he told Mr. Pack he would be ready, if he regained his health, to dedicate all of his time to the Work if needed. He planned to pass the operation of his family business to his two older sons and work full-time in the ministry. His contributions to Restored, and ability to help Mr. Pack, would have been great. Yet God had different plans.

Mr. Pack updated the Church the day of Mr. Denee's death, taking time to reflect:

"As one of the strongest men I have ever known, he was...enormously resolved that his life was fully in God's hands. He was determined not to pursue conventional medical therapies, and told me most directly that he was completely at peace with the possibility of dying. He had squarely faced his mortality and was prepared to accept God's answer. I did not think this would be God's time to take him—that he had yet fully run his course. But I recognized that Mr. Denee had come to grips with the big picture of God at work in his life, and what this could mean for him personally.

"I am sure that God intervened right after our [collective Church] fast—undoubtedly because so

many were seeking His intervention—and ended the struggle that this terrible disease always brings, often for an extended period. I am grateful that Mr. Denee can now be asleep in Christ, yet cognizant that we must press on, fully understanding that we must all continue to ‘seek first the kingdom of God.’

“Only God knows why Richard D. Armstrong died so suddenly in a car wreck at the tender age of 30. God alone knows why James died and Peter lived, within the same account recorded in Acts 12:1-3. Many of God’s greatest servants (John the Baptist, most of the apostles, and so many others) had their lives cut short in ways that must have been difficult for those around them to understand.

“The Bible is seemingly a long litany of what the very greatest of God’s servants were required to endure—and so it is with us. Truly, this is the very core and essence of real Christianity—and we remain the small, walled, fortress city of truth set on a hill.”

Mr. Pack recalled his father’s saying, “Leadership is *lonely*,” from a new perspective.

Eventually, at least a partial understanding of why God had allowed this to happen became clear. This event had forced Mr. Denee’s four children to grow much more quickly in ways they may not have otherwise. As the years passed, all four were given opportunities to serve the Work and the brethren, either at Headquarters or in the field. Two of his sons are in the ministry. His daughter is an accountant at Headquarters.

## *Growing Office*

**H**aving not had time for a vacation since Restored began, Mr. and Mrs. Pack realized in the summer of 2003 that time away was sorely needed. August was chosen.

This would be beneficial in two ways. Besides a respite from a hectic office schedule, whenever Mr. Pack had time outside the office to think, he was often *more* productive. Throughout his ministry, thoughts, ideas and plans poured forth while on the road. The opportunity to get away for a time finally arose.

They decided to drive through the western U.S. and meet their daughter and her fiancé, Mr. Kevin Denee, who had earlier flown to California, to visit with Mr. Pack's brother-in-law and his wife at their home in Montana.

Stopping in Wyoming en route, Mr. Pack had an interesting meeting with a minister who was still in the WCG. This was one of the pastors with whom Mr. Pack had worked closely years before, and the one he most respected. The get-together would be a chance to catch up after 12 years of not seeing each other.

Mr. Pack learned that this man was leading a group—still within the Worldwide Church of God!—that was at-

tempting not to compromise. They had held on to virtually all true biblical doctrines. Mr. Pack took the opportunity to explain what he was doing. After an enjoyable visit, the men parted ways.

Back on the road, Mr. Pack reflected on the visit. *How could anyone in the WCG still be trying to hold to what Mr. Armstrong taught—almost 11 years after the true God had been rejected?* He had heard of such people, but a longtime friend and minister explaining this “church within the WCG” firsthand was eye-opening.

“This was one of the most unusual visits of my life, something completely unexpected. Here was a man who was ministering to approximately 115 people in his scattered area. There were others also still in the WCG who called him from all over the United States. In his early 70s in 2003, the WCG had retired him some years before.

“He and his group were compromising nothing that I could see doctrinally, but they were doing it in the wrong church, and under the wrong government and leaders. He believed tithing was in force, he was very quietly keeping and administering the Sabbath and Holy Days, incredibly, no women were wearing make-up, they did not believe they were born from above, etc., etc., and the group was adamant that Mr. Armstrong was the Elijah who ‘restored all things’—all this from a position *inside* the WCG.

“But there was no way this man or those with him would remotely consider that they should leave the WCG. One of the points that made his thinking most interesting is that all of the splinters disgusted him, and he knew this is not where they should be.

“I have often wondered about this man since. This is because the two evangelists in the WCG who were quietly guiding this band of hold-outs had, in one case,

finally moved to UCG, and in the other case, the man died a year and a half later in late 2004. I cannot help but wonder from whom this group and others like it in the WCG, may still be getting their signals.”

The Packs arrived in Montana and met their daughter and her fiancé. The family traveled into a beautiful area where the Packs’ in-laws, Mr. and Mrs. Carl McNair, had moved after living in California for some time. Staying in the McNairs’ log cabin home, surrounded by scenic mountain views, was a wonderful change of pace, and a chance to enjoy family time.

One evening, Mr. Pack and Mr. McNair, sitting on the front porch after dark surrounded by the sounds of nature, recounted shared memories in the WCG. They discussed some of their most memorable visits. (Mr. McNair’s most exciting visit involved being chased by a man with a shotgun!) They enjoyed each other’s company late into the evening.

The family also traveled with the McNairs to Glacier National Park. Although smoke and wildfires affected some of the stunning landscapes at the time, it was a memorable experience.

Though they were in different organizations, they found after so long that they could still enjoy common ground. Mr. McNair asked many questions about the Work being done in Restored. They enjoyed the time together despite certain differences in understanding.

“One of the great regrets of my life was letting the man who led the Global Church separate me from my brother- and sister-in-law for over four years. We had reconciled in January of 2003 on one of my trips to San Diego. Within about 10 minutes, it was as though four years and two months had never passed.

“So this trip was the second time that we were getting together, this time with my wife, daughter and

son-in-law-to-be. I would see Mr. McNair two more times in the next three months.”

The family said their goodbyes and began the trip home, stopping in Yellowstone National Park, South Dakota’s Badlands and other notable sites such as Custer’s Battlefield and Mount Rushmore.

The Packs also wanted to show their daughter and future son-in-law the former WCG-owned Feast of Tabernacles site in Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin. This was one of three sites the Church had owned years before.

The trip to the site was both nostalgic and sobering. A non-denominational church had moved onto the premises and taken over the main administration building. Mr. Pack and his future son-in-law went inside, only to be met by a barefooted, long-haired, “hippie” preacher, approaching them to push his religion. It was hard to stomach such an episode against the backdrop of a location where thousands of God’s people had once gathered to keep His Feast, including the Packs in 1972, 1973 and 1974.

They drove to the large convention center where services had been held. Mr. Pack reminisced about seeing thousands of cars being parked with help from crews of attendants. He pointed out the imprint of the food stands in the parking lot at which Church members would buy coffee and snacks.

Everything was now rundown. Weeds poked through cracks in the parking lot pavement. The vacant convention hall was in disrepair. The entire premises were overgrown. Mr. Pack reports, ‘It was hard to view.’

Mr. and Mrs. Pack returned to Headquarters revitalized and ready to push forward, full of ideas.

### **Headquarters Expansion**

The years 2002 and 2003 were defined by the Work growing into fuller maturity. Infrastructure was built, literature writ-

ten, programs begun, and the physical office space began to be drastically improved.

Smaller construction projects to create more office space were continually completed in the early years, but the summer of 2003 was the beginning of the first large expansion of the office, or “upfit,” as these were called. Before that time, the office was just over 5,600 square feet. This space had been generally sufficient for a staff of 14, with meeting hall. However, Church Administration and Mail Processing were growing, Youth Services was being formed and the Editorial Department needed more space. A soundproof broadcast studio was also needed to replace a makeshift recording space that would be set up and then dismantled in Mr. Pack’s office.

In his July 2003 *Member/Co-Worker Letter*, he wrote,

“The management here has been absolutely wonderful to The Restored Church of God. They like us and we like them, and we are grateful that God has granted us such favor with them. They have told us that we have virtual ‘carte blanche’ to expand around the second floor, as our growth dictates.

“They first offered this option about a year ago, and an adjacent space of slightly below 800 square feet became a natural step for us at this time. This space will also allow us to have a true conference room, with space for up to twelve men for our very frequent Editorial planning and development meetings, among others.”

Few staff members had much experience in remodeling. This much larger upfit began in September and lasted for months. In fact, many staff at that time recall the day in November, after the project had dragged on, that Mr. Pack said, “Enough is enough! We all have to pull together and put this behind us so there aren’t a host of construction projects going on around us while we are also trying to carry out the Work.”

The team volunteered after hours, and the building's management offered to put in new carpet. The space grew, and each office was redone at the same time. Within weeks, the project was complete.

When a need arose for someone to stand in the gap, pull a team together and get something done, Mr. Pack initially led the way, guiding, organizing and delegating. Of course, as the staff grew in ability and size, he would no longer need to be involved in such projects to the same degree.

### **Elevating the Office**

During every construction project, Mr. Pack stayed involved from a planning perspective.

He wanted to create an office environment with open spaces and common areas. High quality and attention to detail were brought to all aspects of the complex, including furnishings and interior decorating choices. Each office, hallway or foyer had to be pleasant both to work in and view as a guest. Yet, with careful planning, this could always be done for a relative low cost.

Older "utilitarian" plastic doors were replaced with new ones made of beautiful oak. Gray metal desks attached to walls with brackets gave way to more attractive freestanding desks.

Experienced craftsmen in the Church were brought in to design and build beautiful wood paneling and trim for rooms such as the boardroom. However, most other work was done by staff and local members. Apart from carpeting and electrical work, all was accomplished through volunteer labor—meaning that the renovations were done for the cost of materials!

The office gradually became an elegant, warm and welcoming environment—much like the atmosphere of Ambassador College. This was done for an overarching reason—a higher quality atmosphere would lead to higher

quality products, and an elevated mindset, from those working in it.

As more people were hired, the office would expand several more times. Mr. Pack wrote this in his March 31, 2005 *Member/Co-Worker Letter*:

“Brethren, we are very grateful for the favor that God has granted us with the owners of the building that we occupy, as they have now gently moved six different tenants, *including themselves*, to suit our expanding needs—while keeping the largest suite on the floor open for over a year without offering a lease to anyone—because they knew that eventually we would need that space as well for our expanding Mailing Department. That final move will probably be sometime just before or after the Feast. Even before this occurs, however, because we will be the only tenant on the floor...we will soon be permitted to ‘key’ the elevator and the stairwells, making the second floor completely private, and almost as though it were our own building...”

“Speaking once again of the building owners...all of what has been occurring here has been absolutely incredible to observe, as God’s favor with these people accompanied by complicated logistics has continually worked out now for years! May none of us ever forget this kind of ‘on-going, tumbling miracle,’ evidencing God’s Hand at every turn, seen and unseen.”

Mr. Pack recently added this:

“The savings to the Work during these upfits was incalculable. All labor costs essentially went away. Because we were tax-exempt, we could buy construction materials without the sales tax, and often for a discount. In addition, the landlords always

paid for the new carpet. The result was ultimately a beautiful complex of over 16,000 feet (on two floors) for the cost of peanuts.”

### **More Books Completed**

Mr. Pack’s original plan was to finish rewriting all Mr. Armstrong’s literature, as well as others that the WCG had produced while on track, by the end of 2002. This was when regular production of *The Real Truth* magazine began, in addition to broadcasts and other large projects.

However, as the Work became ever more dynamic, many projects were in progress at once. His schedule was increasingly full by the time 2003 arrived, and a few very weighty books still lay ahead.

Time had to be set aside to finish these (all while writing and expanding books written for those in the splinters). This was an incredibly difficult and time-consuming process. However, with more staff members coming aboard, Mr. Pack pulled together teams that would assist him in completing them.

The benchmark book *America and Britain in Prophecy* was written in early 2003. Mr. Pack was determined to include all elements covered in Mr. Armstrong’s version, in addition to adding updated statistics. This took months, but was eventually completed.

Another staff writer undertook writing much of a biography about Mr. Armstrong, titled *Herbert W. Armstrong – His Life in Proper Perspective*. This involved many man hours, but Mr. Pack was grateful that he did not have to write all of it himself.

A full book on the trinity would also be produced. (The Worldwide Church of God had only produced a small booklet on this subject, produced by a team of writers.) Mr. Pack gathered another sizeable editorial team to complete a portion of the research. This very complex, more technical book

was finished in March of 2005, leaving just one more yet to be rewritten.

### **Old Friends, Different Circumstances**

In the summer of 2003, Mr. and Mrs. Pack also had a chance to interact with many ministers in the largest splinter, the United Church of God (UCG).

Mrs. Pack's other sister, Barbara, is married to Mr. Gary Antion, a minister at United's "home office" in Cincinnati. Several times, the Packs traveled south to the other end of Ohio to spend time with them. Each trip provided an opportunity to revisit memories, discuss developments in Restored and UCG, and exchange family news.

That year Mr. and Mrs. Pack attended the Antions' surprise anniversary party. This was also a surprise occasion to greet ministers working at UCG's office, some of whom were old friends from the 1960s, 70s and 80s in the Worldwide Church of God.

During this visit, Mr. Pack was able to talk to the leading man within that organization. The conversation took interesting turns. In regard to Church government, this man offered that as soon as God revealed who should lead the Church as Mr. Armstrong had, he and others would do away with their current form of government and follow him.

The discussion also turned to Restored and the Work being done there. As was usually the case, when someone learned about the Church's productivity, he was taken aback. The conversation moved on, and the evening came to a close.

"I found myself sitting beside a man I had not seen for about 15 years. He is a very kind man, and was a friend, not a close one, but a friend, of years past. This man was at that time the president of UCG, and had been for about one year. He asked me one question after another about Restored.

“I told him that I knew he was the UCG president, and then asked how long his term had to go. His exact words were very close to ‘I have been president for one year, and have two more to go—if they will have me. Dave, our government does not work, and we all know that. But we only created it to serve for the interim—until God showed us the man that we were all supposed to follow. We are waiting for that man.’

“He then asked me how many books and booklets we had. I told him it was approaching 100. He was very surprised and said, ‘We only have about 30, and we are twice as old as Restored is (and he could have added *many times larger*).’

“Two years later the United Council would vote this fine and decent man from office in favor of the man who had replaced me in Akron in 1993.

“I know that most men in the other groups simply do not understand the size and scope of the Work of The Restored Church of God. I can only wonder for how many it would make a difference if they could just *know* what God is doing here.

“This former UCG president has become to me the face of this question.”

Traveling home, Mr. Pack marveled at the fact that many were *saying* they would follow one man if God identified him. But he noted, sadly, that many—in fact most—were not looking for the correct signs. Mr. Pack reflected after the event in the previously quoted July *Member Letter*:

“After a recent visit to see family, which found my wife and me suddenly in the presence of most of the leaders of the largest splinter, I am more thankful than ever for what we have. I continually hear of division in other groups, and never get over the sadness of

watching so many endure and tolerate practices and beliefs we would never have considered acceptable when Mr. Armstrong was alive and the whole Church was on track, walking together toward the kingdom.

“At the end of this visit, an evangelist (and old friend) with this group walked over to me and others standing nearby and said ‘how wonderful it will be when we are all together in the kingdom of God.’ While I may have wished to hand him ‘*Anoint Your Eyes*,’ it was not possible or the right occasion—and I was left only able to share his hope.

“I was pleased that I could personally tell all these senior ministers, in significant detail, what we are doing in The Restored Church of God. Of course, they were surprised, but were very interested in hearing about our literature. While we departed with hugs and affection, and the knowledge that we are brothers in Christ, I was still saddened by the overall state of division among God’s people, which has come to mirror the world.”

### **A Wedding in the Family**

November 2003 brought a most happy occasion to the Pack household. Their youngest child and daughter, Jennifer, got married.

“Both of our sons, almost six and eight years older, respectively, had married years before. Now the ‘baby’ was getting married. The biography has explained that this was to a Dutch Canadian—Kevin Denee. Kevin had been working in our office for some months.

“This was the third of our children whose wedding I was asked to perform. No father-in-law ever gained a more terrific son-in-law, and that is probably all I

need say, other than how much I wish that his father, my best friend, had been there to see the moment. Just recently their first child came—a son. I had talked with Peter Denee just before his death about what it would be like to have a little grandson running back and forth between grandpas.

“One can suppose or speculate how this could still possibly happen in the kingdom. It will be interesting to see how God resolves such things.”

### **Mr. Carl McNair Finishes His Course**

Mr. and Mrs. Pack received unexpected, and very sobering news in March of 2004. Mr. Carl McNair had just learned that he had advanced bone cancer—the reason for a lingering illness that had lasted since almost immediately after coming to Wadsworth for the wedding. He was in much pain, and doctors saw a bleak prognosis.

A brother-in-law, a close friend, and an early mentor was now fighting for his life. At one point, Mr. Pack had a long discussion with Mr. McNair, doing his best to encourage him during this trying time. Mr. McNair had firmly determined that he was going to fight the disease by going to a clinic in Mexico, just days before this became impossible.

Sadly, within a few months, Mr. McNair died, with all of his family by his side. Cancer had once again struck. It was another traumatic experience for the Packs. Mr. Pack wrote in the April 2004 *Member/Co-Worker Letter*,

“It has been said that you pick your friends, but inherit your in-laws. Mr. McNair is an in-law that I would have been happy to pick any day. His example and ministry have had more effect on my ministry, over the almost thirty-three years that we have been brothers-in-law, than probably anyone other than Mr.

Armstrong. Like Mr. Peter Denee, it is hard to imagine not having him here.”

The Packs and their daughter and son-in-law drove to Arkansas for the funeral. It was the first time that many distant relatives had seen each other in many years. The following is from the May 2004 *Member/Co-Worker Letter*:

“We returned a week ago from Mr. Carl McNair’s funeral in Arkansas...I will just state here that it was a ‘bittersweet’ experience. The bitter part is obvious, but the sweet part was seeing so many people we had not seen for years, including nieces, nephews and other extended family.

“Also, a considerable number of ministers from each of the major groups were present, and virtually all of them were very cordial to my wife and me. Some rather surprising things were said, and some invitations were extended to pursue dialogue further than could occur in such circumstances.

“Please do not take this further than I intend it, but at least take note that a lot more people are watching us, and are impressed by what is being accomplished here, than we may have thought. Of that I am sure. But it was important, and indeed encouraging, to see how I was treated by some there in the Living Church of God.”

### **Interacting with “Giants” of the Past**

Mr. Pack had a number of opportunities through the early years of Restored to interact and correspond with high-profile leaders and ministers in the splinters and slivers.

Over the years, it was hoped that some senior men would eventually come with Restored and assist in rebuilding the Work. However, after years of waiting, this had not hap-

pened. Each man he talked to had pet doctrinal ideas (usually many) and administrative differences in “how things should be done.” And again, he found that some senior men had *completely forgotten* some of Mr. Armstrong’s most fundamental teachings. Mr. Pack vividly recalls a conversation with a senior man about basic doctrines the man had completely forgotten. These conversations happened on more than one occasion.

So many of the “name brands” had simply taken on a different mindset during the apostasy and afterward.

In addition, throughout these years, Mr. Pack saw many of the “veterans” dying. Those who were in the Work in the WCG for decades were now in their later years. One by one, these men were disappearing.

Through these years, in keeping with a shepherd’s mindset, Mr. Pack maintained hope that some of these senior men would wake up and regain a love for the full restored truth. The hope still lingers.

“On one occasion, a senior evangelist who had once headed the GCG remnant carefully explored coming with Restored. He had once been very, very strong in doctrine. He read a lot of our literature. The moment of truth—what he would do—came. He wanted me to admit that Restored was also a splinter—but that it was the ‘best’ splinter, and that is why he wished to join us. He believed the Body of Christ was now all split up. He was adamant that Restored was the place to be, but only if I would say we were ‘a’ true Church (the best one!), not ‘the’ true Church. Nothing could move him.

“The man also wanted the right to disagree with me—but promised it would be ‘rare.’ I could not get him to understand what it would do to the Church if this were permitted. Again, nothing could move him.

“Finally, this man *literally* could not remember the Ezekiel warning. I had to tell him several times what

it was in slow, careful terms. He had no recollection of Mr. Armstrong using the term—and yet he was ordained an evangelist in 1952.

“Such lessons for me—and so important for all.”

### **The Staff Transitions**

All through this time of the Work coming of age—rebuilding, reorganizing, planning, implementing, producing, and more—Headquarters still faced occasional setbacks. Despite the exhilaration most employees felt, one here and one there lost sight of the big picture through early 2005, almost always choosing to leave the Church when leaving the office. Since that time, the staff has roughly *tripled*, and the current unity is hard to describe.

Mr. Pack knew that during these exciting times there would still be occasional trials and tests. He also knew, having been with God’s people for decades, and having watched Headquarters from afar during that time, that some would leave the office and the Church. Those in this category were simply failing the tests that life brings.

Although only a few left, it did create the need to always be flexible. Mr. Pack had to adjust duties on very short notice when necessary. These few left at different times, somewhat diminishing any injury to the Work.

“Each time a staff member left it was an adjustment, corporately and personally. The shepherd in me always hoped that I could help the early people who left see the folly of their decision.

“I would point out the size and scope, and growth rate, of the Work—that we alone upheld the full truth—that we had a unique emphasis on quality—that we alone were actively warning the great nations of Israel—that we alone understood God’s government, as well as who and what and all that the true Church

is—that we had the most literature, and best quality. I would watch a given person look at me quizzically, completely unable to grasp all that from which they were walking away—in some cases, because of the apostasy, were leaving for the *second time*.”

### Recollections

Despite the occasional setback, 2002 through 2005 was an exciting time. The staff that experienced it considers it invaluable. It was a time of growth, advancement, innovation, unification and education.

One person in the office recalls it being a period when the staff learned to capture Mr. Pack’s vision more fully. Another viewed it as faith-building—a time when he saw God fill any and all needs, particularly after someone left. It was a time of nonstop activity, a rollercoaster ride. One member recounts the immense productivity occurring, with new items released every month, and a new booklet coming out every seven to 10 days—and sometimes *twice in a week!*

The staff who weathered the storms learned the very real lesson that Mr. Pack taught from day one at Headquarters: “Don’t confuse Christianity with just doing the Work. Your noses have to be in the Bible. You have to be praying.” The staff was spiritually tried and tested.

Galvanized by trials, God’s Work continued to move forward at a faster pace. The wizened, wiser team grew stronger, following a strong lead, always determining to never give up. Long hours continued to be invested. Departments continued to expand. Job duties were solidified. Policy, procedure, process, protocol and polish were refined. Unity was strengthened.

In so many ways, God’s Work was back—FULL FORCE!

## *Understanding Roles*

**B**y 2005, with sufficient literature in place to respond to most inquiries or requests, Mr. Pack decided to dramatically expand advertising. It was determined that, for some time going forward, the marketing budget would be raised *every* month.

This decision, coupled with other elements falling into place, propelled the Work forward as never before. Its impact began to grow by leaps and bounds.

In 2005, over *3.7 million* pieces of literature and audio messages were distributed through the websites (up from 1.1 million in the previous year).

The Restored Church of God website and *The Real Truth* magazine began to rise in prominence. Mr. Pack often stated during these years that God's Work would become a "50-story building in a town where the tallest other building is only *three* stories" (as is much the case in Wadsworth, location of Restored's Headquarters). He explained to the staff and the Church that Restored would eventually tower over the splinters and slivers, en route to becoming "the biggest impact in religion the world has ever seen." This statement was not mere speculation or wishful thinking, but rather was based

on clear prophecies of the powerful “short Work” (Rom. 9:27-28) that would directly precede Christ’s Return.

Distribution of hardcopy literature was also increasing. The Mail Processing Department responded to literature requests from around the world, sending more packages daily.

Greater numbers from offshoots of the Worldwide Church of God were asking for the *Splinter Explanation Packet*. A number of deacons and ministers from these groups were joining Restored as well. This in turn directly affected—and improved—the Church’s ability to serve larger numbers.

Growth curves skyrocketed, with income climbing, numbers of inquiries rising, and membership steadily growing. Mr. Pack gave the following good news, characteristic of the period, in his regular November 2004 letter:

“Things at Headquarters are doing wonderfully well! God’s blessings are evident all around. We are growing rapidly in all the ways that growth is counted in the Work. We continue to see more and more mail (email and regular mail) almost on a week-to-week basis. This is translating into a little faster growth in the Church than we have seen in any previous years. This growth is then translating into growth in income—all of which translates into the all-important growth of the Work that Mr. Armstrong spoke of so continually throughout his ministry. And, I should add, I am noticing that more and more brethren think and talk on a regular basis about the growth of the Work in the way the whole Church once did when Mr. Armstrong was alive and the Church was on track.”

Seeds of the gospel were being sown, and ever-increasing fruit would result.

### Resolving A Crucial Question

Beginning in the autumn of 2004, specific questions came to the fore regarding the Church. A question was directed to Headquarters: “Who and what is the *Body of Christ*? Who is in it? And who is not?”

It was time to clarify this central, biblical question!

While Mr. Pack had taught about the Body of Christ for decades, he had not yet fully examined and explained all of the implications of this truth in the post-apostasy years. He began an in-depth study, examining each scriptural reference on the subject—and *exactly* what Mr. Armstrong taught.

The study led to a thorough two-part sermon series delivered in October 2004. The Church was given a clear picture of who and what was the Body of Christ—that it was synonymous with God’s one, unified, organized and structured Church and Temple. The terms one true Church, Temple of the Lord and House of God are synonymous.

This subject had personal application to every converted man or woman—one was either inside or outside that Body! He was a branch connected to the vine, or one cut off. Mr. Pack went to great lengths to explain this to the Church, along with those in the splinters who would hear the sermon. He summarized this series with an unmistakable conclusion:

“When one comes back to the Body of Christ, repentance is involved. A recommitment is involved. A rededication is involved, then ultimately a reattachment by a cut-off branch back to the vine; a reattachment, a re-suturing in again, of a cut-off body part back to the Body, and yielding to the Head.

“Now let’s summarize all that you have heard. The churches of the world are led by another ‘Jesus,’ who heads a different and counterfeit ‘body of Christ,’ with a very real and different spirit permeating it. That spirit

is what Paul called in Ephesians 2:2-3 ‘the spirit that now works in the children of disobedience,’ when he was referring there to ‘the prince of the power of the air.’ It’s the same spirit.

“In fact, the spirit of *this* ‘Jesus’—of *that* ‘body of Christ’—*does* move through all the different denominations and organizations of the Protestant world. This different Christ always, in time, appears as the centerpiece of another gospel in the churches that follow that spirit—it always goes that way. There is a very real peril, a very real and grave danger, to those who miss the point of what the last almost three hours have explained to you.

“Now, let me add, nature abhors a vacuum. As the Spirit of truth and the Word of truth—the Holy Spirit—diminishes and decreases in one’s mind, another spirit—the spirit of error—fills that vacuum. One diminishes, the other increases, and with it comes an increase of errors into an endless array of other false doctrines. That’s why false doctrines in the splinters will increase. They *have* to increase! You must see this. Once again, real peril—real danger—exists for those who will not.

“Now grasp these final points: There is *one* true Church. There is *one* organized Body of Christ. There is *one* government in that one Church. There is *one* set of doctrines that came through an apostle. There is *one* true Work of God.

“The splinters are not part of any of that. They are outside God’s government. They are outside God’s Church. They are outside the true doctrines. They are outside the true Work where Christ’s spirit is leading.

“And they are outside the Body of Jesus Christ, losing God’s spirit—unless or until they submit to Christ after hearing their name called and their front

door knocked on, and they anoint their eyes and come back to all that they once had.

“And that means coming to The Restored Church of God.”

### **The Watchman Duty**

Around this same time, Mr. Pack revisited a benchmark understanding revealed to Mr. Armstrong. Later, he would elaborate on it in his crucial book, *The Government of God – Understanding Offices and Duties*:

“A designated ‘watchman’ was to appear before the end of the age to warn the modern nations of Israel. This function began before and during World War II and continued for some decades through Mr. Armstrong. However, since Mr. Armstrong died over 20 years ago, it becomes apparent that another watchman had to be raised up to finish the warning right up to the beginning of the Tribulation (Rom. 9:27-29; Jer. 4:16; Rev. 10:11). Explaining this second and last fulfillment is the purpose of this chapter. Also, this subject is covered in much greater detail in a sermon series referenced at the end of the chapter.

“Before continuing, you must recognize that it was not possible for God to send other previous watchmen to the nations of Israel prior to the twentieth century. This is because the identity of the twelve tribes who comprise these nations today was not revealed until Mr. Armstrong restored this vital key of knowledge to the Church in the 1930s. Coupled with understanding the role of the watchman, this key of knowledge—referred to in the Bible as the ‘key of David’ (Rev. 3:7), the identity of great nations that would be understood by Philadelphia—is what allowed Mr. Armstrong during the Philadelphian era to begin this duty.

### The Briefest Quote

“This section opens with a single sentence from Mr. Armstrong. The vast majority of brethren will not remember it, and in all likelihood most probably never noticed it when they read it previously. For those who still believe the truth it contains, this is perhaps one of the two or three most profound statements that I have ever read from Mr. Armstrong’s pen. I, too, did not initially recognize the weight of what was being said. It sets up all that will follow.

“Read it three times:

“‘God expects the spiritual leader of His people to be His “watchman” (Ezek. 33:7) and to warn the people.’

*Who or What Is the Prophetic Beast?*, p. 2

“The statement is impossible to misunderstand. Like others from Mr. Armstrong, you either believe it or you do not. If you do, it means you must go and find whoever is the man commissioned to fulfill this responsibility. But you will not be able to see the importance of locating the Church that is carrying out this duty until you grasp the nature and magnitude of the task Mr. Armstrong references. Once this extraordinary responsibility is truly understood, it automatically becomes its own powerful motivator and magnet to the person who has been shown it to begin searching for whom it is that God has selected to be the final ‘watchman’ to ‘warn the people’ before calamity strikes those who would not heed.

“See this next point. The above statement is meaningless if you cannot know who the leader of God’s Church is. This means—and we are seeing this

in different ways over and over again—that you must know where the Church and Body of Christ is. That is where the government of God would be in place, and thus where Christ would be directing and empowering His chosen servant to carry out this special responsibility. It goes without saying that whoever this man is, he would have to be clear on these things himself because this is the only way he would be able to know that it is his responsibility to carry out the warning!

“If the appointed leader can know—and he would have to know with absolute certainty—so can you! In fact, for this man to carry out his duty, he would have to have a great many people backing him up. This means that the proof, with all necessary facts and evidence—the fruit!—of whom Christ is using must be available to God’s people. Only then could they be in a position to decide if they are—or are not—going to support this effort.

### **Understanding the Ezekiel Warning**

“We have referenced two elements or components of the Work: preaching, or announcing, the gospel of the kingdom of God to the world and warning the nations descended from ancient Israel.

“The second aspect has largely been forgotten, having fallen into disuse by people who were taught by the apostates to mostly focus on ‘love.’ Only rarely does one any longer hear talk of warning the descendants of Israel of impending war, disease, famine and captivity, if national repentance does not occur. Yet, any discussion of the subject of God’s government would be incomplete without re-explaining this warning as an ongoing and vital part of finishing the true Work of God.

“Mr. Armstrong was absolutely on fire with the duty to warn certain nations, and he continually reminded

God's people that this was an ongoing obligation until the very end. He saw this as the gravest of all responsibilities! In fact, the primary purpose of his book *The United States and Britain in Prophecy* was to first identify and then to detail what is at stake for the Israelite nations of the West if they did not change their ways.

“Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28, often called ‘the blessings and cursings chapters,’ outline all that would happen to Israel—plagues, drought, famine, curses, catastrophes of every sort, and enslavement—in the last days, if she did not continue to obey God. This was why that electrifying book—about what would befall America, Britain, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and the other democratic nations of the West if they did not repent—was the Church’s most often-requested piece of literature for decades. Its message became, or should have become, a driving reality in the life of every member of the Worldwide Church of God.

“I remember this book hit me like a thunderbolt and changed my life forever. Many of you could say the same.

“In this regard, Mr. Armstrong continually reminded the Church of Ezekiel 33:1-9. Speaking of the ‘house of Israel’ in modern times, this passage, and actually the entirety of chapter 33, speaks of one called the ‘watchman’ who ‘sees the sword come’ and chooses to either ‘blow the trumpet’ or ‘blow not the trumpet.’ The context of the chapter includes a specific and strong warning to the watchman of ‘blood’ that would be on his head if he did not warn of what was coming!

“The message to the watchman is most serious!

“I personally tremble at this latter admonition. Do you? Do you realize then that you have to participate in and support the effort?

### The Meaning of 'Watchman'

“As with the different New Testament offices, we need to look at the meaning, in this case, of the Hebrew word translated ‘watchman.’ You will find it to be interesting to the point of fascinating. The word for watchman is *tsaphah*, and it means ‘to lean forward, to peer into the distance, by implication to observe, await – behold, espy, look up (well), wait for, (keep the) watch (-man).’ It is of interest that the word espy means ‘to catch sight of (something distant, partially hidden or obscure); glimpse.’

“This definition becomes a description of a responsibility that involves intense scrutiny—the term ‘to lean forward’ paints a picture of one taking a very serious look at what lies ahead ‘in the distance.’ He is one intently interested in ‘catching sight of’ what is apparently obscured to the view of most or all others.

“The man who is to carry out this role would be one who understands all that this definition includes. He must understand that this involves an enormous undertaking—reaching very diverse nations with a combined population of almost 600 million people throughout many nations and territories. One could scarcely conceive of a more daunting task. This man would then have to have all of the means necessary to be able to effectively carry out this staggering responsibility. God would never require the blood at the watchman’s hand if He did not give this man the wherewithal to fulfill the charge. Carrying out God’s command would also necessarily involve not only enough time in advance to prepare all the tools to do this, but—and see this!—enough time to give all of His people in the scattered organizations

of the seventh era an opportunity to accept or reject personal participation.

“To coin the phrase, you can be assured that I ‘leaned forward’ and ‘peered into’ who held the duty of watchman. Will you do the same?”

### **“30 Reasons” Sermons—Continued Impact**

Another type of seed, that was planted years before, continued to bear fruit during this time. In fact, it had been developing throughout Restored’s existence. While Mr. Pack’s “30 Reasons” sermon series impacted many coming to the Global Church at the time they were given, Mr. Pack would only later learn more about the full impact of these messages.

In Restored, Mr. Pack continually heard from brethren who remembered these sermons. Having now found him years later, many became emotional as they recounted how grateful they were for being helped out of the WCG. As more who remembered the messages and literature from the 1990s came with Restored, it was clear that God had used Mr. Pack in a unique way to help those mired in the Laodicean condition.

Here are some examples of letters received from those who had heard Mr. Pack years earlier:

“I have been associated with the Church of God going back to the late Sixties with the Worldwide Church of God. Like most of us I had some very difficult times in Worldwide after the death of Mr. Armstrong. I was amazed at how many leaders and pastors were willing to teach and preach the distortions being promulgated from headquarters. I had some rather heated discussions with the local leaders of my church area. Finally, friends of mine brought me your ‘30 reasons’ tape and I immediately started attending the Global Church of God. You well know the history

of Global and I ended up attending services with The Living Church of God.”

Another individual wrote:

“In 1993 I had decided that there was no point in staying with the group in Johannesburg because by that time the changes were being actively and openly taught. Some few others had already left and others were looking around to see where to go. So I think it was late 1993 or early 1994 that a friend gave me a copy of your audio tape, 30 Reasons to Follow the Truth. This encouraged me to then formally leave Worldwide after having spoken to my minister as to what I was doing and why.”

And another wrote:

“My name is...I am the daughter of...and we used to attend WCG, Global, Living and United. We attended a Feast of Tabernacles where you spoke and loved your tapes on the 90 reasons. This was one of the last times we heard you speak. But for an accidental finding, we didn’t know where you have been.”

This is a sampling of the many hundreds of people whose lives were positively—and permanently—impacted by the work that Mr. Pack had been used of God to do beginning in 1993.

### **Messenger to Laodicea**

Against this backdrop, Mr. Pack came to grasp more fully that the man chosen to lead God’s Work at the end of the age would need a unique field ministry background.

Most of his pastorates fit a similar profile. In new assignments, he replaced ministers who showed a lack of leadership and who had neglected their congregations. This led to a breakdown of God's government. This environment always produced the same result—a “come as you are” attitude before God. A failure to address Church doctrine and members' conduct resulted in confusion among the brethren, which led to spiritually unsound thinking, and then outright heresy.

Recall that Mr. Pack's ministry in the Global Church of God was largely independent. He primarily personally funded the distribution of his books and sermons. From the beginning, communication with brethren in a variety of splinters was hampered by opposition from Headquarters.

In Mr. Armstrong's case, when he gradually separated from the Sardis era of God's Church, he did not initially intend to do a separate work. He was not consciously acting in an independent fashion. This was just the natural result of caring about the truth and the membership.

Mr. Pack's journey out of the Worldwide Church of God and through six years in the Global Church of God followed a similar path. In retrospect, it was obvious that it had been God's intention for him to slowly separate from the Laodicean groups. This included the Global Church of God, and paralleled Mr. Armstrong's experience with the Church of God, Seventh Day, in that Mr. Pack was not aware of it while it was happening.

Yet he was now!

Only later could the connection be made between Mr. Pack's training in his early ministry when he entered traumatized pastorates, with the later task of working with those emerging from the WCG apostasy, and then after, in its endless offshoots. Great numbers were disenfranchised after Mr. Armstrong's death. During this process, he helped to heal, warn, and resuscitate “wounded” brethren.

It became clear that Mr. Pack had been selected to deliver a specific message from Jesus Christ to the seventh era of God's Church. He also wrote about this responsibility in the book *The Government of God*:

“This special duty...comes straight from just one section of the Bible. Therefore, this means that what you will read is largely above criticism and ‘interpretation,’ at least to those who still believe in the truth of Church eras.

“Virtually every member of the Worldwide Church of God was familiar with the seven ‘messages’ of Revelation 2 and 3. This is still true of most who survived the apostasy, although many of these no longer grasp the absolutely crucial nature of Church eras as they once did. However, most have never stopped long enough to notice specifically to whom the messages were written.

“Mr. Armstrong did not write or speak much about the seven messengers of Revelation. (In fact, I never heard or read his thoughts on this subject until just before he died.) This is at least in part because he did not come to fully understand or focus on his own role as the messenger to the sixth era until the end of his life.

### **Written to Whom?**

“In the book of Revelation, the apostle John recorded the words of Jesus Christ—the Revelator—who presented seven distinct messages to seven different entities. I might ask: Are you familiar with whom or what these are?

“Let's begin an examination of the messages with the first one in Revelation 2:1: ‘Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write; these things says He

that holds the seven stars in His right hand who walks in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks...’ To whom was Christ writing? Do you know? Was it to all of the brethren of the Ephesian era?—or to someone or something else? What does ‘angel’ reference?

“Five more times the messages begin exactly the same: ‘And unto the angel of the church...’ Each time this lead-in is followed by an important element in Christ’s description of who and what He is, followed by the name of a particular city among seven on a mail route in Asia Minor (southwestern Turkey today) that were all to be types of the seven eras of God’s Church through the next over nineteen centuries.

“Get this straight! These are not messages to the actual eras themselves. Each is written to one described as an ‘angel.’

“This requires some additional clarification. Obviously, whoever these ‘angels’ were (we will see them more correctly to be ‘messengers’), they were in some fashion to deliver the messages to the respective eras mentioned—Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea.

### **What Does ‘Angel’ Mean?**

“The Greek word translated ‘angel’ in these seven passages is *aggelos*, pronounced ang’-el-os. It means ‘to bring tidings, a messenger; by implication a pastor, angel, messenger,’ and this word can also mean ‘agent.’ Note that *Vine’s Dictionary* adds to this meaning that it involves ‘one sent.’ So we see that there is no unusual or mysterious meaning hidden in the term.

“It is interesting that these messengers are not designated as bringing either good or bad tidings—

good or bad news. They are seen to simply bring ‘tidings.’ A closer examination of the seven eras reveals three different types of messages are presented to the eras: Smyrna and Philadelphia receive only good news. Ephesus, Pergamos, Thyatira and Sardis receive a mixture of good and bad news. Laodicea is given only bad news, and this becomes the greatest reason every reader should get straight in his mind the truth about messengers to eras.

### **What Mr. Armstrong Taught About Messengers**

“Eventually, Mr. Armstrong did write about the subject of messengers to eras. However, most brethren today would probably not remember that he addressed the subject in *MYSTERY OF THE AGES*. He did, and what he wrote was neither difficult to understand nor extensive.

“This...quote...begins under the subhead ‘Restoration of God’s Truth to Church.’ Here is where his understanding is seen to have opened:

““From the year 1931, exactly 1,900 years (a century of time cycles from the foundation of the Church, this small remnant of the original true Church of God began to take on new life as the Philadelphia era. It had come to the “time of the end.” A new spiritual vitality was infused into it. The time had come for Jesus’ prophecy of Matthew 24:14 to be fulfilled—“this gospel of the kingdom shall be [proclaimed] in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.” Such vital truth that had been lost was gradually revealed and proclaimed.

““This Philadelphia era is described in verses 7 to 13 of Revelation 3. The Sardis era (Rev. 3:1-6) was by

this time spiritually dying and had become impotent in spreading the true gospel of Christ. Indeed they had by this time lost knowledge of the true meaning of that gospel. They knew they were approaching the Second Coming of Christ, but they had no knowledge of what would happen during the thousand years millennium, further than the fact Christ would rule.

“Of the Philadelphia era of God’s true Church we read: “To the angel of the church...” This word angel translated from the Greek *aggelos* means messenger or agent. This is not necessarily always referring to a spirit angel but can refer as well to a human agent. It is possible that God’s principle of duality may apply here. It may apply to an actual spirit-composed angel that has been assigned as an overall agent or helper of this particular era of the Church. Or it may also apply to the human messenger or agent God has raised up to lead this era of his Church.

“At the same time another principle of duality may apply to verses 7-13. It may apply to the Church of this era as a whole, and also it could apply to the human leader God had raised up to this era of his Church.” [Author’s note: The principle described here obviously could not refer to Laodicea and whoever is its “leader” in the same way. Also, Mr. Armstrong’s unique role as the Elijah presents the special circumstances for such possible duality.]

“Continue with verse 8: “I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept My word, and hast not denied My name.”

“This era of the Church was to produce fruit. To this era—or to its human leader—God had set before it an open door. It is recorded in II Corinthians 2:12 and also Acts 14:27 how Christ opened the door for Paul to go into other countries to preach the gospel. This

Church and/or its leader had but little strength. Neither were of great and powerful stature in Satan's world but those of this era were faithful to the Word of God. Though much of the original gospel truth, imparted to the original apostles by Jesus in person, had been lost, it was restored through the Bible to this era of God's Church who were faithful in keeping it.”

*pp. 289-290*

“Could any possibly doubt that Mr. Armstrong was the special messenger to the sixth era—Philadelphia? Who else is even a remote possibility for this assigned designation? It seems most obvious, in fact, that *MYSTERY OF THE AGES* was itself the final summary message to all who would choose to keep themselves in the Philadelphian condition. Anyone who has read this book recognizes that it is a wonderful summary of almost every major and most minor doctrines of the Bible, restored during Mr. Armstrong's ministry. Regarding this role, humility kept Mr. Armstrong from stating emphatically what could, in fact, have been no other way! (However, I have wondered if he was also sent to Sardis. There is no way of knowing.)

“On the other hand, we saw that the messenger to Laodicea could not possibly come from inside an era that is blind—and this problem stands above all others within its appalling and deplorable spiritual condition! So the man carrying this designation would have to be certain of his office. He would have to be certain of his responsibility to warn ‘beyond the perimeter’ of where his authority among God's people ended, meaning still within the jurisdiction of the government of God. This would be similar to the watchman who would warn ‘beyond the perimeter’ of his confines, in this case to the physical nations of Israel, obviously outside the Church.

### **Always Human Instruments**

“All through His plan, God has chosen to work through physical human instruments. While He could have chosen another way to communicate with human beings, He did not. Every office of the New Testament ministry is held by human beings. And every major message that God wanted to communicate to a king of Judah or Israel, or a Gentile king, or either the nation of Judah or Israel, was always sent through flesh—a human being—usually a single person commissioned—charged!—with the responsibility to ‘get the message to Garcia.’

“The point? There has to be someone alive at the end of the age through whom Christ would deliver His message to the final era. Get this straight in your mind! In addition, recognize that in this age, because no one has previously either understood or taught the meaning of Christ’s ‘counsel’ to Laodicea to ‘anoint your eyes,’ someone had to be sent just to explain this, if nothing else.

“You must come to grips with the fact that, as with Mr. Armstrong to the sixth era, there has to be one person—one leader—somewhere on earth today who delivers the message to the seventh era. God had to designate and inspire a man to this task.

“Do not let yourself dismiss this reality, and its relationship to YOU!

“It will be up to the individual to decide whom he believes that Jesus Christ has sent as messenger to warn an era described as ‘wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind and naked.’ If those of this era are blind—and this is what Christ states!—their condition would also reflect the rest of the description. Blindness prevents all there from seeing what needs to be addressed.

### Message From Me?

“It has not been my task to create the message or warning to the seventh era. That is Christ’s job. Mine was to understand my role under His rule, to get out of the way, and to allow the patient, merciful, loving Jesus Christ to explain His message—His instruction—to His people. I did not seek or ask for the job. Like you, I was drafted to be a Christian soldier (II Tim 2:3-4). The appointment came and, as with Paul, ‘necessity was laid upon me’ (I Cor. 9:16). And no other messenger will come. The message is not something I want the splinters to hear through ‘my’ books. In a sense, the messengers are just ‘delivery boys,’ except that they are not bringing newspapers or pizza.

“In a way, the same is true of you if you truly desire the living Christ to work in you. One of the first things you must ‘see’ upon anointing your eyes is what and where is God’s government. Your job is to get your own will out of the way and to let Christ work in your mind. This is the case with every person who reads this book—whether individual member, deacon, elder, pastor or evangelist. The first and greatest order of business after your sight has been restored is to seek out where Christ is at work.

“What could be more important?

“Yet again, you are strongly urged to listen to the sermon ‘Watchman to Israel—Messenger to Laodicea!’ and prove to yourself who holds these responsibilities at the end of the age.”

### Another Question Arises

In the same general timeframe, two members of the staff approached Mr. Pack with a copy of Mr. Armstrong’s *Mystery*

*of the Ages*. They had pointed, serious questions regarding statements in this book, and how they fit the current landscape in light of the recently explained Body of Christ understanding. The question initially arose regarding this passage:

“An apostle is ‘one sent forth’ with Christ’s gospel message, including the supervision of proclaiming that message to the world by means and persons other than himself. Also an apostle was given supervision over all the local congregations or churches (I Cor. 16:1). The apostle Paul had oversight over the churches of the Gentile world (II Cor. 11:28)...”

“Pastors are stationary pastors over a local church or contingent group of local churches.”

*p. 244-45*

One of the ministers present on the occasion who came with this question recalls the moment from December 6, 2004:

“We were both looking in *Mystery of the Ages*... for a quote on taking the gospel to the world. We found Mr. Armstrong’s comment on the roles of the ministry, that a pastor could only preach the gospel in a limited way in his local area—that he was not authorized to take it to the whole world. We walked into Mr. Pack’s office, and asked, ‘Mr. Pack, what about this?’”

After this passage was brought to Mr. Pack’s attention, he and others engaged in another detailed Bible study. Within a few months, the topic of Church government became more clear. On January 1, 2005, Mr. Pack delivered an extensive message that explained the roles of the messenger to Laodicea and the watchman to Israel. The teaching of Mr. Armstrong was carefully examined. The picture of what had

already been happening for years on both counts was made clear.

These messages, clearly understood by the Church, led to another sermon series regarding the office Mr. Pack held within the structure of God's government. This understanding was not acquired overnight. Months were spent determining the office he held. He studied Church history, and learned of exactly how Mr. Armstrong came to see that he was an apostle. Mr. Pack examined the fruits, studying *every* angle of the subject.

The end result was a powerful, proof-filled message explaining that he had been given, as had Mr. Armstrong, the office of apostle. Inserted at the end of this sermon was a quote from Mr. Armstrong that applied in the present age as well:

“I am not here because a lot of people decided to vote for me or put me here. You had nothing to do with me becoming God's apostle. Someone says to me, ‘Well, Mr. Armstrong, how do you know you're God's apostle? Did Christ appear to you? Did He speak to you? Did He say, ‘Now, Herbert Armstrong, I make you my apostle?’” I answer, ‘No!’

“‘Did you know back in 1933 when this era of the Church was started that you were God's apostle, that you would be?’ No, I didn't. ‘Did you know how big or how great this Work was going to be?’ No, I didn't.

“I just knew that God had called me, He was using me, and I would go as far as He wanted me to go. No further and no less. Whatever that is, if it meant the whole world, I knew I would be able to do it, because I would do it in the power and the strength of the living Christ.

“Well then, how do I know today? Well, I will answer just as Jesus Christ answered when the messengers of John the Baptist came to Him and said, ‘Well, John

wants to know, are you really the Messiah that was to come?’ Jesus didn’t say yes or no. He said, ‘You go tell John what you hear and what you see being done. Go and show him the fruits of what you see coming from Me, by the fruits you shall know.’

“No, back in 1933, I didn’t know. So how do I know now? Because I look back in all these years and I see the fruits, and you’re here as part of it. You’re part of the evidence because you’re here, and I had something to do with that and so did Jesus Christ, and He was using me. I didn’t do it myself. And woe be to me if I ever take credit for doing it.”

The fruits that were evident in Restored at the turn of 2004/2005 were already well beyond those that existed when Mr. Armstrong first acknowledged that he held this office in the winter of 1952-53.

This came as a staggering realization. Since the beginning of Restored, Mr. Pack had stated many times that he was simply a pastor who refused to compromise. But now it was clear that God was using him as more than a pastor.

He was humbled, and sobered. He understood that if the apostle Paul could fall away—be a “castaway”—so could he. He knew he would have to stay close to God each day—that, also like Paul, a very real “necessity had been laid” upon him!

In Mr. Pack’s book “*Anoint Your Eyes*” he wrote,

“God’s leaders are always to remain ‘little in their own eyes.’ Mr. Armstrong understood that God had selected him for a great task—and he unabashedly identified himself as having been *chosen* for his office. At the same time, he remained humble. Though some *now* attack him on this point, very few during his lifetime accused Mr. Armstrong of having an elevated opinion of himself. Having spent many hours together,

both in person and on the phone, I never perceived anything remotely close to a spirit of vanity driving his actions. Mr. Armstrong knew who he was and who he was not.

“Realize that *meekness*—similar to humility—is not the equivalent of *weakness*. Moses is a wonderful example of how even the strongest of God’s servants can be ‘very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth’ (Num. 12:3). Moses and Mr. Armstrong knew God was using them, but this did not automatically make them arrogant or filled with pride. However, when God chooses a man, if he is righteous as he should be, then he had better be as ‘bold as a lion’ (Prov. 28:1). And if he fears God, he will have and demonstrate ‘strong confidence’ (Prov. 14:26).

“I certainly want God to find me with this quality, and it should also be reflected in a willingness to accept a decision that He has made. Of course, I could not ‘carry the water’ of either Moses or Mr. Armstrong—and I know this! But neither can I be afraid to acknowledge what God has done, simply because *people* will accuse me of pride, vanity, arrogance or presumptuousness. To pull back, because I fear such accusations, would leave me open to *God’s* accusation that I have rebelled against His decision. That I *do* fear.”

### **A New Leader Chosen**

“God has selected a new leader for the remnant of Philadelphia. Just as Mr. Armstrong would not apologize for God’s decision to use him, neither can I. Perhaps the biggest single reason (and I suppose there may have been several) that God selected me is because I never sought this office—never dreamed for a split second that God could have this position in mind for me. (If I am accused otherwise, that is someone else’s error.)

“With all of my faults and weaknesses, only God knows why I could be useful as His tool. But this much I can say—I never once looked in the mirror, in the nearly twenty-eight previous years I had served in Christ’s ministry, and said anything akin to, ‘Behold, I am God’s answer!’

“I never did. Prior to being fired from the Global Church of God in the spring of 1999, the fact that God had selected me for a special purpose had not occurred to me, even once. Only at *that* time—a few weeks before God established The Restored Church of God—did I begin to look back at my remarkable training and experience, and conclude that God had been preparing me for a very long time. And this only occurred to me because I could no longer find a senior minister or even one trained minister who was fully holding to all the truth I treasured.

“When I was finally forced to look back at my years of preparation and experience, one of the things I saw was that I had been, in part, trained personally by Mr. Armstrong during the first 15 years of my ministry (after marrying his secretary in 1971). I recognized that I had been prepared to be able to continue the Work as he had done it. Also, I was familiar with how he thought in a host of ways that would be invaluable to anyone who was thrust into what I had to do. I remembered he had repeatedly said that he would ‘walk across the street and start over’ if necessary.

“This meant that I had no excuse for not being willing to do the same. While the amount of work necessary to press on was beyond comprehension, my training was in place from Mr. Armstrong, and I was only left with whether I would follow through as he would.

“In addition, God had caused me to travel an extremely difficult course, as He does with all His leading servants, in preparation for the time to gather

the remnant of the sixth era from among the survivors of the apostasy. I did not appoint myself. No one else came along—and believe me, I searched for someone who was not compromising!”

Some months after delivering these sermons, in his March 2005 *Member/Co-Worker Letter*, Mr. Pack wrote the Church regarding them:

“It has been wonderfully encouraging—and INSPIRING!—that virtually the entire Church seems to have understood what Christ has revealed to all of us about my office. I had wondered beginning three months ago, with the Watchman/Messenger sermons, whether such a thing would be possible.”

Mr. Pack added this looking back:

“This moment was among the greatest turning points of my life. Nothing that I had gone through prepared me for what I had come to learn. Time after time, I had stated in sermons that were sent out over the almost six previous years of Restored—and I was sincere about it—that I saw myself as a pastor. I had at least publicly acknowledged on at least one occasion that God would certainly use me however He chose to—much as Mr. Armstrong’s statement above acknowledged the same thing about himself. But I never dreamed that I had been prepared for the highest office in the New Testament ministry.

“I know this has been a stumbling block for few or many—I do not know which—who would have come with us had I not, as they put it, ‘made myself an apostle.’ It is sad that a great many people, who once professed to know the fruits of an apostle when they saw them, no longer can.

“Here is the point, however. I knew what the office of apostle meant. I understood that it is only given when a great Work is to be accomplished. I do not know how great—or exactly how large the Work (not the Church) will become—but in all likelihood it will have to become somewhere near the ‘immense, colossal, titanic’ size just because of all that is at stake in reaching a world now over 6.5 billion people in population, and warning great nations inhabited by 600 million.

“This much I knew.”

Even after the sermons were given, more was learned about what holding this office meant. All that would be required of Mr. Pack in the future was gradually coming into focus. He also realized that as the Work expanded and grew in recognition, he would need to focus on the larger, more complex administrative elements of the Work. More preparation would be necessary. So would more infrastructure.

## *So Much Accomplished*

**D**uring this time of growth, excitement, announcements and news, Mr. Pack began to emphasize that these were “the good times.” In staff meetings, he quoted Ecclesiastes 7:14: “In the day of *prosperity* be joyful, but in the day of *adversity* consider: God also has set the one over against the other, to the end that man should find nothing after him.”

Mr. Pack explained that the staff should enjoy these good times, but also should be preparing for very difficult challenges ahead. The need to continue to “*live the Book*” was always emphasized. By this time, the staff had stabilized, and they were counseled to continue to stay close to God.

“Beginning in early 2005, the Work, now six years old, was coming of age. Reports from all quarters began to be good almost all the time. There was regular growth in the Church, as well as financial and statistical growth in the size of the Work.

“This nonstop growth became its own concern to me, because the staff could easily fall into believing that being in God’s Work, and at His Headquarters, was a magic carpet ride—and that is not true! So I

started the habit of warning them not to grow lethargic, or to assume there would come no setbacks. They were certainly encouraged to enjoy the good times—prosperity—but to get ready for real turbulence ahead. The same applies to the membership.”

### **Working with People**

Being a pastor was Mr. Pack’s training and, in many ways, what he still feels defines him. Contrary to some who, down through the years, only cared for the flock because they were paid to, he did this because it was what he “loved to do”—what he “felt called to do.”

Every staff member at Restored’s Headquarters has heard Mr. Pack relate that at times he wished he were pastoring again, because this was always his first love. For those who work with him or see him on the Sabbath or on Holy Days, fellowshiping with longtime members and new prospective members, this is evident.

Mr. Pack determined to never be distant or aloof. And he was never a minister who only fellowshiped with those he knew well, or the “beautiful people.” Extra effort was always taken to meet, greet and fellowship with new people in the Headquarters congregation and at Feasts. He still loves spending hours talking with brethren after services, even when that day’s “to-do” list extends well past sundown.

“I would return to pastoring in a second if I could. People might think being the human leader of the Church, or holding the office that I do, is the ‘most wonderful thing’—and ‘Who could want for more?’ The truth is, I would be happy with less. I loved pastoring and always will. First, I found that I was addicted to visiting brethren. This came to an end. Then I found that I was addicted to phone calls. But these eventually stopped coming because I no longer

had time for them. At least I still get to work with mail and email. I am addicted to reading it.

“But one other related factor will always be at work in my mind, and it could have been included in the chapters describing my Global years. The leader there would never place a proper emphasis on a sufficient number of pastors for the size of the church worldwide. He had never served in the field and had no concept of what it meant to be a shepherd. None!

“Many discussions occurred in Council meetings with me *constantly* lobbying for more field pastors in the budget. Unlike Restored in the early years, where we had neither trained candidates for pastoring nor sufficient funds to hire them if we did, Global had both. Sadly, LCG has still not re-evaluated priorities. The United Church is just the opposite. Too much emphasis on pastors and not nearly enough on doing the Work.

“Mr. Armstrong was balanced in this way—and so must, and will, we be.”

Mr. Pack’s love of pastoring was also seen on an administrative level. Early in The Restored Church of God, he was determined to always be involved in Church Administration. He emphasized this so-named *department* actually represented an entire COMMISSION—feeding the flock!

Due to his field background, he understood the importance of properly caring for God’s people. Mr. Pack took the time to stay informed of each person who joined the Church, memorizing their names in order to be able to personally greet them when he saw them at the Feast or other events.

Over the years, as much as was reasonably possible, Mr. Pack employed a staff motto of, “Everything stops for a person—people *always* come first.” Despite his hectic schedule, he often put his schedule on hold if there was a need, either in the office or the field. And he insisted that “*his* office door was always open” for those who needed to speak

with him, at least to the degree he had time. When someone needed counsel, he would spend a good deal of time walking them through the situation, step-by-step, from the biblical perspective.

“I determined at a point to never permit myself to become isolated. This simply must not—and will never—happen. It became evident that *circumstances* isolated Mr. Armstrong, and I analyzed why this happened. It boiled down to four reasons:

“(1) The Work grew to immense size. Mr. Armstrong had to delegate a tremendous amount. (2) He was traveling the world away from Headquarters for up to 300 days a year. (3) His advanced age, coupled with ever-worsening sight and hearing, forced him to trust people more than normal, or he wished. (4) The first three points led to an immediate circle around him comprised almost entirely of evil men. Of course, there were exceptions.

“Identifying these factors has helped me recognize how to avoid them.”

### **Trip to Kenya and England**

In February 2005, an opportunity to visit a large number of Restored members overseas arose. Mr. Pack and his son-in-law, who by this time was serving as a Headquarters local elder, traveled to Kenya and the United Kingdom to visit the brethren. He had traveled to the Philippines several years earlier and had visited many congregations in North America since that time, but had not found time to again travel overseas.

Here are some excerpts from a report on this 10-day excursion:

“We made our trip to western Kenya, where the majority of our brethren reside. The trip was 300 miles

and took more than 7 hours due to the atrocious roads that are outside the cities.

“While we did not see all of Kenya in this one trip, it was still quite an experience, as there were many different types of landscapes, scenery, farms, towns and villages. Beautiful valleys, mountains, and plains bordered the highway at various points along the way. In the middle of our trip, we drove through thousands of acres of British-owned tea farms. Mr. Pack commented that this area looked as if we were in the middle of Iowa, due to its endless miles of symmetrical bright green rows of tea plants.

“On our trip to western Kenya, Mr. Pack continued to build on the previous day’s discussions, including teaching principles of leadership. We also discussed possible festival sites and the organization of the Feast of Tabernacles in Kenya. We stayed that evening in a hotel in Kisii. Western Kenya is the area in which most local diseases are found, and these are often carried in the water or transmitted through insects. However, for the entire trip and afterward, we were in good health—God had protected us!

“On Sabbath morning, we drove to Homa Bay, where services were to be held. Even on such short notice, we were privileged to meet with more than 150 brethren for the entire day. Some of these brethren had traveled all night in very cramped buses to meet Mr. Pack and hear the messages. Of course, since even bus transportation can be costly for longer trips, many brethren were unable to attend with us that day.

“The morning service included special music by a family, who sang *a capella*. For the remaining time, Mr. Pack gave a sermon covering many broad, overarching points on who and what the Church is, and how Restored is fulfilling that role in this end-time. The brethren found it very helpful and commented that

they were inspired by the clarity and strength in Mr. Pack's speaking.

"Before addressing any questions, however, Mr. Pack briefly covered some additional basics. The questions were helpful and stimulating, covering a wide range of topics. It also gave Mr. Pack and me an understanding of the prominent issues in the minds of the local brethren. Too soon, the day had to be cut short, as many of the brethren needed to catch their bus for the trip home. Those who could stay continued to talk with Mr. Pack later into the evening.

"On Monday, our final day in Kenya, we took a tour of downtown Nairobi and had the opportunity to drive through the poorest regions of the city, dubbed simply the 'slums.' Words—and even pictures—could not describe the poverty we observed. The houses—actually small shacks—were made of tin. Dogs and children alike picked through a makeshift dump on the side of the road. Running water and electricity were nonexistent. While possibly the saddest part of our trip, the visit was an important, sobering experience, and a reminder of the truly enormous blessings enjoyed by the modern-day descendants of Abraham. It gives us one more reason to pray each day, 'Thy kingdom come.'"

After the Kenyan leg of the trip, the men then proceeded to the United Kingdom. The report continues:

"On the evening that we arrived, the brethren, who had traveled from various locations (some many hours away), met with us in a conference room at our London hotel. The surroundings were beautiful, and the edifying fellowship, which lasted well into the evening, was enjoyed and appreciated by all.

"This trip also allowed us to tour the former Ambassador College campus at Bricket Wood, along

with many other well-known landmarks in the greater London area. Witnessing the historic blessings and immense wealth that had been given to Ephraim through the centuries was awe-inspiring.”

What struck Mr. Pack most dramatically was the contrast between the Nairobi slums and the richness and grandeur found in British landmarks such as Windsor Castle and the British Museum.

As he walked the beautiful grounds and interior of Windsor Castle, he commented on the splendor that men can create, but also the future of that nation. Ever mindful that the beautiful environment of England would someday come to resemble the Third World, he was more determined than ever to preach the good news of the gospel—and warn the modern, great nations of Israel.

### **Responding to World Events**

Fulfilling the role of watchman, Mr. Pack used this vehicle to warn the descendants of Israel. With the Internet, and an efficient staff, Restored was able to report on news events within hours of them happening.

When a disaster occurred, the staff *always* pulled together quickly, with Mr. Pack usually at first coordinating a “rapid-reaction team.” Within hours, people could visit *The Real Truth* website and find answers and explanations of why such events were occurring.

After the Hurricane Katrina disaster, Mr. Pack talked to the Church in the September 2005 *Member/Co-Worker Letter* about what had happened, and how the Restored Church of God office responded:

“As this is written, New Orleans, the Gulf Coast—and the whole nation!—are reeling from Hurricane Katrina, with authorities learning from the still-

developing aftermath. Although this catastrophe is still playing out, it is already known that thousands have died in what is certainly the worst natural disaster in American history. First, let me say that Restored has no members either in or near any of the immediately affected areas along the Gulf Coast. Of course, that is wonderful news, even astonishing in a sense. But this is where the good news ends!

“Let’s look at the big picture of what really happened here. In effect, New Orleans, and parts of Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama have had their own *early GREAT TRIBULATION!* Before continuing, stop and ponder this, and the images that you are seeing on television. More than America and other Israelite nations could now imagine, they are looking into a future much darker than the relatively *small area* Katrina impacted. (Get your Bibles and read Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28 with the latest television images in mind.)...”

“Brethren, if we will receive and understand the message—actually the *many* messages!—coming from this disaster, it becomes a stunning picture of what will surely play out over and over again in the cities of the modern nations of Israel, as God’s prophesied punishment intensifies. How many residents dropped to their knees and repented—in either the affected areas or across the country—for all the abominations that were rampant within America’s original ‘sin city’ (long before Las Vegas received this name)? New Orleans was long called the ‘Big Easy’ because sin was so easy and natural there.”

“Make no mistake, brethren. **GOD’S WARNING IS GOING OUT NOW!** We have mushroomed in size **NOW!** We have grown big **NOW** (but will, of course, grow much bigger)! On Monday night, we posted the first of two articles about the disaster, and regularly updated them as events were playing out (we are still

doing this). At the same time, we stepped out in faith and augmented a very aggressive advertising campaign—perhaps more properly to be thought of as a *warning campaign*. The response could only be described as stunning and overwhelming! Almost 60,000 people have clicked directly on our ads and come to our website in just the last 37 hours. Perhaps as, or even more, important, the RATE at which people are coming to our websites upon seeing the ads is approximately *five times* (at least initially) what advertisers consider to be ‘good.’ Obviously, God is blessing the ads, and we do not intend to slow them down for several more days. Quite literally, the ONLY thing keeping us from reaching even *more* STAGGERING numbers of people are budget constraints. But I am determined not to turn off the ads because God has set an ‘open door’ before His Work. I would fear to stand before Christ having refused to walk through the GIANT door before us in just this event.

“Another element of this campaign is that our ads are being shown on the web pages of various newspapers, and other sites that are reporting on Katrina. For example, *The New York Times* (U.S.), *The International Herald Tribune* (UK), the *Jerusalem Post* (Israel) and the *Taipei Times* (China), among others, are now showing our ads. So much more could be said about this potential ‘cross-pollination’ that God could use in the future. These papers, for instance, are some of the greatest in the world. What else might God use in time?

“In the end, we are seeing (at only just past mid-week) a trend that is going to produce statistics for the whole week that are so MONSTROUS in size that we will find that no experience in our past permits us to even make a meaningful comparison to what we are witnessing.”

These types of news-driven events began with the Asian tsunami at the end of December 2004. Remarkably, most of these disasters or world events took place a couple days before Restored was scheduled to print the hardcopy magazine in-house. This allowed for an instant publication—far faster than any church of the world or splinter could.

These rapid responses were a window of opportunity to bring answers to readers who had questions spawned by dramatic—and sometimes extremely traumatic—events.

### **International Growth**

The Church's membership continued to grow, both at home and abroad. After the first year, Restored had a presence in five countries. By 2007, people from 30-plus countries were aboard.

The Internet was being maximized, and more were writing in from nations across the globe. Headquarters received literature requests from the heart of Africa, from nations such as the Central African Republic, Burundi and Rwanda. Inquiries came in from across Europe—France, Germany, Sweden, Spain, Italy and Bulgaria. Readers responded to the truth in the Far East, from China, Thailand, Indonesia and Japan, among so many others. With help from several Spanish translators, the gospel was preached in both Central and South America, reaching every nation there.

On June 17, 2006, Mr. Pack and The Restored Church of God reached an important milestone: God's Church had reached every nation on Earth through the Internet!

Commenting on this benchmark achievement, he wrote in the July 2006 *Brethren/Co-Worker Letter*:

“The [upcoming] sermon explains much about the significance to God's Work that the all-important announcement of the kingdom of God, along with other truths, has now officially reached every nation on the

face of the earth. You will learn more about why this is the first time in history, including the 20th century, that this has happened. I will say no more other than the fact that someone mentioned how the final country was reached on June 17, 2006, the same date of the birth of God's Church on Pentecost June 17, 31 A.D. (exactly 1,975 years later).

"I thought that you might enjoy pondering this interesting parallel. By the way, someone in the office also reminded me that it was almost exactly 40 years ago (the middle of June in 1966) that God first revealed the gospel to me and that my calling began. I see no significance in this as per me, and certainly do not tie it to June 17, but I thought you might at least find it interesting."

Many were watching the statistical explosion the Restored was experiencing. Some outside the organization doubted, others were stunned. In any case, thousands were being reached by the truth *every day*, all over the world.

"This wonderful milestone came to be denigrated by ignorant people (and even some ministers) outside Restored who did not know how many nations and territories there are on Earth. Some crowed that *we* did not know that over 200 nations existed, because we had announced having now reached all 193. There are another 40 some territories and dependencies—and we recognize this, having also reached most or all of these. But there were only 193 countries at the time of our achievement. So some crowed their ignorance, and we had to recognize that some will speak against God's Work no matter what it accomplishes."

Though Restored was still relatively small, its impact and exposure were growing rapidly. For instance, also in the

summer of 2006, Mr. Pack was invited to be interviewed on a prominent South African talk radio program to discuss the understanding of prophecy and the beast of Revelation. Thousands heard this interview live, with the result that some were added to Restored as a result.

Through the years 2005 to 2007, The Restored Church of God's impact grew to immense proportions.

### **Restored's Internet Impact**

As The Restored Church of God reached large numbers with the gospel and warning message, even detractors conceded that it had become "an Internet mammoth." So much was being done, and in a very cost-effective way. Through Internet advertising, a cost of as little as *one penny* could bring a person in contact with the truth—and in fact because of the nature of this medium, the penny *guarantees* that person's conduct.

Along with growing content, the functionality of the websites was continually improved. The Information Services department was creating features that were heretofore unseen. Mr. Pack updated the Church in the February 2003 *Member/Co-Worker Letter*:

"Obviously, all of what is now happening at Headquarters is increasing the strength and confidence of both the staff and the entire Church. It is certainly having the same effect on me personally. May I repeat something that I have said before: None of us ought EVER feel like we have to apologize for the sheer, awesome mass of what God is doing through His 'little flock,' The Restored Church of God.

"I am learning more every day about the power of the Internet. In ways I never before comprehended, it is informing, driving and changing the face of the whole world.

“Mr. Armstrong used to tell us that 20th century technology allowed one man to reach far more people than twelve 1st century apostles combined who were personally trained by Christ. I am beginning to be convinced that 21st century technology may allow a comparatively microscopic organization to do a far mightier Work than any of us could have previously thought possible...we must never limit God! It has become very clear HOW God could now do truly a huge Work through a tiny organization.”

The same letter by Mr. Pack informed the Church of one of the many upgrades that took place over the years:

“But this issue marks another milestone for the Work. The extraordinary new *Real Truth* website update is being launched this afternoon...It is our hope that you will avail yourself of the remarkable innovations now available on this site. Just the ability to immediately read every scripture referenced in the context of an article, in fact, represents a kind of technology available in no other website of ANY KIND on earth.

“For instance, if a reader wants to click on a passage in context, he can instantly read the whole verse. However—and this is a truly stunning feature—much like a television remote control with taped programs or movies, the reader can arrow backwards to previous verses in context or forward to verses that follow in context. Brethren, take a deep breath and savor what you just read.

“Our Information Services Department informs me that **NO PERSON OR ORGANIZATION IS DOING THIS EXCEPT GOD’S CHURCH**, and this includes all other religious organizations presented on the Internet! We are literally ‘cutting edge of the cutting edge’—and uncounted millions will be able to see, experience,

appreciate—and directly benefit—from this! In addition, they are now able to do this on a magnificently beautiful (meaning pleasant to the eye), state-of-the-art website of immense and growing proportion.

“Now pause again and savor the ever-expanding application of what you have just read. Next, realize that *The Real Truth* site also now carries a special ‘fast load’ capability for all items offered. The reader will be able to instantly access—no waiting involved!—any article that he wishes to read. Pause, yet again, and reflect on the convenience of this feature within the impatient world of countless millions of Internet website perusers. Some other additional features will appear post-launch that will be implemented one at a time over the next two months. For instance—and this one is very, very big—a ‘related material’ feature will allow the reader to instantly view a list of everything available anywhere on the site (article or broadcast) that is in any way related to the subject of the article. Imagine the subject of life after death in this *Real Truth*, and how many items on this topic that could be accessed by the reader.”

*The Real Truth* moved forward on other levels as well. Historically, the WCG’s *Plain Truth* was read by many dignitaries, with subscriptions maintained by several White House administrations. By 2006, a number of high-profile leaders were reading *The Real Truth*. Mr. Pack explained this development in the regular February 2006 letter:

“For some time, you have heard that certain developments have been taking place in the background of God’s Work, and that I would begin to announce them as I could. Certain very inspiring news that I did *not* anticipate can now be reported. This may be the first of many exciting kinds of developments that lie

ahead for the Work, and for God's people to hear. I can now report that *several*—I repeat, several—Heads of State (defined as Kings, Presidents, Prime Ministers, etc.) are now reading their own personal copy of *The Real Truth* magazine. These leaders do not lead tiny countries such as islands in the Pacific. In fact, the combined total population of the nations that they represent is about 100 million people.

“Brethren, there are only 193 leaders of nations on earth, so this is a very, very encouraging development. Bear in mind we are aware that there are *other* high government officials in various countries who are also reading our magazine, and then there are those leaders or officials that we do *not know about* who may be doing this ‘online,’ in effect, reading the truth of the gospel ‘flying under radar,’ perhaps to be known or never known to us later.

“More and more of the ‘movers and shakers’ of men’s societies and governments have been learning about this Work. Some of the subscribers signing up online are interesting or even recognizable names, with some of them having websites of their own permitting us to learn about them. Also, a variety of professionals are finding that *The Real Truth* carries answers available nowhere else.”

### **Great Achievement**

The best overview of the accomplishments achieved through Restored in the first seven years is to examine the fruits produced from May 1999 to February 2006. These are listed below, summarized from Mr. Pack’s book “*Anoint Your Eyes*” – *Christ’s Warning to His People*:

“(1) Restored has 103 books, booklets and brochures in place. Such a rate of production has never happened

in the history of God's Work. The enormous help and guidance of God—coupled with technology, efficiency, unity of purpose and hard work—made this possible.

“(2) Restored has about 55 articles—some much longer than certain of our booklets—teaching additional important doctrines, and covering the same topics as the WCG when it was on track. Perhaps a few more will be written over time.

“(3) Restored has produced approximately 230 form letters, reflecting all those available in the past, plus others.

“(4) Restored publishes a large, full-color magazine for its members, *The Pillar*, which is very similar to the old *Good News* magazine, with some aspects of *The Worldwide News* included.

“(5) We stayed on track, and all of the necessary staff fell into place, to launch our flagship, full-color, *Plain Truth*-style magazine by January 2003. Called *The Real Truth*, this bi-monthly publication reflects the quality of *The Plain Truth*.

“(6) In conjunction with *The Real Truth*, fifteen brochures in the Prophetic Trends and Conditions series have been prepared. (Time will tell if more are needed.)

“(7) Restored produced an entire *Bible Introduction Course*, with its full 30 lessons now in place.

“(8) Restored rewrote all of the original *Bible Story* books, titled *The Story of the Bible*, including one extra volume. The final one (Seven) was released in August 2005.

“(9) Restored launched a four-color youth magazine—*Ambassador Youth*—in August 2003, similar to the original *Youth* 81...82...83, etc. Once produced quarterly, this magazine is now bi-monthly.

“(10) Restored also rewrote the original ‘Y.E.S.’ lessons—K through 6th grade. This crucial project—

called the Children’s Bible Lessons—became a reality in October 2003. All twelve lessons are complete. Restored produces both Spring and Fall editions of a *Children’s Holy Day Activity Book*, available from our website to all outside Restored.

“(11) Restored has a comprehensive Member Services Section on one of our websites so that our brethren can freely access hundreds of our sermons. (As of May 2009, this archive is approaching 600 messages.)”

### **Rewriting Finally Complete!**

The last of Mr. Armstrong’s books to be rewritten, *Sex – Its Unknown Dimension*, was completed in 2005. It was another complex project, with a number of staff writers helping with portions of the writing and research.

Finally, the rewriting process came to an end!

Mr. Pack compared this period to logging thousands of miles in the water during his swimming career, having eventually emerged into a life *after* swimming.

Sacrifices had to be made during the rewriting process. For several years in a row, the Packs did not stop a single time to eat lunch during the work week. After sharing a late dinner, Mr. Pack would then continue to edit at home—all to start the routine over again the next day.

Scores of booklets—and books—were rewritten, and it took years. The following analysis of the process comes from Mr. Pack’s book *The Work of God*. The reader may wish to read the whole story. It is an *Appendix* to that book:

“Let’s now visit this exercise from a different, but related, perspective. As was discussed earlier, most in the splinters would be aware that, on September 18, 2000, the Ninth Circuit Court of California decided that it is a copyright infringement, and therefore contrary to

federal law for anyone other than the copyright holders to reproduce the old literature containing God's truths, verbatim, using Mr. Armstrong's *exact wording*.

"The shock and weight of this...took weeks to settle into my mind. Of course, I hasten to add that I am years past this feeling, partly because I am now finished. But at the time, I was left stunned and overwhelmed at what lay ahead. So would anyone else!

"My mind kept turning over and over what this meant: Scores of different kinds of publications, containing thousands of pages, and requiring tens of thousands of hours to complete the task.

"This would take years, and I was not certain we had those years! And I wondered who would help me.

### Why?

"We should discuss *why* God permitted or, in fact—and I have no doubt—directly *caused* this to happen. Certainly, if 'the king's heart is in the hand of the LORD,' and 'He turns it whithersoever He will' (Prov. 21:1), then God could have easily guided the outcome that so many had hoped and prayed for. He could have turned one judge's thinking. But that was clearly *not* His purpose. I later became convinced that there were many reasons God guided the outcome to what it was.

"FIRST, it would have been much too *easy* for us—and for me!—to simply copy what Mr. Armstrong wrote. As some may be aware, This process was already well underway. We had already reprinted eleven of his smaller booklets and could have easily continued.

"SECOND, many people in other groups would be able to see our willingness to do what their much larger, wealthier organizations would not do, and were not *motivated* to do!

“THIRD, of necessity, the truth would have to now be phrased in a considerably different fashion than previously written. We simply had no choice in this. While the style of my writing is not on a par with Mr. Armstrong’s, it does give ‘another look’ to the *same* truths—which could then serve to sharpen these doctrines a little more in the minds of people who may be rereading them.

“FOURTH, many older brethren who might never reread the originals could be inspired to *re-examine* these truths in the newer books, booklets and articles. They could find investigating them interesting. It would no longer be as easy to dismiss them, saying, ‘I know what is in this booklet. I have *already read it.*’ Memories could be refreshed.

“FIFTH, rewriting all of the literature would serve as a beacon to everyone who would care to know the only place where the *full truth* is still being taught! The effort put forth would for the discerning become a ‘city set on a hill’ that could not be dismissed. This project would set us apart like nothing else, and God knew it!

“SIXTH, the recognition that we must rewrite all of God’s doctrines, simply because we did not hold the copyrights, would make their precious value more real since many or most of Mr. Armstrong’s books and booklets are no longer freely available. What had been taken for granted would revive in importance.

“Other reasons could be listed. For the moment, I will focus on the SEVENTH reason, which probably only applies to me.

“Just the physical mechanics of rewriting multiple thousands of pages (above the 2,100-plus-page SEP) of books, booklets and articles was its own challenge. Each project presented its own obstacle. Merely selecting the most precise words, to best represent the

Bible's teaching, like hitting the proverbial 'nail on the head'—while at the same time being *prohibited* from using Mr. Armstrong's wonderfully concise wording—was an indescribably difficult task!

“Try to imagine.

### **Of Priceless Value!**

“The process that I had to walk through in order to achieve this is worth more to me than words could possibly describe! Hopefully you can understand and appreciate the deep sincerity of this statement. I daily drew inspiration and strength of doctrinal knowledge as God helped me address each new project. Again, I find it difficult to select the right words even now to portray *why* I count this as *the* greatest single privilege of my life, and the furthest thing from a burden that I could imagine!

“(In ‘*Anoint Your Eyes*’ I explain the unique spiritual process, related to the Greek word *dokimos*, and its connection to the title, that this overall project reflected. When you read that book, it is absolutely vital that you take time to carefully focus on and study this critically important section.)

“Just as the kings of Israel and Judah were humbled by copying the law, the task of having to rewrite every one of the truths of God was truly—TRULY!—humbling. It is not easy to explain exactly why, but it was. I knew God was using me. And studying and rereading the doctrines that Mr. Armstrong taught, and then writing, followed by editing each book or booklet *many, many* times, meaning that I was reading and rereading what was written, strengthened immeasurably my knowledge of the doctrines of God. Of course, this left me in a better position to effectively teach and defend those doctrines.

“I have never experienced anything like this process in my life, and never will again. I repeat, it is a feeling of great blessing and privilege—and of being humbled—to have been used to do this!

### **Inspiring, Miraculous Process**

“But the manner in which the process itself worked was also miraculous in the truest sense. The actual *method* that God used in helping me became its own amazing inspiration to me—and it is my hope that it will be to you. That is why I am including a brief description here. It is also being included because it carries some additional lessons for those who accuse the Work of God.

“You may wish to start by taking a moment to ask yourself how so many thousands of pages of books, booklets and articles could be rewritten in about four and a half years (and with the help of only a relatively small staff). Again, this includes editing them *several* times, and usually this was *many, many* times, with expanded editions the result, done in the same way that Mr. Armstrong added to and improved certain of his books and booklets, but over a *52-year* period.

“Add to this the fact that, during the same period, most of the books to the splinters were also written (and these also expanded *many* times), as were a number of other books and booklets that Mr. Armstrong was able to assign to other writers in a way that I could not.

“Then there were certain additional books and booklets, as well as some articles, covering various other important aspects of the truth, that had never been written before, with circumstances in this age bringing a need for them. I had to write several of these. I also had to carefully edit everything written by *any other*

*writer*. So, just this latter process involved writing well over two million words, and editing millions more.

“While some readers may doubt the following statement, nevertheless, here it is: *Every one* of the books, booklets and articles from the past that I had to rewrite was done almost entirely *without any notes*. I had no time to prepare them. With only a Bible in hand, and occasional scraps of paper, I literally called out the words, sentence by sentence, paragraph by paragraph, section by section, and often chapter by chapter of a book, as my wife patiently typed every word. Long trains of thought would enter my mind as I spoke, with many of them coming in ways, and at speeds, that are beyond what any human being could possibly devise without God’s *special intervention*—impossible without direct DIVINE INSPIRATION!

“And I mean impossible!!!

### **Over 25,000 Hours**

“This incredible process spanned a period of approximately 25,000 hours, between my late wife and me. Because she was a very fast typist (and I am sure that God provided her wonderful support in part for this service), I was able to move sometimes at great speed through a task that shortness of time would not permit to again occur over a period of 52 years, as could happen with Mr. Armstrong. God knew the age was short—and that a ‘short work’ was His purpose—and that He had to intervene in a most powerful way to help me complete the task. This included giving both my wife and me an almost unbelievable *strength of endurance* to carry on day after day—and for years!

“And yet, our enemies scoff.

“If the reader will think about this, really deeply *ponder* it, it will become obvious that there simply

could have been no other way for it to have been accomplished. And it stands as its own towering miracle, declaring that God leads this Work!

“And yet, I repeat, our enemies scoff.

“Early on, my wife and I developed a somewhat sophisticated system whereby she could know, through a series of physical signals and spoken one-word terms, when I had a complex thought train in mind that she must type *without interruption*. Many were the times that I knew God’s Spirit was simply placing one thought after another in my mind, often arranged like many boxcars following in a train. The thoughts would simply come and come and come, for hours and hours and hours, over a period of days, weeks, months—and eventually years—until all the publications were completed. Of course, as with every writer, and as explained, it was necessary to clarify, strengthen, tighten and generally improve the text afterwards through several edits before each was finished and ready for printing.

“Nothing could explain what occurred as happening solely on the human level—on *human* power or ‘steam.’ No physical pile of clay could do what I had to do—and that certainly includes me! (The same is true of my wife.) The recognition that one is being used directly by God to do something that he or she simply could not do on human strength—and for a task so SUPREMELY IMPORTANT!—is what made this experience so humbling, and at the same time so inspiring. When truly understood, all room for *any* kind of bragging is removed.

“A side note to our accusers and persecutors that they might consider their attacks in the following perspective: While you may be trying to discredit me, in fact, your attacks greatly *overcredit* me. When you suggest that either I or my wife could have done this on our own, even a fraction of it, you have unwittingly assumed

that a human being would be capable of what in reality *no man* would be capable of doing. Not for a moment would all of this have been possible without CONTINUOUS MIRACULOUS HELP from Almighty God—and I would never be so arrogant or presumptuous as to believe that I could have done this on ‘physical brainpower.’

“Attackers—reread Matthew 12:31-32 and Acts 5:34-39—and then be careful of what you could be speaking against!

“To all others, if you are anointing your eyes, you have much to consider in deciding which organization you will attend. You should also consider the account you have just read as you look for where the hand of Almighty God is truly at work today.

“Be sure to look for the right things!”

With this massive undertaking in the rearview mirror, Mr. Pack was finally able to focus on other elements of the Work.

### **Ready to Push Forward**

By the end of 2006, Mr. Pack prepared for the Work to move ahead at an even more aggressive pace. Many tools to serve new members and ministers were now in place, as was a more sizeable Headquarters staff. More infrastructure had been built and tremendous growth was being realized. In 2006, over *8.5 million* items were downloaded—ultimately into every nation and reachable territory on Earth.

By this time, his second son, Rob, had joined the staff, and the Packs now enjoyed two children in the Work.

The truth of who and what were the 144,000 found in Revelation became clear. Urgency of the “short” Work was understood. The Work seemed poised to move to the next level. But 2007 would prove to be a very different year than expected.

## *Loss of Mrs. Shirley M. Pack*

Amidst all of the progress through 2005 and 2006, the difficulties that are part of the Christian life were also faced by the staff. The most severe trial directly affected Mr. and Mrs. Pack.

For some time, Mrs. Pack had been dealing with female-related health problems. She typically just pushed through them, employing an unusual strength of will, and focusing on the Work's needs rather than her own.

### **Health Trial Intensifies**

Mrs. Pack developed a mild cough in early July 2006. It persisted and slowly grew worse. In late 2006, Mr. Pack felt it necessary to give the Church a general idea of what was happening in a *Brethren/Co-Worker Letter*.

“Finally, I need to also add at this time that my wife has been worn out by the unbelievable workload that she and I have had for the last five years. As my father-in-law would say, ‘I am not complaining. I am just explaining.’ This has meant that she is battling a

variety of physical difficulties that we have not yet chosen to pass on to the Church at large, partly because we were not entirely sure of all the health issues in the picture. Some are female-related, and most of the rest appear to be related to general exhaustion.

“Please pray for my wife’s recovery. She has been unable to come to the office for some time. God’s Work needs her, and I need her. I also ask that everyone would be patient with my temporary inability (I’m not a typist or a computer person) to answer emails in a timely fashion.”

This was followed by a prayer request in the Church’s weekly *Announcement Bulletin*, on January 13, 2007, sent to all congregations and hosts:

“Mr. and Mrs. Pack request the prayers of the brethren on behalf of Mrs. Pack. Lately she has experienced a persistent cough, which is attributed to a severe lung irritation. Please pray that God would heal her, as this is causing some difficulty in day-to-day activity. Both Mr. Pack and God’s Work need Mrs. Pack in good health. Besides the cough, she is feeling well, virtually normal. She is taking steps to address her condition, involving natural treatments.”

### **Keeping Brethren Informed**

In subsequent months, Mr. Pack again communicated with the Church through regular monthly *Brethren/Co-Worker Letters*.

March 30, 2007

“My wife continues to progress in her recovery from serious illness. It now appears likely that she will attend services tomorrow for the first time in almost three months.

“Right as we thought her lung condition had dramatically improved—and it had—she began taking walks outside (not in Ohio, but in the South). The result was that she contracted life-threatening pneumonia. At first we thought she had what is commonly referred to as ‘walking pneumonia,’ but later realized that it was a much more serious bacterial pneumonia that had moved in because of her weakened condition. She is now much better, and happy that she can keep the Passover and Days of Unleavened Bread with the rest of God’s people.

“This has been the hardest trial of her life and mine. It had so many twists and turns—and there could still be more—that we (together) decided not to give the Church a ‘blow-by-blow’ account through every moment. We were not always sure ourselves of what we were seeing. We are very thankful for those who attended to my wife, including several nurses and others who played a remarkable role in a recovery that should have taken months more. Of course, we are most thankful to God that the trial seems to be nearing completion!

“We are told that forms of acute pneumonia require months for full strength to return. Please continue your prayers for Mrs. Pack’s full recovery over the months to come.”

### **Mrs. Pack with Grandchildren in North Carolina**

If there was one positive aspect of this tremendously difficult time, it was the Packs having opportunity to visit their grandchildren. Mrs. Pack had traveled to North Carolina after the American Thanksgiving for a respite from the Ohio winter, and to pursue a full-time treatment regimen.

“My wife moved to North Carolina for what would become three and a half months. She was a private

person, and did not want anyone to know she was there. I supported her decision. She had time to focus solely on her health condition.”

### **Determining the Severity of the Situation**

On January 8, 2007, while back in Ohio, Mrs. Pack had decided to get a chest X-ray to see what she was fighting against. The films revealed large masses in both of her lungs, but their exact nature was unclear, and the doctors did not suspect them to be malignant, saying this was “unlikely.”

Later, beginning on April 26, she obtained another set of X-rays—before which she had learned that her pneumonia was gone. Mr. Pack wrote several special letters updating the Church about his wife’s condition:

May 3, 2007

“Dear Brethren and Co-Workers,

“There is a need to enclose this special separate letter. It concerns the health of my wonderful wife, Mrs. Shirley Pack.

“As most of you know, my wife began battling a cough about ten months ago. It grew in intensity through the fall and winter until the point when we pursued certain tests to try to learn more about the cause. This occurred about four months ago, in the first week of January. The tests were somewhat inconclusive, although we did learn that there could be multiple causes, including more than one at the same time. We knew *something* was present in my wife’s lungs, but would only have been able to learn exactly what it was if we were willing to undergo what she felt were invasive tests. Although we were interested in knowing all that we reasonably could, in terms of a correct diagnosis, she had absolutely no intention of following conventional Western medical treatments.

“Based on all that we could discern in early January, my wife decided upon certain very specific holistic, or natural, therapies and treatments. This has been our extensive background, both in her family and mine, and it was consistent with the sure knowledge that it is God who is our Healer—the One who ‘restores our soul’ (Psa. 23). My wife feels, and has always felt, very, very strongly about this approach and understanding!

“We experienced what we believe is truly a miracle earlier this month. Let me explain. First, beginning in January, Mrs. Pack successfully battled and overcame a severe respiratory infection and I reported this to the Church. In fact, we thought the original problem may have been gone or abating by this point. However, about two months ago, it became clear that my wife had developed an acute case of pneumonia. But, by the time I wrote the April *Brethren/Co-Worker Letter*, we thought she was ‘out of the woods.’ Yet, the worst was to come. The pneumonia was *not* gone, and neither were the various accompanying complications that made it more acute than we could have dreamed. Mrs. Pack nearly died. However, and this is where one of the miracles occurred in the opinion of our family, the pneumonia and its related symptoms *suddenly* disappeared—and a basic sputum test revealed all pneumonia-related ‘pathogens’ to be completely gone. We were thrilled.

“However, because my wife’s energy levels were not returning as we thought they would or should, she decided to take another closer look at her lungs, and on the same day we learned the results of the sputum test of then one full week earlier. This time, some more fairly thorough ‘non-invasive’ diagnostic tests were added. The results were not what we hoped for. We learned that my wife has a large, slow-growing form of uterine cancer that has spread to her lungs. Her condition is advanced.

“But, this is not the end of the story—in fact, far from it. Mrs. Pack’s faith is not weakened or in any way diminished, but rather is increased. (She has just finished her extensive exercising at the local fitness center as this is being written.)

“Let this be understood: No one is on a ‘death watch’ here. That is totally against everything our family stands for, or that Mrs. Pack would tolerate. A very well-thought-out, extensive treatment plan was decided upon to aggressively *attack* the mass. While we might have wished for this plan to begin sooner, it did not, so we are proceeding as though we have no time to spare. Our family, particularly our two children who are in the Work, are extremely well-schooled in the realm of ‘holistic health.’ Of course, so are Mrs. Pack and I. Recall that Christ quoted back to His questioners the common Proverb: ‘Physician, heal yourself.’ There is a certain at least partial application of this here. What we are doing is comprehensive, and will take time to bear the fruit that we all hope for—and anticipate. We also know that the all-powerful, ever-living God has all the ‘full answers’ to my wife’s restoration to good health. When circumstances require, He heals us—we do not and could never do this for ourselves in certain severe situations! God knows what He needs to do, and He knows what we should strive to do as our part whenever this is possible.

“Since some could think that my wife is not ‘calling the shots,’ let me say that they simply do not know Mrs. Pack! She is emphatic, determined and resolute in *her* choice of how to physically fight this battle. In fact, other miracles have clearly already occurred! For instance, with the size of the mass(es), we are astonished that she has no pain, loss of any normal function or any otherwise threatening symptoms beyond diminished energy and shortness of breath.

Also, Mrs. Pack has been able to continue coming into the office on a limited but daily basis.

“I suppose that I do not need to ask for all of God’s people to continue praying for my beloved wife. We know already that you will do this, and thank you in advance for your steadfastness. I need not tell you how important she is to the Work, and to me and her family. Some of us will be fasting on her behalf as well. My wife has deeply appreciated the many cards and letters that have already arrived, and more are certainly welcome.

“Our immediate family, five of us here in God’s Work, are doing well and pressing forward. Our eyes are fixed on the God who can build whole galaxies with one hand, who says, ‘The prayer of faith shall save [from physical death, not referencing salvation] the sick’ and ‘Pray for one another that you may be healed’ (Jms. 5:15-16). Remember, the KINGDOM OF GOD is more important than all other goals put together. That is the one fixed in our minds!

“We love you all, and thank you for your never-ending support!

“In deepest gratitude,  
“David C. Pack”

June 4, 2007:

“I feel that I should at least periodically give a report of Mrs. Pack’s overall health condition and progress. This monthly letter seems the best time. Let me begin by stating that I want to be as careful as I possibly can in how I report what is a very complicated process and picture. First, my wife has now been formally ‘at war’ against the huge tumor she has for 39 days. My wife and I think and speak of each day as a single ‘battle,’ with these broken into several of what we call ‘skirmishes.’ At worst, it could be said

that Mrs. Pack is ‘holding her own.’ At best, while the developing picture is still inconclusive, we have a variety of reasons to have hope, and this is just based on the ‘sight’ of her condition (II Cor. 5:7), apart from the FAITH, which is the all-important centerpiece of our thinking! While my wife is certainly thinner, and this can largely be attributed to the highly specialized anti-cancer diet she is on (it has also caused me to lose 10 or 11 pounds I wanted to keep!!), virtually all of the fourteen separate things we monitor could be thought of as presenting encouraging results.

“Speaking personally, I can tell you my wife has demonstrated ‘the heart of a lion’ in the amazing, uncompromising *will* she brings to a *very* difficult, *very* extensive regimen. Further, she is still regularly exercising at a fitness center as part of her regimen—and I can report that she is both eating and sleeping well, and is still feeling no pain of any kind. Finally, she regularly attends services with the brethren at Headquarters.

“Please understand that I cannot yet offer more than this brief description. The next letter may offer greater opportunity to say more—or possibly much more. We will see. Until that time, please continue praying for the woman whose quiet, private service (typing) *on your behalf* has permitted you to hold in your laps literally millions of words containing the truth of God.”

June 29, 2007

“I promised a brief update on Mrs. Pack’s condition. She could still be described as ‘holding her own’ in what has turned out to be a battle of epic proportion. Of course, in a trial of this duration the war is not only physical, but obviously lapses over into the many spiritual lessons attached to it.

“No matter how long and arduous has been the regimen and process, it seems that the ordeal seems to keep playing out, and playing out, and playing out in a way that does not allow us to yet see what is God’s ‘end game.’ My wife has been exercising as I write, but understand that she is still quite thin and frail. While we are encouraged that her weight loss seems to have slowed, with even a slight gain in her last report over the previous seven days, and even though there are a variety of reasons to be encouraged, the picture is extremely complex because of the nature, size and *location* of this particular tumor.

“I personally monitor 23 (no longer 14) different aspects of her condition, and this alone probably best tells you how complicated the picture is, and how difficult it is to describe where her condition may be going. Please understand this is all that I can say at this time. And please do continue with your faithful prayers on Mrs. Pack’s behalf, as well as with the wonderful stream of moving, encouraging cards and letters that we receive—all of which my wife reads carefully.

“The whole Church can take heart that there have been two recent dramatic healings among the brethren, so none should doubt God’s power to do this for my wife. In fact, because my wife has battled this general condition for so long, and battled just for basic sleep as well for months, her favorite Psalm has become Psalm 30, and her favorite individual passage is Psalm 4:8. You may wish to read them both. We read them every day, and often more than once.”

### **The Trial Comes to an End**

Despite a Herculean effort on the part of Mrs. Pack, as well as that of her caregivers and local brethren, it became evi-

dent that her condition had simply grown too severe to turn around.

Mrs. Pack finished her course at home, in the early hours on the day of the annual Headquarters Summer Picnic.

July 26, 2007

“Dear Brethren and Co-Workers,

“This is a special letter written to give more detail to the passing of my wife, Shirley M. Pack. Mr. Armstrong wrote a tribute in *The Plain Truth* magazine to his wife’s record of conversion, and in a sense this is also written in the same spirit (I may put this in the September *PILLAR* so that others may have access to it in a similar way). I had intended to post this sooner, but circumstances would not permit.

“By now all of you realize that my dear wife of over 36 years of marriage died in the early morning hours (3:32 a.m.) of Sunday, July 22, 2007. I should explain that Mrs. Pack was in and out of consciousness beginning Thursday and this became complete on Sabbath morning at about 5:30 a.m. I mention this because, amazingly, she awakened shortly before Sabbath services were ‘piped’ into our home for the two caregivers attending to her, and she remained awake until about 5:30 p.m., just when our longer service this Sabbath was completed. (Due to the tradition of adding special international reports on the post-Conference weekend by men who are still here, there were three powerful messages, including the sermon that the caregivers noted she was clearly able to hear.) As services ended, she closed her eyes and did not reawaken.

“Because my wife’s history in God’s Way goes back to the end of 1959, and because she was known by countless thousands in the Church, condolences and notes of sympathy have been arriving from all over the

world, and from people both within and outside The Restored Church of God. These have already brought a tremendous comfort to me and to our children. Two of our three children and a son-in-law serve at the Church's Headquarters.

"I wish I could respond to each letter individually, but there are uncounted hundreds, with more still arriving. My family thanks you from the bottom of our hearts for such an outpouring of genuine love and concern during this extreme trial. I am honored to have been married to one who touched so many people.

"May I now be permitted to tell you more about the background of one of the most extraordinary 'soldiers of Jesus Christ' I have ever known. While it is not my intention to lionize my wife or make her larger than life, I believe a brief outline of her life and service is appropriate in such a case.

"Mrs. Pack fought one of the longest and bravest battles against a deadly intruder that I have ever witnessed, and we only learned later that her battle probably lasted between three and five years duration. I can make this statement with some experience, since I have witnessed many scores of people suffer with cancer. We often described her struggle as a 'war,' comprised of what we referred to as *daily* 'battles,' with days then broken into multiple 'skirmishes.' I charted many kinds of indicators of her condition on a daily and on a weekly basis as we hoped for the progress in natural healing that God, for His own reasons, chose not to grant, either dramatically or over a long period (Isa. 55:8-9).

"It is important to know that my wife's ability to confront this terrible disease as we did involved the assistance of many people here at Headquarters, bringing help in a host of ways far too numerous to recount—as nurses, caregivers, cooks, helpers with

cleaning, shopping and other details, and more. Suffice to say that I have *never* witnessed the love of God within His people in the way that I did as these helped my wife over the last number of very, very difficult months. Some of this is continuing in help that I am now receiving in her absence. Our family—and this would still include my wife because she will come up in the resurrection and attest to this—is forever indebted to these brethren’s ‘work and labor of love’ that God promises He will never ‘forget’ (Heb. 6:10).

“Some history might be important in this story. My wife’s health struggles actually began with fibroid tumors from about the time of the birth of our third and last child, a daughter, born in early 1980. This introduced physical challenges due to female-related health problems that made some aspects of my wife’s life difficult on a daily basis ever after. She suffered from severe anemia for years. (Also, in about 20 percent of cases, fibroid tumors become malignant, which is what happened here, and spread.) Beginning in 1971, she was truly what Mr. Armstrong referred to as ‘50 percent of her husband’s ministry.’ Those who know anything about our life understand that my ministry has been one of extraordinary challenge and difficulty all through the decades.

“This letter could not begin to recount all of those unique experiences and special training that brought that ministry to where it is today. Inseparable in all of it was the phenomenal steadfastness of the partner who was there at every twist and turn, backing me up, defending me, taking care of an ocean of details—all while we were under fire for the truth almost nonstop through the years. Her typing of all God’s doctrines—plus thousands of emails (just since Restored began) and all the regular magazine articles that were not part of the rewriting of Mr. Armstrong’s literature—has, of

course, now become a story and service of legendary proportion among thousands of God's people who have been the beneficiaries of her efforts. In fact, the Work could not have remotely been able to achieve all that God helped us to do in rewriting His truth were it not for her very unique participation, and as no other wife in the ministry could have done. Frankly, this participation provided her husband with an immense advantage over any other minister of God in being able to carry out the overwhelming responsibility of what God had laid before me to complete.

“Make no mistake, I know this—and I will never forget it!

“I have often thought of my wife as part of a future chapter of Church history, as part of the expected coming large extension of the Book of Acts that the Church has long understood will appear because that book closes without an ‘Amen.’

“But all the attacks, long hours, holding our home together, financial difficulties, because we poured every extra dime we had into God's Work, missed meals (not so much as a single bite of lunch for three and a half years straight at one point, from late 1999 to mid-2003), and so many other things in this vein—we were forced to eat dinner out three or four nights a week for years, and this after having already worked late all of those nights—in many ways wore down my wife's remaining health and energy (II Cor. 12:15). In the truest sense, my wife may have almost *literally* ‘laid down her life for her friends’ (John 15:13). I should add that, in the last months, she often repeated that she would not change anything. (Of course, looking back, there are things that I would try to change on behalf of her schedule, if given another opportunity. Yet, I have often tried to figure out what I could have done differently in our workload and could not really come

up with what would have been an alternative. God's people are all forced to play the cards that He has dealt them.)

“Know that in the last months Mrs. Pack remained more than ever positively determined to get back into the office and to help us finish the Work. She could not tell me often enough how much she wanted to come back and support me because she knew that no one else could understand the road that lies ahead for me personally. Even though she was declining, she still chose to return to the office every day for over two full business weeks, including the first two days of the Conference. This included wanting to see her son's presentation on Monday (at the Conference).

“The Work of God was absolutely everything to my wife. Though she could not help me with the typing of my last book *The Work of God – Its Final Chapter!*, she was able to carefully read it, even rereading certain parts of it such as the ‘Measure the Temple’ chapter. She expressed several times to different people upon reading it how (1) important it was that the message needed to be distributed, (2) how upset many readers were going to be, and (3) she could not understand how those in the splinters could miss the message it contained. I found it most encouraging that the book left her repeating the word ‘incredible.’

“At this point, it would be inspiring to review a quote that one of the visiting wives from overseas who attended the Conference gave me the day of my wife's death. She may have been the last woman other than her caregivers and our daughter who spoke to my wife. Their brief conversation was last Monday, Mrs. Pack's last day in the office:

““One of the most spiritually uplifting experiences I have ever had in my life was meeting with the late

Mrs. David Pack. This courageous lady, within a few short days of her death meeting me for the first time, was so fired up and focused on God's Work, she said that no matter what happened to her, or the outcome of her illness, it was all in God's Plan and that the Work must go on. She added that we must not be discouraged but more determined than ever to get on with the job of serving in and supporting God's Work. These were her words. It seemed to me that she didn't consider, at any time, her own suffering. She was far more concerned about God's Work and getting on with it. Her love for God and God's people shone through her and I can never ever forget that meeting.'

"I am tempted to say that this statement says it all, but there is one other brief statement I would like to offer because it was part of my wife's very last conversation with me, held one week ago tonight (Wednesday) as I write. She barely had enough breath to utter the words. It contains perhaps the most inspiring of words for you, but for reasons you will see, the most difficult for me to hear:

"'Tell the men in the office and the Church to always pray to keep their eyes on the Work. That is the most important thing for the rest of the age. Don't take your eyes off the Work. I am just sorry I could not stay and do it with you.'

"The Church has lost much with the passing of Mrs. Pack. That loss is simply incalculable. Her training began several years before Ambassador College, and she was already eleven and a half years in the faith when we were married. Before our marriage, she had traveled the world, attended two years of her college in Bricket Wood, England, learned to play four instruments and been Mr. Armstrong's secretary for two stints totaling five years over an eight-year period. Later, after marriage, she worked with the same 10,000

to 11,000 people that were in my assignments through the years, endured the same trials and attacks, while bearing and helping rear our three children, and *always* attending *every* Sabbath service with me in the years I pastored two and three congregations, all while she was also experiencing the many aspects of my special training referenced above.

“I have personally lost a kinship that allowed either of us to mention any name, date, event, doctrine, situation or circumstance, including all elements of the apostasy and the resulting splinters, and know that the other had an instant frame of reference that required no being brought up to speed. Directly related to this, one of my wife’s qualities was that she was always ‘real,’ possessing an extraordinary intuitive ability to ‘smell’ given situations. We often felt that the best summary of our marriage, if we could only use one term, was ‘spiritually productive.’ She told me twice in the last few weeks of our marriage, ‘No one could ever understand our marriage.’ To say that my wife’s passing leaves a hole in the office is a great understatement. It leaves a bigger hole in our home.

“I am not the only one of God’s servants to endure losing a wife. Those who heard my sermon ‘At the Red Sea’ (thousands have now listened to it) know the story of Mr. Armstrong’s wife dying in 1967, also after a long, difficult illness. Although almost age 75 at the time, Mr. Armstrong was required to go on without her for almost 19 more years. I also referenced how the prophet Ezekiel lost his wife at apparently a much younger age than was my wife, and how Paul must have lost his wife as well. We have had many dramatic healings in The Restored Church of God, and all of you regularly hear of them. Sometimes God allows people to live, through healing, and sometimes He does not because ‘it is appointed unto [all] men once to die’

(Heb. 9:27). Ultimately, everyone dies of something, meaning everyone eventually dies having not been healed.

“My wife ran a long, difficult course of 43 years and 10 months with God’s Spirit, nearly four years longer than Mrs. Armstrong, plus another almost four more years of attendance as a teenager before that. In regard to conversion, she is in fact four years and three months longer than I in the faith, because I was baptized in December of 1967.

“In her last months my wife built the qualities of much greater long-suffering, faith, self control—I often called her the ‘regimen queen’ because of her tremendous willpower—and, finally, more peace over God’s decision not to heal her. Despite wishing so badly to continue, she came to fully understand that ‘to live is Christ, and to die is GAIN’ (Phil. 1:21).

“While the death of every saint is precious to God (Psa. 116:15), a unique circumstance exists in our age, and this may well have been the case with my wife because of what she would have possibly had to witness me endure. God explains in Isaiah, ‘The righteous perishes, and no man lays it to heart: and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come’ (57:1).

“May all of us ‘lay to heart’ and ‘consider’ what has happened here.

“In the end, I am now alone. I repeat, as Christians, we are all forced to play the cards that God has dealt us. The only other option is to get up and leave the table and look for another ‘game.’ This was never an option for Mrs. Pack and it is not an option for me. Neither should it ever be for you (John 6:66-68). In my wife, you are all left with a wonderful example that you can emulate in regard to approach to the Work and in acceptance of God’s will.

“Brethren, know that I intend to press on toward the mark (Phil. 3:14) without looking back (Luke 9:62). This physical life is described as so much grass of the field, a handbreadth as David said. On the other hand, in this age, time is very, very short. There are not 19 years left. My wife’s own words quoted above are what is on my mind. Like Paul, I intend to fulfill I Corinthians 9:26-27: ‘I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beats the air: but I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a *castaway*.’ I am under no illusion that this will be easy. Paul knew that those of his office could also be *unapproved* by God (the more correct meaning of the Greek word *adokimos*, here translated as ‘castaway’). As a case in point, after posting this letter, I will go straight to do another *WORLD TO COME* broadcast. I ask that all of you would pray for me that I would have additional strength going forward in a way that I never thought I would ask anyone to pray for.

“In the end, one of my wife’s favorite verses, so important to her as she sought to get sleep each night with her terribly difficult breathing problems, has in the final sense come to pass on her behalf. David wrote, ‘I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for You, LORD, only make me dwell in safety’ (Psa. 4:8). My wife is now at peace, asleep—and completely safe from all further attack and harm. I am very thankful that she had an incredibly strong constitution and heart, physically speaking (noted by those who cared for her), but of course spiritually also. This allowed me to have closure with her in the very fullest sense over a period of many months of her war against the cancer. But, in the light of King David’s words, I can also take comfort that her long, incredibly difficult struggle is

over. We are left to think of how the completion by God of one 'living stone' (I Pet. 2:5) within a number so small in the First Resurrection trumps all other reasons why we might wish my wife to have been able to continue at my side.

"I leave you with I Thessalonians 4:13-18 to read as an assignment. As you think of Mrs. Shirley M. Pack, be sure to read verse 18 a second time.

"In Christ's service,  
"David C. Pack"

August 3, 2007:

"Surely, this has been both the busiest and the most sobering of months. Despite the sadness that all of us are feeling because of my wife's death, the Work of God *must* continue and *must* be completed. We are all determined here to press on to that completion. In fact, because of Mrs. Pack's death, we are all focusing more than ever on the goals and needs of the Work. This is exactly what my wife would have wanted us to do at this time.

"Before leaving the subject of my wife's passing, I must reiterate how wonderful has been the incredible love and outgoing concern for me and my family. I could never have dreamed that so many would write to me, or that they would compose things so poignant, so touching, so helpful and applicable to our feelings at this time, and so truly heartfelt. Also, the number of absolutely beautiful bouquets of flowers would fill a small ocean. I find myself wishing that my wife could see them.

"I know that I am somewhat repeating myself from the special tribute letter sent last week, but the warmth that I and my children are experiencing has brought a level of encouragement—and additional strength!—to me that I could not have thought

possible to feel just a few weeks ago, when I was trying to anticipate what life would be like should God have been planning to allow my wife to die. In fact, I have been going back and reading for the first time every one of the letters sent to my wife over the months to encourage her during her illness. While, for obvious reasons, some of these are difficult to read—they express the natural hope and sureness that God would raise up Mrs. Pack—they are also at the same time showing the very lovingkindness of God’s people that I am feeling. There were so many hundreds of cards and letters that my wife received that it will take me weeks, reading many per night, to complete them all.

“Finally, the viewing and funeral were a time when a great many people I had not seen in some cases for many years came to offer their condolences. There were all of my extended family members and my wife’s extended family, plus people from all of the splinters, including a variety of ministers, as well as people from my last pastorate in the Worldwide Church of God (including one formerly longtime local church elder—who was about to leave with me in 1993—but who with his wife has now actually returned to the Catholic church).

“Both the eulogy and service for my wife were fitting and inspiring...I will simply close this part of the letter with a very heartfelt ‘thank you’ for the kind of support I and my children are experiencing.”

### **A Special Gift**

During her final years, Mrs. Pack worked on a long-term project that accidentally resulted in a very special gift for two of her children. In an early 2008 staff lecture, Mr. Pack recalled this:

“When my wife died, I called my two younger children in and gave them each one of her bibles. Now she had two bibles. She had the one that she [wrote her college notes in] from 1963 to ’68, and then in the very last couple of years of her life, she decided that she wanted to transfer everything into a second Bible. I think they are pretty much the same.

“She did it as a Bible study, and she didn’t quite finish. But she was a neat printer. All the women in her family were.”

The following are Rob Pack’s reflections on this period.

“A conversation occurred about two weeks before my mother died. She had not given up hope that she could be healed, but rather she seemed at peace with the likely outcome of her cancer. She had a moment where she was pragmatic about her condition, and shared the sum of a life lived.

“She said, ‘You know Robby, in the last several weeks, as I’ve spent hours and hours looking back at all the memories I’ve accumulated through the years—something struck me! There is really only one thing that matters. It’s not all the people I’ve met. It’s not all the places I’ve been. It’s not all the experiences I’ve had—and it’s not even my family. None of these will really mean anything *once I’m gone*.’ Then she stopped, smiled and told me that *of course* it all meant something and *of course* she felt blessed, but what she was trying to say was:

““As I face the reality that I’m probably at the end of my life, all that *really* matters is whether all of the things add up—how I’ve conducted myself—have I qualified for eternal life? When you are at the end, what’s next is all that really matters. I’ve reached that point, and I’m not really looking back anymore.

“I’m looking forward.’

“My mother accepted that she was going to die. I think she *really did* reach a point where she stopped asking ‘what if’ she could have done things differently, would there be a different outcome? She was just ready for what was next. And she believed ‘what was next’ was eternal life.”

Almost two years have passed since Mrs. Pack’s death. Her husband’s thoughts were:

“While this biography was being written, I planned all along to add more about my wife at this point in the story. I got here and saw that there is no need.

“First, so much has been written about her for the last 1,100 pages, what else could be said? Second, the contents of this chapter are such that, I wonder again what I could add. One point comes to mind. It is short, but profound.

“It took me some time to come to final peace with the death of my wife. But it happened. The greatest thing she left was a record of service in God’s Work that holds a special power of *motivation to continue* for me.”

## *Another Personal Trial*

In the aftermath of what the Packs, the Headquarters congregation and the entire Church had endured, the demands of an intense schedule permitted little time to grieve or reflect. A growing Work had to carry on. But this was really the “therapy” Mr. Pack most needed.

In July 2007, the first Ambassador Youth Camp was just around the corner. There had been fairly large-scale camping excursions in previous summers involving young people at Headquarters and surrounding areas. But 2007 was the first year for a more formal, structured summer camp, with youth brought in from around the world.

### **Camp Interrupted**

The camp, held at Caesar Creek State Park in Waynesville, Ohio, had a fine start, featuring many elements of the Summer Education Program camps held in the 1960s through the 1980s—sports, Bible Studies, a treasure hunt, shared meals, and more.

On the next-to-last day of camp, Mr. Pack received a phone call from his daughter. He again found himself writ-

ing an unexpected letter to the Church. It would describe a traumatic situation of almost the worst nature. Only 19 days had passed since Mrs. Pack's death:

August 17, 2007

“Circumstances require that I now have to write another ‘family health update.’ While it is difficult to believe I am doing this so soon about such a matter, an extraordinary story has developed, and I hope all of you can be as sobered, but also inspired as I am at this moment. Also, I am writing because your urgent prayers are still needed in what has happened. You will soon understand this.

“As some of you may be aware, a little over a year ago my second son (and second child) Robert (Rob) returned...his mother and sister and I were of course thrilled to have him...working in the office. My daughter Jennifer is the youngest child and married to Mr. Kevin Denee. She and Rob were especially close growing up, so she is overjoyed that he is back in the office and back in Ohio (from North Carolina). [Editor’s Note: Rob has since returned to North Carolina to be with his children.]

“Beginning in the summer of 1995, I had spent an enormous number of hours working very closely with Rob because my father was no longer able to run his business (he died, and I inherited it in October of that year). This daily working business relationship lasted for over five years, until August 2000. This unusual business relationship also revived last summer at an important time for God’s Work.

“This said, having had several opportunities to attend summer camp in the Worldwide Church of God, Rob last week served as Activities Director at the Ambassador Youth Camp three hours from Headquarters. On the last day of the camp, Friday,

disaster struck. He and his brother-in-law (Mr. Denee) were attempting to move a very heavy steel soccer goal from a field so that the campers could play softball. The goal suddenly tipped over—the in-ground anchors unexpectedly giving way—and the corner of the goal fell directly on the entire right side of Rob’s face as he fell down under it. He was knocked unconscious, and Mr. Denee immediately thought he was dead. Paramedics were called, as was the camp nurse, and he was rushed to a hospital emergency room about 15 minutes away. The trauma team there almost immediately determined through examination and CT scans that he had to be quickly either life-flighted or taken in an ambulance to Columbus, and to the renowned Ohio State University (OSU) Medical Center. (An ambulance took him.)

“The only way to describe what happened to my son’s forehead, right eye, cheek, nose, upper and lower jaw, bite, and parts of even the left side of his face, was a catastrophic injury. Just the gash across the lower forehead was seven to eight jagged inches long—and all of it to the bone. In addition, with sinus bones breaking, a small air bubble was pushed into his brain cavity and the brain lining (the outer dura, meaning ‘hard’) sustained a ‘micro-tear.’ So did his right eyeball, which was very slowly leaking fluid and causing loss of peripheral vision. His eye was swollen completely shut and bleeding.

“In Columbus, multiple teams of doctors (various kinds of specialists) formed and began to examine and assess the massive extent of my son’s injuries. First, we heard words like ‘fractures.’ This gave way to descriptions of facial bones as having been ‘shattered.’ Later, (during the second reconstruction surgery I will describe) the word ‘destroyed’ became the operative word for many of the bones around the right eye, cheek, and both the upper and lower jaw.

“Brethren, understand that approximately 500 pounds of steel fell directly on Rob’s face from a height of about eight feet. By every account—and I mean EVERY account!!!—all who understood the nature of what happened recognized that Rob should have been killed instantly, his entire head ‘pancaked,’ if I may describe it this way. A day after the accident, after I preached the final sermon that closed the camp, five others joined me in briefly returning to the site of the accident before going back to Columbus. The soccer goal was as it had been left the day before. I attempted—I am a very strong man—to lift what fell on Rob. I could only lift the corner of the goal facing eight inches off the ground, and I twice tried as hard as I possibly could to lift it. I was horrified at what had landed on my son. In fact, I am still stunned. That Rob is six feet eight inches tall, and very powerful, has nothing to do with what the human head can sustain before it would be crushed flat.

“Bear in mind as you read that this accident occurred only nineteen days after the death of my wife. I found myself realizing that a truly unbelievable accident absolutely should have brought the death of my son this short time later! But for the obvious miracle that EVERYONE involved recognizes that they witnessed, this is what would have happened without angelic protection. This includes the opinion of some of the host of doctors and nurses I will be describing who also voiced the obvious divine intervention that could not be explained by time and chance or even ‘luck.’ To say that I and the rest of my family are extremely grateful that another death—a tragic death—in my family did not come to pass may be the greatest understatement of my life! I simply cannot find words to describe all that has happened over the last week, a week during which I spent most of my time in waiting

rooms, trauma rooms, special intensive care units, and hotels, etc., while talking to a wide range of different kinds of specialists bringing reports of what they were learning, what they were planning, and later, what they had done to reconstruct Rob's face.

"As circumstances and knowledge developed, nine separate medical teams, of two to four doctors apiece, came to be involved. There was also a primary or 'lead' physician who led teams of trauma surgeons, plastic surgeons, neurosurgeons, ophthalmologists, neuro-ophthalmologists, ear-nose-and-throat (E.N.T.) specialists (to perform and monitor the tracheotomy before final surgery), radiologists, neurologists and anesthesiologists. Also, as could be imagined, a near endless number of nurses and nurses' aides were involved during various steps and stages of the whole process.

"Rob's first surgery, on Friday, to close the jagged wound, took two hours. The follow-up surgery on Sunday took almost eight more hours. Seven doctors and nurses installed ten permanent steel plates into my son's face, and his jaw was wired shut with multiple additional devices. These will remain in place for a total of 21 to 28 days (this was five days ago). Because his nose has been completely reconstructed and is largely blocked by swelling at this time, the temporary but necessary tracheotomy will only possibly be removed when Rob's jaws are unwired and he can at least breathe through his mouth (and probably by then through his nose also). The tracheotomy could remain until the second phase of the 'rubber-banding' of Rob's jaws is finished.

"It is interesting to note that the primary plastic surgeon, a truly brilliant physician, told me that Rob's case ranked in the top three most difficult cases that he and his attending team have ever dealt with. This caused him to parade a near endless number

of interns, resident physicians and OSU nurses and medical students to Rob's bed so that he could be used as a textbook example of what to do in the most extreme circumstances.

"Rob was released from the medical center yesterday and I, with the same nurse who cared for my wife, drove him home last night. In fact, as this is being written, he is actually strolling through the office reuniting with all the staff. (There have just been some very 'poignant moments' here and there.) At this point, the swelling in his face has been reduced to about 75 or 80 percent of Rob's normal look; use of the right eye is returning, and is improving daily; his partially shaved head is already growing back, having been evened out from a necessary precautionary surgical 'pre-shave' in the event the surgeons were not able to do the surgery as hoped for. (The surgeons had expected to have to literally peel Rob's face back from the top of his head all the way down in order to repair such extensive injuries. They were able to reopen the forehead wound and come up under the upper lip instead—an enormous blessing because of various risks that could be avoided.)

"The schedule now calls for a plastic surgeon to remove the stitches—there were a total of about 70, with perhaps 40 to 45 internal ones at three more layers—on Monday back in Columbus, when eye specialists and E.N.T. doctors will also reassess his condition and progress. Many follow-up visits either in Columbus (two hours away) or with Akron area OSU medical center associate doctors—plus a dentist—will occur in the Headquarters area over the coming weeks. Nurses in this area will also be seeing him three times for at least this week, and the first one arrived at my daughter's home (where Rob is staying) this morning for initial examination.

“It is interesting to note that my son had previously broken his nose at least two times as a teenager, both with significant damage to its structure and his ability to breathe. Naturally, these effects have been long-term. This accident completely destroyed all of his nose’s existing bone structure, good and bad. This meant that the plastic surgeons had to entirely reconstruct Rob’s nose. A hidden blessing is that this allowed it to be brought back to a condition much closer to normal—in both structure and breathing. In effect, he got a needed and beneficial ‘nose job,’ at the price of everything else.

“There are still ‘dangers’ about which to be concerned, and about which I ask all of God’s people to pray going forward: (1) Bone infection anywhere on the face, (2) brain infection due to bacteria introduced by the air bubble, (3) leakage of spinal fluid, if pressure on the brain slowly or suddenly breaks the micro-tear before it heals in the next 30 days or so, (4) any kind of respiratory infection because of the ongoing tracheotomy, (5) related to this would be vomiting when his jaws are wired shut and ‘aspirating’—ingesting material into the lungs—because nothing can escape the mouth (emergency procedures would have to be activated), (6) proper healing of the partial loss of vision, as well as some double vision, in the right eye due to several possible nerve or muscle-related causes, and (7) simple accidents (even sneezing) that could happen, which could injure or even collapse some of the reconstructive surgery.

“Please understand that all of these are very real concerns that intervention by God can simply ‘stop cold.’ Rob is also naturally losing weight (he has already lost about 20 lbs. from a starting weight of 235) because he must essentially ‘eat’ through a straw, and this for at least three weeks.

“Many more tests and re-assessments of Rob’s jaw and overall healing process await him!

“Thank you in advance for your prayers, I hope beginning tonight, about my son’s condition. He is needed in God’s Work—and he is needed by his father and his family. I know that you will be as faithful in your prayers for Rob as you were for my wife. We should also be willing to expect that God will grant a very different outcome.

“Either I or the Church Administration team will keep the Church posted about this matter as developments occur. At this time, I am thinking that this will probably be in the form of an update, with lessons that have been learned, in my next *PILLAR* ‘Personal’ in about two weeks.”

### **Life’s Lessons**

Mr. Pack’s “Personal,” titled “Learning Life’s Lessons,” was published soon after, and included a letter from Rob Pack.

“It is with the deepest gratitude toward God that this unusual ‘Personal’ is written. One of the most extraordinary times of my life, and that of my family, appears to finally be drawing to a close. When I reported to the Church the recent accident involving my son Rob, I mentioned that a follow-up would likely appear in this *PILLAR*. This is that report.

“Before going further, I thought it would be helpful for you to hear directly from my son about his experience and his views of that experience. It serves to introduce the remainder of the “Personal.” I will follow my son’s comments with some more of my own.

“I would like to personally thank all of the brethren for their kind emails, cards and letters of encouragement. The last few weeks have truly shown

me the outgoing concern of my Restored family that I have now experienced firsthand. It has served as great motivation to resume my efforts as soon as possible in God's Work, despite the more conservative timetables given to me in the hospital.

“For an update on the specifics of my health: I have been back and forth from Ohio State Medical Center in Columbus, Ohio, multiple times now, meeting with teams of physicians who all seem to make the same general statement: ‘You are recovering extremely well and we don’t understand why you didn’t sustain more permanent damage. Wow, are you lucky!’

“My ophthalmologist (eye surgeon) informed me that my iris should have torn, my eye should have literally exploded and that many patients of his with minor injuries compared to mine have severe and permanent double vision in the affected eye. Although I do have some double vision, it is fading on a daily basis. After examination, he was shocked to report that I have 20/20 vision in my left eye and, incredibly, 20/15 (better than ‘perfect’) vision in my right eye—the one that was ‘crushed’! He also told me that I was extremely lucky and that I may not even need to continue wearing reading glasses (from a small pre-existing astigmatism).

“One of the hardest things I have had to endure was the initial uncertainty that my 4-year-old daughter Aimee Jane had about my appearance—who I was!—before all the swelling had disappeared. After the plastic surgeon removed the surface layer of the over 70 stitches in my face, it was encouraging that my children could again physically recognize me as their dad (during a recent visit to Ohio), and that the face in the mirror again began to look the same. For a time, my appearance had been radically changed. Although I still have significant numbness in about half my face

(forehead and right side) the doctors are encouraged that I appear to have normal muscle function returning in all of my facial muscles, and that I have regained symmetry in my face after the two-phase, ten-hour facial reconstruction. They are also optimistic that I am regaining sensation in the numb areas, and this is a positive sign. I asked the lead surgeon exactly how it was that they reconstructed my face to its present condition after such a catastrophic injury. He simply replied that I was ‘lucky.’ He chuckled and said he wanted to take extensive pictures of my face during the next office visit so he could ‘show off’ his reconstructive abilities to future patients and colleagues.

“‘Because of the extreme damage to my nasal breathing passages, it was necessary to give me a tracheotomy to allow sufficient airflow during the healing of my facial bones with the accompanying new plates. Although this procedure is usually required to remain in place for four to five weeks, until the wire is removed from the jaw, my ear/nose/throat doctor said I was healing so fast and my air passages were so clear that he removed the tracheotomy tube after just 8 days, instead of four to six weeks! In addition, the tiny air bubble that threatened my brain and posed a high risk for cerebral meningitis and further complications seem to no longer be an issue. Once again, I was informed of how ‘lucky’ I was.

“‘This accident and the ensuing chain of events have made me think back to the many times through the years that I have witnessed the blessing of little children ceremony. I have been forcefully reminded of the promise made almost 33 years ago when God promised His protection to me as a child because of what my parents believed. I consider myself blessed and know that my prayers and the prayers of everyone who has shown concern for me have not gone unheard.

“Thank you!

“I was reminded in a recent email that, although there are personal lessons I am supposed to learn in this trial, this is clearly an attack by Satan against my father’s time and against God’s Work as a whole. The attack will not succeed. There is still way too much work to be done.”

Mr. Pack continued with other points in his “Personal”:

“For most of this spring and summer my mind has been on the many lessons and insights that have presented themselves through the unexpected death of my wife and the equally unexpected life-threatening accident of my son. The balance of the ‘Personal’ will briefly cover a number of points that have been on my mind. They are things that all of us should consider as we go forward in the few remaining years God has given His Church to complete the still enormous amount of work yet to be done.

“While much more could be said on each point below, I am keeping them short because whole sermons have been devoted to aspects of each principle listed.

“(1) Mr. Armstrong said more than once that perhaps the greatest sin is that of ingratitude! Paul recorded, ‘Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God’ (Phil. 4:6).

“Brethren, you will be amazed at how many things you can suddenly find to be thankful for when something you took for granted has just been lost, or was almost lost. While it is obvious how this applies to me, in how many ways might it apply to you? How thankful are you for the many things—things that you may now be taking for granted—that God gives to, or does for, you every day of your life?

“I have striven to make it a near lifelong practice of keeping about one-fourth or one-third of my daily prayers devoted to thanking God for all that He does—for me, for others and for His Work. I learned early in my conversion the wonderful value and blessing of approaching each day this way. It has greatly helped me get through recent weeks and months.

“It will do the same for you for the rest of your life—but only if you actively employ it!

“(2) Who doubts that life involves many, many ups and downs? Sometimes these are through God’s specific plan for our individual lives and sometimes they are a result of simple ‘time and chance happen[ing] to them all.’ First, it is important to recognize that it is not always clear which is which. In the end, however, it does not really make any difference.

“We still have to ‘ride the rollercoaster’ of Christian existence. And we must do this in the spirit of what Paul added for the Philippians in the same context from above, stating, ‘Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need’ (4:11-12).

“Be sure that you permit the ever-changing circumstances of your life to instruct you!

“(3) Trials and tests of every kind are an absolutely necessary part of the Christian way of life! You cannot escape them—nor should you try, except in matters in which you have obvious control through the use of good decision-making. Peter recorded, ‘Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you’ (I Pet. 4:12).

“It is human to think that trials are strange, something that intrudes into what should be a normal flow of everyday life. Be honest. Nobody truly enjoys trials. But they can appreciate, and even later enjoy, the fruit yielded by trials—if they learn from them what God intends.

“Determine every day of your life to accept and consider the messages, often sent straight from God, which will be overlooked and missed if your sole focus in trials and tests is to ‘get through them’ or ‘wait for them to be over.’

“(4) You should not see yourself as enduring trials alone. God will always sufficiently empower you with His Spirit so that you are able to endure any given trial you are facing. Recall that Paul went on to follow the above-quoted verses to the Philippians with ‘I can do all things through Christ [Who] strengthens me’ (4:13). You and I are no different from Paul. This is the whole point of what he was inspired to instruct. At the outset of every time of difficulty in your life—great or small—quickly remind yourself of this passage, and speak these words to yourself with conviction.

“Remember also that spiritual strength is made perfect coming off a foundation of physical human weakness.

“(5) Consciously remind yourself of the importance of good decision-making in every circumstance in which decisions cannot be avoided. Solomon said, ‘The prudent man looks well to his going’ (Prov. 14:15).

“My son and son-in-law would both no doubt say that they learned a great deal from what seemed to be such a simple act, that of moving a soccer goal. The lesson learned would not be merely to be more careful in the future in that exact same situation, but rather how all of us should approach every potentially

difficult or dangerous situation with great care. We should be concerned with all the things that can go wrong, including what could happen beyond one's control even if he were careful.

“In just the next week of ordinary human existence, you will make any number of decisions that carry the potential to take your life. Accidents do not just happen to others—they can happen to you. Be careful!

“(6) Indirectly connected to the above point, recall Christ's instruction, given in the context of being vigilant not to fall into the pursuit of physical things: ‘He spoke a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: and he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have much goods laid up for many years; take your ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, You fool, this night your soul shall be required of you’ (Luke 12:16-20).

“None of us know when our life might end. The man described was caught up in wrong pursuits. Like so many millions today, he had no comprehension that his life could end as quickly as would happen if hit by a truck. Perhaps take the time to listen again to my sermon of about four months ago titled ‘This Day!’

“Utilize to the maximum every day that God gives you. Pray for His Work. Study the Bible regularly. Do the same with fasting and meditation. Serve others at every opportunity. Build godly character where sins, faults or weakness now exist. Sacrifice for God's Work in all of the ways about which you have been exhorted in recent years.

“(7) Somewhat connected to this point is another. Do not ignore health warnings. What happened to my wife, and to others who have either gotten very sick or died in the faith, has personally sobered me. I am trying to take a closer, in fact much closer, look at my daily health regimen and routine. I have been forced to make a number of adjustments.

“How diligent are you, and have you been, as a steward over what you should think of as the God-given resource—the temporary, physical human body you have been entrusted with for ‘threescore and ten’? God has given you this extraordinary stewardship. Have you recognized it as such? Do you grasp how much is at stake in just the proper maintenance of good health? Never, ever permit yourself to forget that almost everything you do is in some way tied to your health.

“Carefully manage this marvelous physical ‘resource’ for the few years remaining for all of us in this life!

“(8) Faith had better be present in every aspect of our lives, and sometimes great faith. You and I either believe that God is directing every step of the path we walk—or we do not! The Hebrews were told ‘Without faith it is impossible to please Him: for he that comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him’ (11:6). The Romans were told that ‘The just shall live by faith’ (1:17). (Also see Habakkuk 2:4.) The ‘just’ are those who have been justified by the blood of Christ. This describes us. Therefore, we had better be truly living by faith.

“The world wanders around stumbling in darkness because they have no idea that there is a greater purpose at work on earth, either in their own lives, individually, or the whole world, collectively. Brethren, we must

live and act as though we have complete confidence in Christ's purpose directing and guiding our lives.

“These are just some of the things that have been on my mind starting as far back as before the turn of this calendar year. Other points and principles have been covered in sermons or additional reports and letters of recent date. These things have not been presented just to understand what I have gone through, but rather that each of us would focus intently on the lessons and insights to be gleaned at each ‘mile marker’ in our conversion.

“God is working out a supreme purpose. Remember that everything—everything!—that we do must in some way tie to the all-important understanding that God, the Master Potter, is building HOLY, RIGHTEOUS, PERFECT CHARACTER in the blessed few ‘pieces of clay’ He has called to reign with Jesus Christ in just a few more years—if they qualify!”

Rob continued for some time as Media Production Services manager, overseeing the Church's wide array of video productions, Information Services, as well as publishing. Today, back in North Carolina, there are certain daily challenges with his health—but he is grateful to be alive!

## *Turning Point in the Work*

**T**he fall of 2007 marked, in a sense, a “return to the Work” for Mr. Pack. During the previous year, a tremendous amount of time had been spent assisting Mrs. Pack in her battle with illness.

### **First Feast Alone Since 1972**

This was the first year in which The Restored Church of God had three North American Feast of Tabernacles sites (alongside many international sites), and Mr. Pack divided his time between them over the course of the eight-day convention.

Spending time at beautiful sites in Niagara Falls, Canada, Snowbird, Utah, and Destin, Florida, was a very different experience without the companionship and support of a spouse.

“The Feast of 2007 was one like no other. In fact, it is hard to describe what it was like to go to the first Feast in 37 years without a companion who was taking care of all the details of clothing, travel,

shopping, as well as all of the details of scheduling while at the Feast. In some ways, it was the worst possible thing that for the first time in my life I was going to *three* sites, not one or two. But in another way, it was the best possible thing to happen because it kept my mind very busy.

“Also, two young men traveled with me, taking care of a host of details for which I was very grateful. Two young single men did not equal one experienced woman—and they readily agreed.”

The fall of 2007 would see a dramatic transformation in the scope of the Work on virtually all fronts. Members thrilled to reports of progress, related in detail through Mr. Pack’s monthly *Brethren/Co-Worker Letters*.

Many letters tell the inspiring story, step-by-step.

### **December 2007—Plans for a Television Studio**

The next statement comes from the Publishing Project coordinator, and has to do with what were big, new developments in the Church’s plans to publish books for purchase in retail chains and online. This was the December 2007 *Brethren/Co-Worker Letter*:

“Our recent trip to a large East Coast publishing company (mentioned in last month’s *Brethren/Co-Worker Letter*) was, to say the least, extremely productive. It was truly an eye-opening experience, one we very strongly believe provided Headquarters with the valuable information needed to properly prepare to launch God’s Work forward on several fronts. It was encouraging that the founder and Chief Executive Officer of this large, multinational company ‘dropped everything’ because he wished to meet with us personally. After having chosen to research

us on his own interest, he decided to spend an entire afternoon extensively discussing Mr. Pack's books and the future of the publishing project with us. This man can perhaps best be described as a publishing industry insider. He provided an incredible inside view of today's publishing world. It opened our eyes for the first time to the specific, individual steps required to launch our books on a massive scale, and to ensure this project is a success..."

"This entire trip was a blessing and an opportunity given to us by God. The lessons given by the men who met us have prepared us to confidently *and immediately* proceed with the publishing project."

"The remainder of the letter will detail projects that we can now officially announce because the money is or will soon be in place to carry them out:

"(1) We intend to present up to 10 books to the publisher..."

"(2) We can also project that we will be able to present additional books...to the publisher...through 2009—or even beyond. (There are some other new books that you have heard about, which will be mentioned again soon.)

"(3) We now have the funds in place to contract an outside company to redesign our websites so that they are up to the same standard (with obvious differences) of such media giants as CNN, MSNBC and IHT, among others. You will soon be hearing more about this exciting development because contracts are expected to be signed within a month. Results will be about two months later, meaning the website redesign should appear about March 1. Related to this is the fact that just in September and October there have been an additional 14,617,529 websites created, meaning that they are appearing now at a rate of 1,677,421 per week—or 239,632

per day! This incredible statistic by itself ought to convince everyone *for all-time* that the media wave of the future, and until Christ Returns, is the Internet. This sets up the next item.

“(4) Funds are now also in place to construct a first-class television studio, except that ours will [first] be used to videocast on the Internet. We need to find space in the building, and we then intend to build a ‘set’ of similar quality to what you old-timers in the faith will remember from Mr. Armstrong’s telecasts (recall clips of him from our *Behind the Work 2007* video). Understand that we are now poised to take the announcement of the kingdom of God and the full truth of the Bible, coupled with the warning to the nations of Israel, to the now over 1.4 billion people who have access to the Internet. Recall that this number was 1.154 billion just a little over four months ago...Please pray for me in this regard, as we embark on an important new element in the Work, one more familiar to Mr. Armstrong than to me. I did two telecasts in the last few months of the Global Church of God, and also did various sermons ‘in front of the camera,’ but what we are planning is obviously something much more sophisticated and professional.

“(5) ...

“(6) ...

“(7) Finally, at least for this list, we can fairly safely project that the funds are also now in place to hire the necessary employees (we think the right people are available) to help carry the additional workload in Media & Marketing, as well as Media Services (those who prepare videocasts). We expect the first person to arrive as soon as January 1, with possibly one more arriving the first of each of the next two months. We will see.”

“On a final related financial note, Mr. Armstrong always found it encouraging to see and announce increasing numbers of co-workers and donors to God’s Work. This has been its own quietly developing story in The Restored Church of God. There has been a steady and continual rise in the number of people outside the Church who wish to contribute to what they see God is doing here. It is another part of why the Church continues to move forward as we have been.

“We may find after another month that we can even safely alter upward our *long-term income projection*. Even a slight upgrade, when carried over a long period of several years, can have a DRAMATIC and POWERFUL effect on the scope of the Work.”

### **January 2008—Unveiling a New Direction**

At the turn of the calendar year, God was opening Mr. Pack’s mind to an ever-grander vision of what the Work and Church would accomplish before the end of the age. The next report comes from the January 2008 *Brethren/Co-Worker Letter*.

“Brethren, the Work of God is about to change—and I mean in every regard...The whole Church can look forward to a message (to be heard on January 19) filled with the excitement of inspiring—and BIG!—developments across a broad array of fronts in God’s Work.

“It might be interesting to know in advance that I will read a series of short reports from either division heads or department managers as a summary introduction to my comments that will follow each report. Between eight and a dozen separate reports are now anticipated. (There may even be a need for a follow-up ‘Bible

Study’ on the same Sabbath, and there will continue to be so much to report that there will also need to be a number of additional update messages before the next scheduled one in the middle of 2008.)

“One of the other problems with trying to report any of these things in writing now is that the ‘financial landscape’ is changing so rapidly—so dramatically—that the passing of another week will only benefit all that I can report. This is related to the fact that our STRATEGIC PLANS are changing on a now almost daily basis.

“What is happening is just that powerful!”

“News from this month reveals a grim state of affairs for the world. Yesterday morning, former Pakistani Prime Minister and opposition leader Benazir Bhutto was assassinated at an election rally. Initial reports, and these conflict, stated that the killer shot Ms. Bhutto in the neck and chest, and then detonated a bomb, killing himself along with 20 others...”

“*The Real Truth* magazine demonstrates how rapidly our editorial team was able to ‘slam into gear’ and put our response on the ‘front edge’ of this story worldwide. Already posted at this writing, no other magazines (in the world or the splinters) will have done—or been able to do—what God’s team in place here has accomplished.

“Hopefully, you are continuing to notice the constant and visible improvement in power, quality and excellence that is reported so often to us by our large and growing readership of this magazine, now many hundreds of thousands.”

**February 2008—Pastor Training Program,  
Ambassador Youth Camp and Studio**

By now it is evident that multiple topics needed to be reported in every *Brethren/Co-Worker Letter*. Mr. Pack want-

ed the brethren to have details. This was sent February 2008.

“Now for progress reports, with the first from Multimedia Services regarding the...Pastor Training Program filming: ‘With the youth film now behind us, Multimedia is now focusing on all of the many details involved in readying for videocasting. To do this, we are currently focused on the transitional project of filming and producing videos of the Pastor Training Program (PTP) lectures. This is a major shift from previous projects that were largely editing-intensive. The PTP lectures require a much more comprehensive process, not only through filming and video-editing, but also in regard to ‘stage sets,’ lighting setup, camera angles and lecture choreography—all of this being done within a ‘classroom setting’ at Headquarters.

““Within the overall Leadership Development Program, the PTP will develop leaders on various pastoral issues. Instead of sending audio CDs, the new DVDs sent will include multiple camera angles, specialized set design and possible presentation graphics. This ongoing project serves as wonderful training for all future Multimedia productions, including videocasting, now soon to happen.

““Not only does this project represent an ‘A-Z film project’ (from lighting and filming a live Restored event to sending out the final DVD), it introduces one of the most important steps the department has taken in the past few weeks—upgrading our equipment. So far we have been limited to a single camera that only films in a relatively low resolution at *standard definition* (SD). After intensive research we selected two very powerful new video cameras...”

““With some additional equipment, and these flexible, new cameras, we can deliver video content

that rivals the largest professional news agencies and ensures that God’s Church preaches and presents the gospel to the world in the most effective and powerful way, through video!”

“At this point, I think everyone will also enjoy reading about the new television studio and videocasting plans as described in a 1-page section within a completely revised Chapter Sixteen (of *The Work of God* book) to be posted as an article today on the website. The bold is the subhead above it:

**New Television Studio!—  
Videocasting *The WORLD TO COME!***

““Mr. Armstrong began to announce the gospel in the 1930s on *The WORLD TOMORROW* radio program. Decades later most of his public preaching had moved to television. This program slowly built a giant audience of regular listeners, many millions of whom went on to read *The Plain Truth* magazine and other literature. Of course, many thousands became members after first hearing Mr. Armstrong’s voice on this program. This established the successful pattern used today of public preaching to the world.

““Before our plans to move to videocasting, we produced 112 *WORLD TO COME* audio broadcasts. Of course, these are *all* available *24 hours a day* on *The REAL TRUTH* website, which means there exists a system of archiving programs that Mr. Armstrong could never have dreamed of just 25 years ago.

““Recognizing that we live in a largely image-driven ‘video world,’ we understood the need to begin videocasting *The WORLD TO COME* program. The first step was to find space in our building to construct what amounts to a ‘world-class’—state-of-the-art television studio. Necessary sufficient space *was*

secured and construction is underway at this writing, with it scheduled for completion by the middle of March.

“As mentioned, these will be regularly produced, and the length, set appearance and style will closely resemble Mr. Armstrong’s telecasts. One of the virtual *doctrines* of the past was that we serve a God of quality. Therefore, these videocasts must reflect excellence, be absolutely professional in every way—with high definition cameras (already purchased), beautiful studio, sufficient and quality graphics, news footage, powerful statistics, effective music, all of this brought together by cutting-edge software.

“Of course, all of this can only come together and be possible through use of a specially trained *team* of professionals. We are blessed to already have this in place on our staff. (A reminder again to watch ‘Behind the Work.’)

“We understand that it will take some time to perfect the level of quality that we must achieve. Having carefully followed an exact timeline to this point, we plan by mid-spring this year (hopefully, about May 1) to release simultaneously our first four to eight videocasts.

“Keep watching *The REAL TRUTH* website for the announcement of their arrival!

“The next report comes from Mail Processing: ‘As mail continues arriving in large numbers, we continue to process inquiries, mail literature and send responses ever more efficiently!’

“The Worldwide Church of God long found it better to bring literature printing in-house. But after reaching a certain threshold it became less labor intensive and cheaper to send the material to outside printers. This switched several times before reaching a stable point.

““Since the delivery of our new equipment, the ongoing, in-house production tests have proven invaluable, and we have found ourselves in a very similar situation.”

“The following write-up comes from Youth Services: ‘All brethren will find enclosed the new edition of the *Ambassador Youth*. With the 2008 camp (AYC) less than five months away, we have prepared a special ‘camp-preparation’ issue containing *ten* articles. These address a wide variety of subjects related to the camp experience. Our intent is to adequately prepare the Church’s youth for this year’s AYC and thoroughly motivate them to want to attend this truly one-of-a-kind opportunity. Nowhere else will teens experience anything like it! AYC 2008 is set to be yet another life-changing experience for our youth.

““The process for applying to this year’s AYC will be different this year. All potential attendees will be required to fill out a detailed application (included in this mailing for all our teens who attend Sabbath services). We strongly encourage *all teens* to fill out these forms, even those who live in far-flung regions of the globe and/or may not be able to afford the camp fee and travel expenses.

“Our financial situation may allow us to assist a significant number of U.S. and international teens this year. We will strive to do whatever we can to ensure that as many teens as possible attend. We are looking forward to receiving *many* applications. The more teens who attend, the better experience AYC will be for all.

““Parents: Do not allow your teens to miss this opportunity! Encourage them—motivate them!—to send their applications. Remember Mr. Armstrong’s admonition in the youth video you recently viewed:

When one considers the importance of camp, “being indifferent” toward it is one of the gravest sins one could commit...”

“Space does not permit reports of progress on the publishing front, website remodeling, development of a small school, etc., but believe me these things and others are progressing very well. I am committed to reporting **REGULARLY** both from the pulpit and in writing all relevant details. My position in reporting these things is as enjoyable as anything I have ever done in my life! And what is happening is just too thrilling and inspiring for anyone to miss!

“Finally, I can now officially report that the Church’s income in 2007 grew an absolutely phenomenal *77+ percent* above 2006!”

“Nothing I am seeing leads me to think that the world has even a minute longer to go than my sermon of three months ago reported. I often think of the following analogy in regard to the coming Great Tribulation. As you read it, ask yourself if it applies to you:

“Imagine a number of people at day’s end sitting around a campfire somewhere in the beauty of nature, but out in the open. The stars are out and so is the moon, with not a cloud in the sky. The fire is inviting and the food is good. The temperature is perfect and the softest of breezes is blowing. The animals are all quiet and resting. Conversation is easy and so is the laughter—and everyone is growing sleepy, believing a peaceful night of rest awaits them.

“However, just over the horizon, only a couple hills away, unseen and just beyond earshot, is coming ‘the storm of the century’—in fact, **WORSE!** Screaming—deafening—winds of 200 mph, and gusting to 400 mph, mixed with sand, broken debris and even stones, are racing toward the ‘camp.’ Trees,

houses and the very strongest buildings are being flattened and boulders thrown around like toys as it advances.

“Strangely, for those who survive, the first storm affecting hundreds of millions will be followed by a *second* infinitely worse one, arriving shortly after, that will crash into *billions*.

“This description is perhaps just the tiniest picture of the Great Tribulation and Day of the Lord.

“Our challenge? Warn all (and hope to convince some) of those enjoying the campfire that a storm of such magnitude, and in two waves—a weather calamity never previously experienced or reported anywhere on earth—is approaching, and will soon descend on every nation (‘campfire’) of the world. And then the task is to inspire the same people to believe that what will come after is also different, but infinitely BETTER, than anything ever experienced by civilization.

“Are we up to the challenge?”

“My prayer is that first all of US believe deeply this picture, because it is this internal conviction that becomes much of the impetus for all we do, first in our own lives, but also in our driven determination and unbending effort to finish the most important Work on earth. I recommend that you read and reread the picture described until you could also never forget *it*.”

“May everyone continue to do all that they can in the days ahead to help fulfill the vision unfolding before all eyes in the Church!”

### **March 2008—Troubled World, Growing Work**

The next statement comes from the *Brethren/Co-Worker Letter* of March 2008.

“This has been another extraordinary month. Opportunities—and incredible possibilities!—are simultaneously opening up to God’s Work. Three editorial staff members attended a campaign rally last Saturday night for the democratic presidential hopeful Senator Barack Obama, with three more of our staff scheduled to hear former President Clinton speaking nearby this afternoon. (*The Real Truth* also carries an interesting article about the rally.)

“One of our new High Definition cameras was stationed right beside those of CNN. You will actually see pictures of this in a thorough article and ‘spread’ to be included in the next *Pillar*. These cameras and other super quality digital cameras are all playing a role in new and different ways not previously available to us...”

“To understand the quality of all that God’s Headquarters is doing, one need merely look at the contents of what for us is now a typical mailing—the one arriving with this letter. Two magazines are included, but so also are the promised ‘Youth Guide’ and new *Annual Calendar*. I must say that I never cease to be amazed at the incredible quality of art and graphics merged with the usual wonderful editorial content of all our publications.

### **April 2008—Beginning to Videocast**

This is from the April 2008 *Brethren/Co-Worker Letter*.

“While you will see the usual powerful regular magazines enclosed, we will shift quickly to news of the Work. Since the last update on the *realtruth.org* website remodel, many details have solidified. Contracts and the final Statement of Work have finally been signed, allowing us to explain to the

Church some of the actual website upgrades. They are exciting, to the point of thrilling. Yet, the final picture will be worth a thousand words, compared to what you will read here. Understand that what we are planning for these websites is to take them to what I call ‘the top of the world’ in all manner of quality and function...”

“The design firm we contracted has scheduled this first remodel to last nearly *800 hours*, and will be carried out by a team of highly specialized and experienced project managers, artists, designers and developers.”

“Next, the absolutely beautiful videocasting studio should be fully complete in three weeks...”

“Thank you for your prayers on my behalf, and on behalf of all of the staff here, and thank you in advance for so many much needed prayers during this time when I, with others supporting, am facing what are clearly some of the biggest decisions of my life! I am so very thankful for all that you do.”

### **“AC” Reborn!—Ambassador Center**

As his vision of the Work’s future grew, Mr. Pack realized that more than a Pastor Training Program would be needed.

A training “center” that continued the spirit and tradition of Ambassador College was necessary to train leaders both at Headquarters and in the field—a “feeder system” providing employees, managers and ministers to serve in the Work. This had to be done in a systematic and highly organized fashion. The pattern of the past would pave the way.

Ambassador Center was born!

Fast forwarding for a moment to early 2009, Mr. Pack found a letter that summed up in many ways the thoughts,

feelings and conclusions that convinced him that a restoration of Ambassador College was necessary.

A letter that Mr. Armstrong wrote to his Uncle Frank from San Francisco in January 1947 reveals the purpose behind starting the original Ambassador College. It speaks volumes.

“Dear Uncle Frank:

“I have about twenty minutes before leaving for the train home, so thought I’d get off a short account of happenings since I saw you last summer.

“Sorry my call at your office was so brief and full of interruptions. We had a good trip home, arriving on schedule.

“Did I tell you I planned to start a college in Pasadena? This work has grown to the place it needs several Herbert W. Armstrongs, and so far it has had only one. It needs a follow-up—a personal follow up—I haven’t been able to give it. So far I’ve been able to get clerical help, and shift about all that kind of detailed responsibility to others, but I need several who can do some of the things that, so far, only I can do. Another thing, I’m not getting any younger and the work so far has been built solely around me, and if I dropped off it wouldn’t continue long. Only thru a college, where we can educate and train men to do some of the things I do, can the work expand much bigger, and be sure of continuing on—and even with the college going I realize I’ll be lucky if I’m able actually to use one in ten or twenty of the students.”

### **A Trip to Pasadena—Recapturing a Vision**

The best way to provide the Headquarters staff with a glimpse would be a tour of the college and what was once God’s Headquarters.

A travelogue detailing this trip to Pasadena was published in *The Pillar* magazine, titled “Recapturing the Past, Preparing for Our Future! – HQ Staff Visits Former AC Campus”:

“March 2, 2008 – Hours before the morning sun arose, 26 of us from the Headquarters staff stretched and waited in line to buy coffee and newspapers and other reading material. We were at the Akron-Canton Airport waiting to board a plane bound for Los Angeles, three time zones away. One thought was at the center of our minds: By midday, we will walk the campus where God trained a ministry and performed the greatest Work the world had yet seen.

“With a brief layover in Denver, Colo., we arrived at LAX...We picked up three rental vans, loaded our luggage and headed for Pasadena. All were thankful that the traffic was relatively light, as Los Angeles is notorious for traffic jams. Along the highway, we took notice of the Southern California environment. We saw traces of smog in the air, but not so much that it blanketed the sky. In the distance were the rugged mountains, standing tall and unmovable. And along the highway were neighborhoods: houses, stores, restaurants, repair shops and the like—communities that, at first glance, looked like suburbia blend into each other, creating an urban monstrosity of middle class neighborhoods.

“Finally, we came to Pasadena, city of roses. Compared to Los Angeles, it was quiet, slower in pace, easier on the eyes. As we drew close to the former Ambassador College (AC) campus, and spotted the renowned Ambassador Auditorium and the Administration Building standing beside it, we realized we were seeing the remains of an oasis that once flourished in a spiritual desert.

“The goal of visiting AC was to experience firsthand what was left of the grandeur of the former headquarters campus and, through Mr. Pack’s guided tour, internalize the college’s role in training leaders.

“Throughout our nearly four hours of walking the campus and observing its lingering beauty, Mr. Pack recounted numerous stories and historic accounts, explaining in detail the various facts about the buildings and way of life that was taught at AC.

“Showing us Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong’s on-campus home, Mr. Pack pointed to the large living room windows. ‘Mr. Armstrong usually left the curtains wide open,’ he explained. ‘He loved to have lots of sunlight come into his home.’

“Walking through the Italian Gardens, Mr. Pack explained that the 59-acre campus was designed to be a 20th-century Garden of Eden, with gardens, fountains, pools, paths and buildings that reflected the quality and majesty of the Great God we serve. Though only a shell of its former glory, the campus in its current state was still a sight to behold. Enough remained to at least somewhat recognize the quality and sheer beauty it once reflected.

“Founded by Mr. Armstrong in 1947, Ambassador College was established to provide the finest academic and well-rounded cultural education available while maintaining a firm basis in biblical truths and God’s way of life. During its finest years, the campus was honored and respected for its quality and excellence, winning an annual award for overall beauty, including landscape and design, for several consecutive years.

“Following the death of Mr. Armstrong in 1986, the troubles and legal battles that have plagued this property have been well publicized. Various parts of the once stunningly beautiful and statuesque grounds

and buildings—comprised of the Administration Hall, Ambassador Hall, multiple academic buildings, student and faculty residences, European-style gardens and the renowned Ambassador Auditorium—were auctioned off, sold and broken into smaller sections for alternative development. The former ‘Pearl of Pasadena’—Ambassador Auditorium—and 13 acres of the west campus were purchased in May 2004 through a partnership between Harvest Rock Church and Maranatha Christian High School.

“Though we looked forward to touring Ambassador Auditorium, we initially held reservations about encountering ‘worship services’ there. However, services ended prior to our arrival, with only a small number of Harvest Rock members remaining.

“Though it evidenced some neglect by its current owners, Ambassador Auditorium’s amazing structure still stands as a testament to the excellence and the original beauty of the campus and college—more so than with all the other buildings, in spite of their respective unique and beautiful architecture. The extremely high quality and special care that went into the planning and building of the Auditorium was evident. The elegance of its many rich textures and lines were visible on every surface. All areas of the Auditorium reflected its magnificence, down to the smallest hidden details.

“The pink onyx wall gleamed in spite of obvious attempts to chip away any evidence of God’s existence or truths that were once embodied there. The immense chandelier, gold trim, patterned plush carpet—a single piece—woodwork and acoustics were of such a grade to be considered amongst the finest in the world; these rare qualities and values repeated throughout the campus are reflected in depth in this one very special piece of architectural history.

When the Church was on track, this campus revolved around doing the Work.

“As a group, the staff was privy to seeing this firsthand. These were not the only impressions of quality left in our minds and thoughts. Several of the campus buildings were locked, inhabited by their new owners. We were able to peer into rooms devoid of activity, shrouded in darkness and shadow.

“We viewed aged beauty and elements of God’s quality throughout many of the now-empty buildings. But bulbs that were never permitted to burn out under the leadership of Mr. Armstrong are now encased by broken glass on a far side of the campus. Trash cans overflowed next to buildings that once held the finest academic classes and activities for the numerous campus clubs and socials.

“Although dimmed of their former brilliance, the gardens and water features still contribute great beauty to this campus.

“As God’s Church expands and takes the gospel to more people around the world, there will be an even greater need than of past times for additional ministers and staff trained in exhibiting the quality and excellence of God’s Way of life. Out of this necessity, Ambassador College was born—out of this same necessity today, the future of God’s Work must move forward in an even greater way.

“The cross-country journey to Pasadena was a privilege, allowing us an inside view of the lessons we must embrace, and the pitfalls we must avoid in moving forward in doing the Work. The ‘big picture’ view that Mr. Pack painted for us—which he learned from Mr. Armstrong and the campus environment, as a student and then a field minister visiting the Refresher programs and ministerial conferences—was inspirational, educational and informative.

“The tour was a walk into the grandeur of the past—preparing us to follow the pattern for an even grander future!”

## *Unusual Relationship*

**T**he fall and winter following the loss of Mrs. Shirley Pack were trying and lonely times for Mr. Pack. However, a very encouraging story was developing. It began to be known because of two low-key announcements from Mr. Pack at the end of sermons, first in February, then in March 2008.

“A friendship had been quietly growing, and I wanted to plant a seed with the Church, first that a deep one was forming, and then a month later a simple comment that it was progressing.

“After my wife was gone from the home, one of the nurses who had lived there for four and a half months, who had experienced and endured all that had happened during her illness, filled the void of loneliness. I had found her very easy to talk to during the time she had lived in our home.

“But I did not yet want to say more than this.”

This story was further shared in more detail the next month by the Coordinator of Church Administration at the time, Mr. Jeff Ambrose via a special letter of April 4, 2008:

“Dear Brethren:

“This is a special letter. I write to share with all of you wonderful news for the Church, and for our Pastor General, Mr. David Pack. Recall that Mr. Pack has twice briefly mentioned a special friendship that has developed within the past year. This unique relationship was not something anyone could have remotely anticipated, including Mr. Pack himself. What happened presents itself as a story and explains why the letter is unique.

“God says, ‘It is not good for the man to be alone’ (Gen. 2:18) and ‘Two are better than one’ (Ecc. 4:9). For a moment, imagine Mr. Pack’s situation. For nearly his entire 37-year ministry, he has had the support of a wife, close by at all times to assist with the many details necessary to maintain a home and raise three children, while working endless hours serving thousands of God’s people—sometimes in the face of fierce opposition. As his responsibilities continued to *increase* over the years, so did the demands on his time. Without ‘an help meet,’ performing all of his growing number of duties would have been very difficult, if not impossible.

“You are all aware of the unforeseen chain of events that occurred over the better part of last year. As of late July, Mr. Pack found himself in a situation he could never have imagined: he was alone after over 36 years of marriage. The constant and extraordinary help, as well as companionship, to which he had grown so accustomed was suddenly gone, in what seemed to be an instant—and much too early. He faced the day-to-day reality of life without the support of a spouse. Some of you can relate to this.

“For a number of reasons, Mr. Pack believed remarriage would be *highly* unlikely, and for certain reasons it actually seemed impossible. (Mr. and Mrs. Pack had for years discussed why the death of either

of them would probably preclude remarriage, though Mrs. Pack eventually began to reassess this view.) In light of his office, experiences, responsibilities, and even enemies, God would have to provide a truly unique and extraordinary woman for this to become a possibility.

“Unbeknownst to him, there was a woman whose life evidenced God had prepared her for this role.

“During Mrs. Shirley Pack’s lengthy illness, valuable skills that a staff member brought to Headquarters became vitally important. Ms. Vernia Anstey, who moved to Headquarters from upstate New York in 2004, had worked for many years as a nurse. In February 2006, she was hired into the Church Administration Department, where she served as a secretary until mid-2007, when she was transferred to a similar position in the Executive wing, some weeks after Mrs. Pack’s death.

“In latter 2006, Mrs. Pack’s condition began to deteriorate, which increasingly limited her ability to serve alongside Mr. Pack. Since Ms. Anstey has over 16 years of nursing experience, including much senior administrative and teaching experience, it was natural for her, along with a team of others, to help care for Mrs. Pack. She spent four and a half months as a highly involved caregiver, from early March 2007 until late July, and developed an unusual bond of trust with Mrs. Pack during this time—literally attending to her needs day and night with assistance from others, including my wife (as well as one other woman who lived in the house). Ms. Anstey witnessed Mr. and Mrs. Pack endure a trial of a length and severity that few ever face. The extraordinary group effort to help Mrs. Pack forged a lasting closeness among the members of this special team. This continued until Mrs. Pack finished her course in July.

“As Mr. Pack was confronted with the finality of this loss, the grief of a bereaved husband was only softened by memories of the many hours he spent with his ailing wife. He was left with time to ponder all that had taken place—the sleepless nights, the peaks and valleys of Mrs. Pack’s struggle, and seeing her faith strengthened by this trial. In this regard, after the many hundreds of hours Ms. Anstey had spent with his wife, as well as seeing her role in his son’s recovery from a severe injury, Mr. Pack could reflect on what he had learned about her, and Ms. Anstey could do likewise. It was the unusual character she demonstrated in the most trying of times that led him to consider her a friend.

“After Ms. Anstey joined the Headquarters staff, I personally observed that she displayed the heart of a servant, a consistently positive outlook, warmth and an ability to comfortably converse with anyone, which endeared her to the staff and the local congregation. Mr. Pack saw all these qualities as well, and appreciated her boundless energy and graceful manner. He also learned that she had been toughened by adversity and learned to face it with a ‘never give up, never say die’ attitude. Among other severe tests in her life, Ms. Anstey had once been very near death herself, fighting an infection expected to take her life overnight. Circumstances also required her to provide for her children alone, for years, in the face of extreme financial hardship, while at the same time putting herself through five years of college. (She enjoys the blessing of a son working at Headquarters in the [Information Services] Department.)

“Similar to Mr. Pack, for a variety of her own reasons, Ms. Anstey had long held no intention of remarrying. But as they had more opportunities to interact in the Executive Office, she and Mr. Pack realized they had much in common. They worked

together for many, many hours—she has been his full-time secretary for eight months—with Ms. Anstey initially helping Mr. Pack catch up on the incredible backlog that had resulted from a tumultuous year. In the process of spending so many hundreds of hours together, he had opportunity to ‘download’ decades of what he had experienced in God’s Work that had led him to his present position. In time, she became more than a secretary, more than a companion—she was a true best friend.

“Realizing the far-reaching implications of a marriage, Mr. Pack sought wide counsel from a number of ministers, who collectively represent hundreds of years of experience in the Church. All of these men know Ms. Anstey, and their counsel to Mr. Pack reflected their esteem toward her.

“In retrospect, Mr. Pack’s intense schedule would never have allowed him to develop such a relationship under any other circumstances. The entire situation was simply unique—and, we all clearly feel, God-ordained. As the Church sees and learns of her unusual character, this will become evident.

“Try to recognize that Mr. Pack’s duties are truly overwhelming—and still growing—with no senior ministers from the past having come to help. I can assure you, brethren, that no one fully comprehends the demands on his time and the pace of his schedule.

“Try to fathom learning to videocast, rewriting his 12 biggest books for bookstores, planning an entire college (with just this task having hundreds or even thousands of details with which no one else can help), planning an entire building and campus (now think of just this alone!), overseeing two massive website remodels, the summer camp, the annual Conference, building a full-time ministry, overseeing a growing flock, articles, sermons, endless meetings, letters, phone

calls, staff lectures, counseling, warning hundreds of millions, announcing the kingdom of God, etc., with this list able to go on and on. Now imagine trying to also take care of basic household duties (in a larger home), such as laundry, food preparation, washing dishes, errands, shopping, even simply trying to read a newspaper. There are limits of physical endurance and exhaustion with any human being, even with God's help. Brethren, we here at Headquarters see this—and wonder how he does it..."

"Mr. Pack, to quote Paul, has still said he would 'eat no flesh while the world stands, lest [he] make [his] brother to offend' (I Cor. 8:13), particularly if a decision would in any way dishonor his deceased wife. To this end, whether to remarry, and when, are decisions he has weighed very, very carefully. Scripture is silent for a reason on how much time should pass after the loss of a spouse before remarriage. The idea of a 'wait one year' social norm is no more than an artificial kind of word-of-mouth standard with no apparent roots in history, let alone in God's Word. (This is why Mr. Pack never included it in the 'Dating and Courtship' book, written four years ago.) But this will not prevent attacks.

"Of course, everyone, in or out of The Restored Church of God, will have an opinion. Brethren, please be sensitive with whom and how you discuss this. And realize that comparing Ms. Anstey to Mrs. Shirley Pack, as some inevitably will, is a fruitless exercise—they are different people. Have no doubt Ms. Anstey will come under wrongly motivated scrutiny—but hopefully by none in the Church. While she lives life fearlessly, and is not intimidated by participation alongside Mr. Pack's office—and is uniquely suited for the next and later phase(s) of the Work—we hope all of God's people will pray for her, as she will have tremendous responsibilities.

“We can be inspired that, for those who serve Him, God is able to provide ‘abundantly above all that we ask or think’ (Eph. 3:20)—certainly the case here. Mr. Pack and Ms. Anstey would like you to share in their joy!

“In Christ’s service,

“Jeffrey R. Ambrose

“Coordinator of Church Administration”

Mr. Pack and the former Ms. Anstey were married on May 4, 2008, at the Headquarters office complex.

### **Life Together in God’s Work**

Looking back on the period of a little over a year since their wedding, Mrs. Pack relates a number of observations and reflections.

“My first impression was of being overwhelmed at what I was seeing him have to do. You don’t really realize how busy a person is until you, as my dad would often say, ‘Walk a mile in his shoes.’ And although I didn’t really walk a mile in Mr. Pack’s shoes, I was close by watching all the different things from sun-up to sundown that he would do for the Work.

“Just watching him, observing all the projects he had to do and all of the time invested left me awestruck, but also inspired at the same time, that God would give the energy to a person to accomplish what he did. I could certainly tell it was not his own human strength. He is a very energetic man, but you can tell that he is getting extra help. And during all the time he spent doing the Work, he did it with happiness and zeal, never complaining.

“Another thing that struck me about Mr. Pack was that, for being such a tall man, with a clear, powerful

speaking voice, he is, at the same time, a kind, gentle and tenderhearted man.

“Above and beyond all of my observations, it was his character that stood out.”

Mrs. Vernia Pack (pronounced `Vûr-nuh) was reared in a large family in the countryside of northern Illinois. In later years she lived in Texas and upstate New York. Commenting on the similar backgrounds that she and Mr. Pack learned about as they became acquainted, she added,

“There were many things we did that were similar, from work experiences to places we lived to difficult experiences. He lived in New York City, which was difficult. I would say a lot of my time in New York state, near Buffalo, where we both once lived, was challenging—going to school, rearing children, working at least two jobs, and having no support system. For almost 17 years my three sons and I lived around Buffalo. The area is beautiful, the time there was one of important learning and growth.

“Mr. Pack and I are both extremely adventurous people. Flying out of swings when we were little... we both did that. The more we talked the more we realized, ‘Wow, I did that too,’ or ‘Yes, I remember when I did this.’ I rode horses bareback, and at age 10 rode a galloping horse with my bare feet standing *on* its back—arms spread like I was Annie Oakley! I tried a lot of things I would not do again. So we had that in common, too.

“I do not think I was concerned about being injured. There were times when I should have been injured or possibly even killed, but I survived. I fell from the second story of our home when I was about nine or 10. We were adding on to our house and I decided to climb up the ladder and check out the second story

and see what my dad and uncle were doing. I stepped backward and fell through the hole where the steps were going to be, and landed flat on my back on a big scrap pile of lumber.

“But that was actually not where I was scheduled to land. I actually flew sideways onto the pile. God knows how this happened.

“My dad picked me up, put me in the back of the station wagon and took me to emergency, thinking I was dead! I broke no bones, and had no stitches. The doctor said hitting the lumber pile saved my life—because it was on concrete.

“I awoke the next morning very sore, but went horseback riding the following day.”

### **Persevering Through Adversity**

Elaborating on some of the more difficult times she faced, Mrs. Pack recollected,

“When I had my last child, I was desperately ill, and very close to death. I checked myself out of the hospital because I knew I was dying. I had a severe staph infection, a very high fever and a ferocious headache from a spinal block due to a Cesarean delivery.

“I could not raise my head, or I would pass out from the pain. I decided to die at home, and left against the doctor’s orders by signing a waiver.

“The next day I was completely normal. All symptoms were gone—and my baby was fine. I came to believe God had spared my life, but only later would learn why.

“Mr. Pack and I are both very determined people—we do not give up. We seem to both be ‘never say die’ types. We were never permitted to give up. I learned that from my parents.

“I came from a family of nine, and a cousin lived with us most of our lives, so we shared everything as a family of modest means. We made do with what we had, but we always tried to make sure we did the very best we could do. *Quality* was important to my mother and father. *Order* was also important.

“There was a time as an adult that I severely broke my left big toe and three toes next to it. The wind caught the door, blowing it closed with my toe in the hinge, crushing it in three places, and breaking the three adjacent toes.

“With a full-time job, and rearing three boys on my own, it was one of the toughest times of my life.

“The accident occurred on a Friday. I went to work the next Monday, where the administrator approached, asking, ‘I heard you broke your toes. Did you go to emergency?’ I said, ‘I know they are broken.’ He made me get an X-ray to confirm what I already knew. The doctor wanted me off work for three months for the toes to heal properly. I could not afford that, so we compromised and I took one week off. To this day, my big toe still bothers me—the price you sometimes pay in the face of necessity.”

Such experiences further strengthened the resolve that had been ingrained by her family.

### **Work Experience**

The career path Mrs. Pack followed through the years was a unique preparation for an active role in God’s Work.

“My first full-time position was with an optometrist. I learned how an upscale, quality office operates. Next, I moved to Texas and to women’s retail clothing. This taught me about dress, fad

and fashion. I slowly worked my way to part-time assistant manager, and then to full retail manager. I learned a great deal about business, merchandising and aesthetics—what appeals to the eye. I also experienced ‘shoppers.’

“I learned about public safety—and a certain boldness—when threatened by a shoplifter. I came face-to-face with a woman who had a scar from her forehead to the middle to her chin. The police were called and she was arrested. She told me, ‘I’ll be waiting for you out back.’ On her way out, in handcuffs, she was right here, nose-to-nose with me, saying she would get out eventually—and I should be ‘very careful leaving the store at night,’ because ‘when you least expect it, I’ll be there.’

“I next went into nursing, spending 12 years learning an incredible amount about this field. Much of this training is now being used in the Work. In fact, it put me into Mr. Pack’s life.

“I later worked as a supervisor on the floor, which gave me the opportunity to oversee people. For a time, I worked with physically, and sometimes terminally, ill children. They could not speak, so I had to find a way to know what was wrong with them, or what they needed, or did not need. I learned to tell different things about people simply by their skin color, the sweat on their brow, the look in their eyes, the color of their lips or even their fingernails.

“I went to college and took specialized training courses in three different time periods. The first was in 1990 for one year, and I was not working full-time at that point. The second time I worked two part-time jobs, which equaled full-time. The third time I worked a full-time job, and attended school part-time.

“In choosing nursing, my thought was to help people. I always enjoyed caring for people. I am the

oldest girl, and second oldest of seven, eight counting my cousin. For years, I diapered and watched tiny children. I like being around people. I guess I am just one of those who enjoys working with sick people.

“There was not a great demand for nurses when I first went to school, so finding a full-time job was not easy upon graduation. This meant working two part-time jobs. It was not until about five or six years later that the nursing shortage was felt in New York. You could then pretty much write your own ticket, which worked well when I was called because I could tell supervisors I could not work certain days.

“I had a very severe back injury during my nursing career, virtually paralyzing my left arm for a year and a half. I had to take this much time off to rebuild my left side. I worked for a civil engineer and was involved in many projects, partially managing multibillion-dollar projects for an entertainment company that built outdoor amphitheaters in places such as Scranton, Pennsylvania, and Darien Lake, the amusement park near Buffalo.

“I did everything in the office from bookkeeping, to payroll, blueprint making, and scheduling, talking to distributors in the United Kingdom, or the Philippines, or wherever our suppliers, contractors and subcontractors might be. Three days a week I went to physical therapy for rehabilitation, before moving back into nursing.”

### **Learning About the Church**

“I first began learning the truth through a family in Restored. I had been able to end my employment with the civil engineer and return to my first love—nursing. A call came from an agency I had worked for prior to my injury. They asked if I was interested in coming back with them, since they had a case I had

once worked on, perhaps four to five years earlier as a fill-in. The couple were members of Restored.

“I knew about the Worldwide Church of God from a case where the neighbors were long-time WCG members. I recall when the WCG allowed Christmas observance. The little girl next door came over, very excited, saying, ‘We can put up a Christmas tree this year!’

“I began working with The Restored Church of God family, and was soon asking questions because they held services in their home on Saturday. I would listen to sermons from the next room. That was June 2000.

“I started asking questions about the Sabbath, ‘Why do people go to church on Sunday, if the Sabbath is Saturday?’ The family handed me Mr. Armstrong’s Sabbath book. Mr. Pack’s book came later. They said very little and let me read. I had more questions, and the answers sparked even more questions.

“The man of the family was volunteering at Headquarters at that time. Restored was 18 months old. The Day of Atonement was my first Sabbath.”

While Mrs. Pack’s schedule is now full, she related other things she has enjoyed in her spare time.

“I love to read and sew. I used to make quite a few quilts. I like to garden, plant flowers and grow my own herbs—and I also enjoy the satisfaction of experimenting with cooking. I could spend a day planning and cooking several meals.

“I once enjoyed running, but no more. The toe injury ended that. I was a sprinter and middle-distance runner in high school, running everywhere in my childhood, and for miles. I was also a defensive cornerback on my high school girls football team. To this day, I love football. My team is the Chicago Bears—from Illinois.

Although I ‘compromise’ by watching the Cleveland Browns, I still like the Bears—and most bears are ‘brown’!

“Health and fitness has always been important to me, and 2,500 hours of Tae Kwon Do and self-defense replaced running. My husband and I exercise pretty diligently, perhaps three or four times a week, plus walks.

“My husband and I are very much adventurers—explorers at every opportunity. I once lived in Peru for part of a summer on a special assignment. This began a love of travel, which my husband also enjoys. But, wherever we go and whatever we find ourselves doing, we talk almost nonstop about God’s Work. Our conversation may drift to something else for the moment, such as our surroundings or an incident or our children, but it always comes back full circle to the Work.

Mr. Pack added this,

“While this chapter primarily relates my wife’s experiences and background, it closes with my thoughts. Early on, I made a list of all the things I either admired or enjoyed about my new wife. It grew long—stopping at 47 qualities, with almost no pause in writing them as they came to mind. A second list of interests parallel to mine reached 26.

“This exercise began because, at a point, I suddenly realized that I had witnessed an extraordinary level of love and support demonstrated to my first wife while she was in extreme affliction. I saw a nurse—and one who did not *once* sleep more than two hours straight *for months*—not *once*! Further, she never complained. A *true* servant’s heart was on display, and it was easy to recognize. (It would later actually require well over one year for her to recover her normal sleep cycle.)

“The first list included *my words* in this order: (1) a servant’s heart (2) truly happy, radiant (3) fearless (4) meets adversity head-on (5) wonderful sense of humor (6) positive (7) very athletic (8) loves exploring...(11) hard working...(13) loves children (14) deeply converted, reads and studies...(18) thrills to news of the Work...(22) forged by persecution and suffering...(24) gentle with people...(27) keeps confidences...(31) frugal...(33) injuries and near-death experiences—can relate to each other...(35) tender-hearted...(39) she likes my children and they like her (40) discerns people...(45) listens well...(47) highly scheduled, follows routines.

“The second list included interests such as walking, singing, traveling, football, horseback riding, swimming, fishing, enjoys stage plays, comedies, cooking, planting (a big one in my book), hiking, biking, reading and dancing. But there were also other things I enjoyed, that made us compatible in an almost infinite number of ways. For instance, my wife and I love to sing and dance as a form of entertainment and recreation at home. I have always loved to sing, and do so all the time. So does my wife, and I had noticed while she lived in our home how she loved singing when she thought no one was listening.

“While so much more could be said, the story really starts and ends with the extraordinary *friendship* we developed, starting under the most unusual of circumstances. How many men get to observe someone so ‘up close and personal’ for months in the way I did?

“I found myself initially wishing my new friend had not been a woman for the first few months after my first wife died, because people might have misunderstood the early timing of our being together. I primarily needed friendship with someone whom I could talk

to, someone who could understand everything that had occurred in the previous year. My friend had also been traumatized by the first Mrs. Pack's death. So our friendship benefited her in a similar way.

“But we had a level of concern about people misreading a friendship that appeared to start too early after my wife's death, when it really began long *before* her death—during the period when she was also building a friendship with the woman she was caring for.

“Most important to me in the final analysis was whether my wife could in effect vault all the way to being an apostle's wife when she had not been so much as an elder's or even a deacon's wife previously. This was the biggest of questions. How many could do this?—How many could really handle it? It almost seemed unfair to ask such a thing. I had to be sure she could, and that she could stand the scrutiny of others, meaning the ‘heat in the kitchen’—and I concluded the answer to these questions was an unqualified, ‘Yes’!

“Her training, preparation and background became even more evident when I met her wonderful family and parents. Of course this was after our marriage, but it did serve as further confirmation of what I had already seen.

“There being so much more that could be written here, I eventually came to believe that she had been prepared all her life for this role.”

## *More Growth, Big Plans*

The latter half of 2008 saw videocasting begin, planning for the Ambassador Center progressing full-speed, alongside the initial phases of work toward a new Headquarters complex and campus with extensive grounds. The Church had optioned a beautiful piece of well-situated land not far from the Headquarters complex.

### **Testing the Studio**

Mr. Pack and the rest of the Media team had their first dry-run experience in the studio, as Mr. Pack related in his May 2008 *Brethren/Co-Worker Letter*:

“I can report that yesterday about ten staff joined me in our new studio for about one half hour of initial tests and experiments, as well as ‘dabbling’ with the cameras, lighting, new software, and new audio equipment. We also tried experimenting with a few ideas and concepts. In addition, we are exploring the various roles of different Media Production Services staff members, with others, who will be involved.

“Before concluding, I must tell you that we have had another wonderful month of income and overall growth in the Church. (We continue to add members in new and, in some cases, more remote and exotic parts of the world.) I can also already report that the Spring Holy Day offerings are running at least 20 percent over last year, but the offerings from some international areas have not yet arrived. So I cannot yet report the final figure for even the First Day of Unleavened Bread...”

“I must end every letter with a heartfelt ‘thank you’ to all of God’s people. I might add that there has been an overwhelming and encouraging response to the announcement of my upcoming marriage. It is hard to put into words what has been the effect of the reports, cards, letters and even certain phone calls that have arrived. Each day I have been given a stack of new letters. With the passing of time, I will say more, perhaps much more, because there is so much to relate, about the background and training of my new wife (it will be past tense by the time you read this).”

### **The First Videocast**

The “lights, camera, action” moment for videocasting arrived in June. Mr. Pack gave the Church a look inside this and other developments in his regular *Brethren/Co-Worker Letter* of June 2, 2008. Short video introductions for his books were a stepping stone to longer productions.

“The development of major projects continues to fast forward unlike any other time in the reconstitution of God’s Work in preparation for an advancement of the Work in power and impact across the world the likes of which may never have been seen before...”

“We will start actual production of videocasts THIS WEEK! There is a heightened awareness all around Headquarters of the extreme importance of fulfilling our responsibility to announce the kingdom of God to the world through this (truly high-quality) visual medium. We are all probably at this point unable to imagine what this will mean for God’s Work going forward.

“The applications for Ambassador Center (the ‘college’) are now available for all who wish to receive one. All who would like to be considered for admission to the center this [December] may write Headquarters and it will be sent the same day.

“The training center presents an historic opportunity. Consider long and hard whether you wish to attend what will truly be ‘God’s college.’ Factor into your thinking that the training center being planned will in every sense reflect all pertinent aspects of the Mr. Armstrong-era Ambassador Colleges. (We are also trying to employ improvements that Mr. Armstrong would certainly bring if given the opportunity with a resurrected Ambassador College.)

“I recall 41 years ago at this time readying myself to attend what became an adventure that has still not stopped. Whether single or married, man or woman, young, middle-aged or later, you have a chance to begin your own epic journey within God’s Work. Think very, very carefully about whether or not you may wish to attend.

“We have stepped out in faith and hired a number of people—each of them *very* necessary, and with the critical skills and experience required, to keep all projects, including the mammoth challenges of just properly preparing for and carrying out the training center and a Headquarters building, moving forward, as well as on track toward the *level of quality* that everything of God must demonstrate. Two other people

have chosen (and are able) to volunteer from half of their time to all of their time so that all the Work's internal needs can be met during this period..."

"Somewhat large-scale internal restructuring of the Work is again taking place. What the Work of Mr. Armstrong's time always experienced, now happens to us in much shorter intervals simply because we have and will probably permanently continue to grow at a rate that would strain to the point of breaking any organization that did not have the blessings and direct assistance of God..."

"I might add that we are anticipating posting *publicly* quite detailed, but still somewhat conceptual, pictorial renderings of the proposed [Headquarters] building (but also sitting within its potential fuller campus setting on the Church's members services site).

"It is with deepest gratitude that I thank the Church for all that God's faithful people are doing on behalf of the Work during these extraordinary times. These efforts are a source of constant inspiration to all who are on staff here. Also, my new wife and I thank you personally for the 'ocean' of cards and letters of congratulations that we have received (and are still receiving) from congregations and individuals."

### **Summer Camp Reaches New Heights**

July's *Brethren/Co-Worker Letter* passed on Mr. Pack's impressions of the *second* Ambassador Youth Camp, this time in eastern Pennsylvania in a very beautiful, big new facility. Almost 50 percent more students attended in the second year, and a great many more adult staff were present.

"We are nearing the end of the summer camp (some comments later) and it is still a little quieter in the office than usual. But everyone will be back on

Monday, and we will blast back into the full cycle of normal workload.

“Ambassador Youth Camp has turned out to be an experience almost too wonderful to describe. The mood and atmosphere at the camp is such that I wish at least one young person could return to every Church area in the world with a report of the excitement, experience and *joy* that all attendees will be taking home with them...”

“College applications are now being sent out or received on a near daily basis. This is also very encouraging. Speaking of encouraging, the Pentecost offering was everything we hoped for—some 10.4 percent above the second day of Unleavened Bread, which was itself 3.8 percent above the first day. (It should be noted that the 2008 three-day Spring total was just over 23.1 percent above the 2007 total—a wonderful increase by any standard!)”

### **Impact of Videos**

In short order, the posting of videos led to a big upswing in literature requests. Mr. Pack shared this encouraging news in the August 2008 *Brethren/Co-Worker Letter*.

“As of three days ago, all brethren should have heard the latest sermon update. All goals discussed within it remain on track, meaning key milestones are being met at what would be about halfway to the next update to be given five weeks after this one. Over 100 applications have arrived from those hoping to attend Ambassador Center this December. Many more have expressed interest in coming in 2009.

“The Media Production Services Department (MPS) has made nothing short of amazing progress in its ability to produce quality videos that are being

posted on both our websites. I must say that I marvel at how so few can have done so much, so fast, considering how little directly applicable experience they brought into the process. The opportunities that now lie before us would seem to be limitless, and our conversations about what can soon be done always leave us ‘salivating’ about just how greatly God can use this medium in the future.”

“I must comment on a truly extraordinary piece of literature—*Ambassador Youth* magazine—that is included in this mailing. We have never, and, in fact, no one on Earth has EVER, produced a similar kind of remarkable publication. I can tell you that the Worldwide Church of God never undertook to send such a special edition publication as this one is, where the young people of the Church produced the magazine—never mind 52 pages of one. Of course then, no church in the world could possibly be compared to what God’s Church could produce, hence my confidence in the above statement.

“We decided some time ago to send out this special edition. But I can tell you that no one had any idea that the result would be something so wonderful. I hope every member of God’s Church will take the time to read as many of the articles as your schedule will possibly permit. You will be glad you did, and will find your reading of this to be a life-changing experience, just as the camp was for all the young people who wrote *every one* of the articles. And be sure to look carefully at the faces in every picture, along with the nature of the diverse activities that were all a part of this special, special second annual youth camp.

“Whatever we may all understand about the millions of tragic young lives being wasted today—a near whole generation—you will have no doubt that

there is a remarkable group of exceptions within the Church of the living God!...”

### **Rapid-fire Video Production**

In Mr. Pack’s September 2008 *Brethren/Co-Worker Letter*, he wrote the Church about continued developments. Unexpected opportunities were coming, and more announcements about the Training Center could be made.

“I have now completed 20 videos—11 book introductions, two longer *Real Truth* introductory videos and seven *Splinter Explanation* (SEP) videos, with these latter ones totaling over 2 hours and 47 minutes in length. Now that we have completed these, this is an astonishing amount of videocasting in a less than ten-week period...”

“Last week two fascinating opportunities came to us. On Friday, I was interviewed by a well-known writer for an article on Christians dating in groups that will appear in *The Wall Street Journal*, the second largest newspaper in the United States, behind *USAToday*. The interview went well and lasted about 25 minutes, and may lead to a second interview because of certain material covered in the first one...”

“Planning for the all-important Ambassador Center is progressing nicely on all fronts. It is inspiring to watch God work through the group of Headquarters staff that is planning all of the *many, many* elements necessary to begin a top-flight academic institution.

“We have been quite pleased with the number of applications received so far, well over 100! An acceptance committee is currently reviewing the applications. Right now, it appears the opening class size will be between 60 and 70 students...”

“The first semester will include classes such as Speech 1, Principles of Living, Harmony & Survey of the Gospels, Church History, and The Government of God & Body of Christ, among others. (The latter course covers fundamental truths that most of God’s people in this age have forgotten or discarded. It became clear that a doctrine Mr. Armstrong taught was ‘EVERYTHING’ needed to be addressed in thorough detail in God’s college.) These will be college-level courses in every sense.

“As was said at the original Ambassador College, students will be taught how to live, not just how to earn a living. This will truly be ‘God’s college’!

“I cannot emphasize enough the Training Center’s *vital importance* in training ministers and Headquarters staff members as this ‘short Work’ (Rom. 9:28) progresses and the Church grows. It will allow Headquarters to continue moving forward at an accelerated pace, completing the tasks God has in store for the end of the age.”

### ***The True Jesus Christ Book Released***

September and October saw the completion of a vital book about the true Jesus Christ of the Bible, understood by so few. No other book remotely like it had ever been produced. Here is what Mr. Pack wrote in his October 2008 *Brethren/Co-Worker Letter*.

“As soon as I am done with this letter, I will go down to the studio with the Media Production team to produce our very first *World to Come* in video. You should be able to guess what the first subject will be—and *should* be. For those who cannot, it is the TRUE GOSPEL. We decided to include it in its entirety within our now every-year *Behind the Work* video, so

that the whole Church will be able to hear this first program together.”

“Let me at least briefly explain that today I completed all editing, as well as my portion of our new 304-page book *The True Jesus Christ – Unknown to Christianity*. There is no doubt that this is, and will remain, the single most important piece of literature of any kind to those whom God is calling now that The Restored Church of God will ever produce.”

“All necessary preparation for the opening of Ambassador Center is still on track. I want to just say again for the record: This will be *God’s College* in every sense of the word. This means the same quality of academic standards, the same involvement and employment in the Work for as many as we can afford to hire, evening speech clubs for men and women, a Headquarters chorale and special music department permitting this important extracurricular activity as occurred in the past, college activities together, such as sports, dances and field trips, as well as special forums and assemblies—and more.

“God’s timing for His training center came at the perfect time. Of course, this is the God we serve—He does everything on time, meaning the time He knows it is necessary and best. We simply have to have more ministers in the field by twenty months from now, as well as more who can be managers and leaders at Headquarters before and by that time.

“Related to the need for more ministers is another wonderful month of growth that just concluded the month of September. This month we grew another 4.2 percent, meaning we are just under 26 percent growth so far for the year—with a quarter of the year remaining! It will be evident at almost every Feast site in the world, and most obvious in areas that are having a site for the first time, that the Church is now rapidly growing.

Additional hires in Church Administration have made a very, very big difference in our ability to work with and bring along new prospective members to the point of invitation to services. This is also true of those with questions who are coming from the splinters.

“I am most pleased to announce that we now have an Afrikaans section on *rcg.org*. It was posted this week and features two booklets, one article and three *Bible Introduction Course* lessons...We are now actively translating into five *more* languages (French, Spanish, Dutch, German, and now Afrikaans).

### **Ambassador Center—God’s College Reopens!**

A milestone was reached in early December with the inaugural semester of the Center. Mr. Pack relayed the advancements in the December 2008 *Brethren/Co-Worker Letter*.

“We could not be busier in the office. Five new employees, who will also be students in two more days, have arrived and settled in at least a little bit.

“The opening of Ambassador Center is upon us. Many months of hard work are finally coming to fruition, with now 85 students scheduled to participate in classes, 45 physically present and another 40 auditing from places across the world. [Both these numbers turned out to be higher, totaling 97 students in the first year.] We feel very grateful when considering that Mr. Armstrong began with just *four students*—and not a single converted faculty member besides himself. We also have a pattern to look back to—the one God set through him—in a way that obviously he did not.

“Brethren, an incredible number of details have fallen into place. God has really been with us in bringing back what is truly the reconstitution of God’s

college. These details and developments include the right professors leading the right combination of the nine classes in the first semester, with a strong lineup of additional qualified professors also scheduled all through the remaining three semesters throughout the next 18 months...”

“We are also very inspired here at Headquarters to see a *World to Come* ‘rhythm’ now in place. I filmed the sixth program yesterday and will be filming another one this Friday—these are Part One and Two on the subject of the Sabbath day. God has also certainly blessed a process that integrates three departments—Media Production Services, Art/Graphics and Marketing—working closely together on a weekly basis, meeting deadlines so that we can post a new program every Friday through the year! My part in this occurs in the following way. Each Friday three things happen: (1) I begin preparation of a new broadcast, (2) I deliver the broadcast that I began preparing the previous Friday and (3) the broadcast begun two weeks earlier is posted. Again, all these things happen on the same day—each Friday. This longer process allows a tremendous amount of thought, imagination and polish to be brought to God’s program heard in every nation and territory of the world once every seven days. A host of internal mechanics, ideas and workflow all come together through this highly controlled ‘rhythmic’ process. It has fully settled upon me that I must do these new *World to Come* programs every week of my life, almost certainly for the rest of the age.

“Once again, let me express how very grateful I am for the large team (approximately 19 people when all aspects of production are counted) that God has assembled who work with such zeal and dedication to produce the kind of ‘product’ that befits the excellence

of God in all points. But we are also collectively most grateful for the tremendous help that we know God directly gives to us to make possible such an incredibly complex, professional presentation. May I ask that all of you continue to pray about the ongoing success and even improvement of this additional, new great ‘spearpoint’ on the cutting edge of God’s Work...”

“Let’s all realize that things are likely to become more difficult in the American and world economy before they get better. We will all have to ‘endure hardness’ as I mentioned at the close of my letter a month ago. Recall I wrote, ‘Constantly prepare yourself to ‘endure [ever-greater] hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ’ (II Tim. 2:3). Those who have not experienced even a recession, never mind a depression or a world war, will need the daily help of God to be ready for what lies ahead.”

## *God's Work Surges Forward!*

As 2009 began, the urgency of the task before Mr. Pack, and every member of the staff, continued to drive aggressive goal-setting and accomplishment. The final Work of God through the last days was truly *coming of age*—and everybody involved could see it.

### **January 2009—A Look Back, and Moving Ahead**

Mr. Pack's January 2009 *Brethren/Co-Worker Letter* put the accomplishments of the previous year in perspective.

“Another year, by man's count, has passed, and a new calendar year is upon the Work of God. This is a time when we naturally give a recounting of some statistics from the last year. That will be the case, with a number of reports following from different managers at Headquarters...”

“Now for the first report, which comes from the Vice Chancellor of Ambassador Center:

“Ambassador Center (AC) is off to a most wonderful beginning! After commencing with

Orientation on December 4 and 5, classes officially began on Monday, December 8. Faculty and students have been inspired to see things ‘come together’ in a very professional fashion.

“‘God’s guiding hand has been very much in evidence, and many hours of hard work by many people are paying dividends. While it has necessitated a more intense, compressed schedule in order to get all of our other work done, the class schedule is WORKING! To say that we are pleased with how well the faculty have done their part, coupled with help from a number of administrative assistants in the college, would be a great understatement. Mr. Pack has remarked that [the arrival of] the college has been ‘beyond whatever was his grandest view of what we might expect.’

“‘With four weeks of classes behind us, preceded by an extensive Orientation period, students are already immersed in top-flight instruction on a broad array of subjects.

“‘Most of the Church would not be aware that Mr. Pack’s brother, Mr. William R. Pack, has come aboard the Center as part of the faculty. We are very pleased that this has happened. He is teaching the ‘Harmony & Survey of the Gospels’ course, in addition to lectures in Speech I and (later in the semester) Creation Science.

“‘As a graduate of Ambassador College (Pasadena campus) and a longtime pastor in the Worldwide Church of God, his experience has proven very useful in the AC setting.

“‘Mr. William Pack is also the author of *Parallel Gospel Harmony*. The book combines the synoptic gospels (Matthew, Mark and Luke), as well as John, into a single account, divided into 183 events. The course had been in the works for some time, with his book as the planned textbook. His offering to come

aboard the faculty on a part-time basis has helped with the overall workload. Who is better to teach a class than the author of the textbook?

“All the students are thrilled with the level of research and background that he brings. He also has been very helpful in assisting certain other faculty members. (Incidentally, he is in the midst of entirely rewriting another of his books, *A Survey of the Old Testament*, so that it can be given to students, and used as a basis for a class he will teach in the second semester.)

“We are already just a few weeks away from mid-term exams, and anticipation for this challenge is gearing up. This week, visiting leaders from Australia and the UK will join us for a sampling of the school routine. Also, a seniors’ brunch will be sponsored by the college next month, with students and faculty younger than 54 organizing the event and serving those who are 55 and older.

“Of course, we must never lose sight of the long-term goal and purpose of AC: sending well-equipped pastors and their wives to the field, and training managers and employees in a growing Work.’

“The next report comes from the Marketing Department manager..”

“In 2009, *The World to Come* video broadcasts will continue to be a focal point as we strive to market them ever more effectively. With the passing of time, we are learning to be better fishermen, hooking those whom God may be attracting.”

“I should mention another fascinating point. The Marketing team learned last week that the Vatican recently came again to *The Real Truth* website. While this has occurred a number of times before, this most recent visit was the longest and most significant one yet. Our software indicates that at least one individual within the Vatican clicked on an advertisement for the

*World to Come* broadcast “The True Jesus – Unknown!” This brought him directly to the video, and he stayed for about 13 and a half minutes.

“Brethren, stop and consider the significance of the last sentence! As one on staff mentioned to me, for the first time in history, an apostle entered (was invited to?!) the Vatican—and I would add, in a sense, did this literally—spoke and was seen face-to-face with someone or ones, and did so for longer than the average sermonette! Realize that the impact of a video on a viewer would be much greater, and much more memorable, than clicking through and simply coming to a booklet or article, as happened periodically with the Vatican in the past.

“Let’s ask: At what other time in history would, or could, this have happened? Next ask: Where could this ultimately lead? What else might the Vatican soon find itself wanting to read or view?”

“Next, the Human Resources manager brings a report of dramatic changes:

““In 2008 the entire Headquarters staff grew by *over 50 percent!* New departments were formed, others expanded, space was made more efficient, strengths were maximized, and many transfers were effected between departments. This necessitated a host of new ‘protocols’ being established on the order of what was in place for decades when the Worldwide Church of God was on track. Truly, wherever one goes in the office the productivity, unity and zeal is most evident. But understanding of the importance of communication and how offices interrelate and work together is also much stronger.’

“Before introducing the report from Church Administration, I can announce that the Church has grown unofficially by [29.2%] net in 2009, with it closing December up 5.1% for the month to make up

for the slower months in late summer. The year 2007 grew 16.1% over the previous year..."

"Finally, I am pleased to report that total income... grew in 2008 by 32% above 2007. This includes *all* categories...Note that these are still preliminary figures and will continue to move slightly upward over the next few days as we close the fiscal year..."

"Brethren, God's Work is booming forward at an incomprehensible rate in all areas and categories of growth. I can scarcely imagine what 2009 will bring..."

### **Explosion of Interest, Growth in Membership**

The effects of video productions and targeted marketing came to bear in a dramatic way in early 2009. Mr. Pack passed on what is always the *most* exciting news in his *Brethren/Co-Worker Letter* of February 3, 2009:

"We are experiencing a surge in growth unlike anything seen before in Restored. Literature requests and inquiries from people desiring to attend services have skyrocketed—an increasing stream of new donors and co-workers are arriving daily—the number of members and prospective members being invited to services each week has never been higher—viewings of and comments about *The World to Come* video program are rapidly rising—and income has increased faster than expected. In the last less than two months, the Church has grown an astounding 9.5% in size! We anticipate reaching 10% by the end of this month. This has *never* occurred in God's Church in such a short amount of time."

"Next comes a brief description of our plans to completely remodel our less-than-one-year-old studio. The following write-up comes from the Media Production Services manager: 'In mid-February, the Church was informed of a crisis at Headquarters

resulting from a large disruption in Wadsworth's sewer system. The flooding meant that the *World to Come* studio would need to be nearly entirely rebuilt. The building we are in suffered a staggering loss involving millions of dollars to those in the lower level. The planning of an improved set began almost immediately, and improvements regarding sound, lighting and set design will *noticeably* upgrade the quality of an already beautiful studio.

“Yet again, however, this “lemon is being turned into *real* lemonade.” Media Production Services can now focus on the redesign and reconstruction of the studio without the huge task of *simultaneously* producing *World to Come* broadcasts in a temporary Main Hall set, which would complicate other Headquarters' functions such as Training Center classes and weekly Sabbath services. Also, Mr. Pack now has time to complete the Biography.”

“I can also report that my first book, *The Awesome Potential of Man*, will finally be available for purchase as of March 13. *Tomorrow's Wonderful World – An Inside View!* is almost certain to be available in about 15 to 18 more days. We are on track with dates recently announced, one book each month thereafter, and I thought you would want to hear this...”

“By now all of you know that an extraordinary opportunity came to us to purchase one of the 25 original ‘Elijah Cups,’ identical to the one given as a gift to Mr. Armstrong in May of 1982. (His was the 14th cup sold, after only 25 were made by Steuben Glass Works in 1976 in Corning, New York.) I decided to purchase this most special cup for the Church.

“The cup we purchased (the 16th one sold, in December 1982) came at a wonderful price, and the circumstances must be heard to be appreciated.

“For years there has only been one item from the Worldwide Church of God from Mr. Armstrong’s time that I truly wished could be in our possession. We now have it...”

“God is blessing His Work, and we are grateful for it beyond words at Headquarters. This letter could have contained so much more. All facets of planning that have been so evidently guided by God are progressing on or ahead of schedule. We can even rejoice that a wonderful first semester of the college will be complete by next week, with 97 attending in our pioneering class, either with us here or auditing lectures from afar.”

### **A Grandson in Wadsworth!**

Another happy announcement of a different kind took place in March:

“Mr. and Mrs. Kevin Denee are very pleased to announce the birth of their first child, a healthy baby boy, on March 22, 2009. Born at 5:50 am, Jonathan Hendrik Denee weighed in at 9 pounds, 14 ounces, and was 22 inches long. Mr. and Mrs. Pack (Grandpa and Grandma) along with several uncles, aunts and cousins at Headquarters have been enjoying getting to know the newest member of the family!”

But Mr. Pack had his own thoughts about the arrival of a local grandson.

“I had six grandchildren before this new grandson, and all of them live in North Carolina. Of course, I do not get to see them nearly as often as I would like. God’s original purpose was that families generally live close together. The modern age has changed that for

millions. (Recall that Mr. Peter Denee died, so I should add that we have adopted some of his grandchildren. There are three that live at Headquarters.)

“My new wife and I are happy beyond words to have a local grandchild. My first grandchild was a boy—but he was followed by five girls. Now a *local* grandson!

“Our daughter married in 2003, but, because she and her husband put the needs of the Work first, they delayed having children for over five years. There are any number of other women in the office who are making the same sacrifice. God takes notice because the Work would suffer terribly if they all had children at the same time.”

### **Biography (Volume One) Completed**

In April, a project nearly three years in the making came to fruition. Mr. Pack described the completion of Volume One of his biography in the April 2009 *Brethren/Co-Worker Letter*, along with other developments in the Work.

“I am thrilled to finally be sending the long-planned *The Authorized Biography of David C. Pack – Volume One...*”

“It has long been my desire that, as with Mr. Herbert Armstrong’s *Autobiography*, my also two-volume biography will benefit people in real and tangible ways. I will not list again the six audiences to whom it speaks, but we eagerly await reports that it is finding a ‘home’ in the thinking of many minds for whom it could make a difference. The goal was never to merely just entertain, although I hope it is found to be interesting, even gripping at times, but rather to potentially lead many people back to this ultimate reality: ‘Jesus Christ built a *Church* that does a *Work* under a *Government* that explains and

declares the *Truth* through two commissions.' If even a tiny number are benefited toward that understanding, it will have been worth every minute of the most difficult and challenging writing event that I have ever been a part of. I hope everyone also enjoys the pictures.

"Finally, Volume Two is well over 400 pages at this writing, and we still believe that it will also be mailed sometime in the spring."

"The next report is from the Media Production Services manager: 'After almost two months of waiting since the catastrophic flooding of *The World to Come* studio, the landlord's cleanup is nearly complete. (It was to take three weeks.) We will enter the space Monday, April 13 to begin renovation. After weeks of preparation with a "world class" Cleveland, Ohio, design firm, the new studio will not only be *visually* redesigned, but will implement various *new* audio and video *technologies*.'"

"Next is a brief, but fascinating, Marketing report: 'Largely due to advertising, *The Real Truth* has fast become an international magazine. We now have subscribers in 176 countries. About 47 percent live in the U.S. Interestingly, *The Real Truth* is popular even in countries that do not profess Christianity as a major religion. For example, seven percent of subscribers are from *India*. We are continuing to receive good subscription growth. One interesting statistic is that in March we surpassed 10 million articles downloaded from *The Real Truth* website since launch.

"We are also continuing to receive strong response to *The World to Come* broadcasts. This is despite having not posted any new ones since our studio was damaged. Existing videos continue to have a significant impact on visitors to our websites based on the many positive comments received. Marketing is currently working with the newly established Growth Team

on many, many initiatives. As these roll out, we will report more!’...”

“This report comes from Business & Accounting: ‘In March we had another good month of income. This was largely driven by members and prospective members whose regular tithes and offerings increased significantly over the previous month. This reflects the strong growth in membership in recent months. It is also encouraging that a solid base of co-workers and donors has developed. Their generosity is making a real difference. Since the beginning of 2009, these contributions have accounted for 23 percent of total regular income. One reason for this strong showing is the ability to make online donations. This convenience for many includes those outside the U.S. who have become able to contribute online. As the U.S. economy slides deeper into recession, the Work’s income grows stronger. God’s blessings are most evident!’

### **Last Family Member of the “Greatest Generation”**

Early summer 2009 saw great progress, but it occurred alongside a sad event for Mr. Pack and his family. He informed the Church in the June 2009 *Brethren/Co-Worker Letter* of the loss of a very special member of his extended family who had helped shape his thinking in a number of areas. His uncle had died quite suddenly of cancer:

“Now for a sad note. I suppose everyone knows how special my Uncle Frank was to me. Mr. Armstrong had his special Uncle Frank, and so have I. My wife and I flew out on Sunday morning to see my uncle, thinking that it would be a relatively normal visit...My aunt had decided not to tell us [of his greatly worsened condition] before our arrival so that I would not ‘fret and worry’ in advance of seeing him. My wife immediately went

into nurse mode and helped take care of him until he died just after 1:00 a.m. Wednesday morning, only about eight hours before we were scheduled to leave.

“My uncle was 86 years and three months old, so he had lived a full life. My mother’s youngest brother and her best friend, this was the last relative remaining in my life from the ‘Greatest Generation.’ This truly extraordinary man had such an impact on my life.

“He had read *every* piece of literature produced by The Restored Church of God, and by me, until a period that ended only recently with the arrival of his memory loss problem. I am thankful for his life continuing for so long, and that we could be with my aunt until after he died. I will be traveling to Illinois on Monday to carry out the very difficult task of delivering his funeral—a promise I made to him about 10 years ago, and one he required me to reaffirm about once every year thereafter. (Understand that my long-time first mother-in-law died just seven weeks ago at almost 91.)”

After performing the funeral as promised, Mr. Pack reflected on his uncle’s lasting influence.

“In some ways, much like with my first wife after her death, there is little need for additional comments about my uncle because I have looked back and seen how much I have written about him. It was a very difficult funeral to perform—to say the least.

“What I will miss most about this man who virtually built *Encyclopaedia Britannica* was his own *encyclopedic mind*. I have never known a person with more knowledge—not one. He was a world-class scholar on President Lincoln, General(s) Grant, Sherman and Custer, as well as Napoleon—and every conceivable aspect of the American Civil War. His

own personal library was filled with thousands of books on these subjects. But as fascinating as he was to listen to on these topics—as per *operational*, *strategic* and *tactical* thinking—he was most helpful to me in his latter years on matters pertaining to business, advertising and publishing with the same three levels of thinking in these areas.

“While I already miss him, I am thankful that I got to be with him when he died, and that I had him for so long—until my age began with a 6, something that only a few can claim.”

### **A Tremendous Opportunity!**

In a bittersweet turn of events, the loss of one of the biggest thinkers Mr. Pack has ever known occurred at the very same time as one of the most incredible prospects ever seen in God’s Work—in any age!—presented itself. Mr. Pack also announced this in the same letter:

“At this point I would like to comment on an apparent and truly fascinating new ‘open door’ (Rev. 3:8) that has been presented to us. Early last week we were contacted by a West Coast-based television production company. They requested a lengthy interview with me, to be featured in a 12-part documentary series on the subject of prophecy. The series will then air on a *major* cable network. They have offered to arrange travel to a studio in a large city (Boston, New York, Chicago or Washington, D.C.) that is close to Headquarters...

“A representative explained that they had found academic types to discuss biblical subjects as covered in classical literature, and other niche areas of knowledge, but they were not able to find an *authority* on biblical prophecy, particularly the book of Revelation—until they found literature such as *Revelation Explained*

*at Last!* through an extensive Internet search. They concluded I am '*the expert*' (their words) in the field...

"Generally speaking, television denigrates, lampoons or dismisses the Bible, which is usually portrayed as mere ancient literature, or worse, superstitious folklore...But this network seems to have a genuine interest in the details of prophecy as found *only in our literature*, and I am of course willing to answer questions they might have. Having studied virtually all elements of prophecy for over 40 years, I can—and will!—speak with authority—and the producers say they want this.

*"Brethren, this could be an incredible opportunity for the Work!!!* This cable channel reaches over a million *prime-time* viewers in the U.S. alone each night (it would likely be more on the subject of prophecy), and also has a *large international viewership*—apparently in well over 100 nations! I believe we are scheduled for prime-time. Hundreds of millions currently receive this channel in their homes.

"Now ask: How many millions could watch this series (just its first showing), especially considering the fascination that has come to exist with Bible prophecy—and this to occur in a time of terrible global uncertainty and fear?

"Next ask: How many times would it be replayed? And: Might this lead to further opportunities with this network? Still further: Which *other* networks, radio programs, newspapers or magazines *might* learn of this interview and request one (or more) of their own?

"We cannot be sure of where this will lead yet, but we certainly can pray about how God might use this unbelievable open door on (INTER)NATIONAL TELEVISION 'right out of the gate'—meaning, the very first time I speak on television. I ask each of you to pray *fervently* about this exciting prospect. I will share more

in due time, when it is appropriate to do so. Remember God's words in the book of Ezekiel to Ezekiel when you think of how big this Work will grow—"Son of man, they are talking about you...(meaning, everywhere)."

Reflecting on the weight of this event right after it took place, Mr. Pack stated,

"The interview was an eye-opening experience—to say the least. A list of 105 questions for my review was sent to us four days in advance to allow for proper preparation. I could not have asked for a better series of questions, and they permitted me to cover virtually everything that I would have wanted to say.

"The series will also include a look at well-known 'prophets' and psychics of the past and present. Because it is scheduled to look at the devil's role in prophecy, demon possession, as well as the identity of the Beast and False Prophet (something they indicated I should specifically address), a large number of questions were devoted to this subject. But I also got to talk about the kingdom of God, America and Britain in prophecy, the true Church versus the false churches of men, what is the Mark of the Beast, Armageddon and the identity of the Great Whore of Revelation 12.

"The questioning opened with, and periodically returned to, the subject of the last days—what this period is, when it is, and how to know that this time has arrived. Many questions appeared in this line of inquiry.

"Millions today want to know how to escape the horror that is coming, and the questions also reflected what they should do now to prepare. This permitted me to debunk the idea of a rapture, and to introduce the Place of Safety, which interested the interviewer. I had a full opportunity to explain that prophecy is only understood if one obeys God, and the book of Revelation is written to 'His servants.'

I quoted Acts 5:32—God gives His Spirit ‘to them that obey Him’—Psalm 111:10—‘a good understanding have all they that do His Commandments’—and that it is ‘the Spirit of truth’ (John 14:17) that leads a person into the truth of all elements of prophecy.

“Later, we learned that the interviewer reported to her contact people that she was very pleased with the answers she heard, using strong language to make her point.

“We may well find that this opportunity opens more doors in the near or distant future.”

### **First Year of Ambassador Center Completed**

More advancements continued to take place throughout 2009. Mr. Pack detailed these in his July 2009 *Brethren/Co-Worker Letter*:

“Our first college year is now complete as of eight days ago. What a wonderful year it was—and so beneficial to the existing staff, as well as those being sent to the field in the near or later future. Of course, we are finding that the most *immediate* benefit of this first year is that, now that it is over, we all have a full day each day to do God’s Work. Remember, we are doing something that is historic—very different from the past. We are putting an already existing staff through the college rather than building a staff from the beginning having come *out of* the college. But God did get us through this first year, and all of us think with flying colors. So many other things are advancing in the Work, and this letter will mention only a few.

“*America and Britain in Prophecy* is now available as our fourth book that has come through the publishing process. I wish everyone could see these four books in their beautiful hardbound version. They leave me

inspired, and wishing that Mr. Armstrong could see them. Book five, *The True Jesus Christ – Unknown to Christianity!*, has entered the process, with *Sex – Its Unknown Dimension* soon to follow. I will explain in the sermon why I am changing and making the “True Church” book seventh in order, rather than sixth as had been originally planned.

“God’s Work is truly ‘locked and loaded’—ready to expand as never before!”

### More Developments

In the fall of 2009, the Ambassador Center started its second year. Mr. Pack wrote the following regarding these developments in his *Brethren/Co-Worker Letter* for September 2009:

“The Work of God is coming into a position of such power and effectiveness—and at exactly the right time!—that I thought a brief summary of some of these advancements would be particularly inspiring before the Feast...”

“The next report concerns Ambassador Center: “Ambassador Center (AC) is preparing for its second year! Orientation will take place during the week after the Feast, and classes will begin on Monday, October 19. Courses for this semester will include General Epistles and part of the Epistles of Paul (taught by Mr. Pack), Speech 3, Principles of Leadership and Protocol 2, Advanced Journalism, Home Economics 2 and Music Appreciation & Fine Arts. The total student body will be comprised of at least 115 men and women (there may yet be a couple more), which will be the largest number that the Center will serve for some time. Naturally, enrollment will dip after the first class graduates in May of next year. But

we anticipate that the number will then begin to grow again, especially as God continues to call new individuals into the Church.

“Incidentally, much advance work has already been done on this May’s Graduation weekend, with a very elegant location in nearby Akron secured for the ceremony, scheduled for Sunday, May 2.

### ***World to Come Program Accelerates***

Another inspiring development was detailed in Mr. Pack’s November 2009 *Brethren/Co-Worker Letter*:

“The Work is progressing in ways that have permanently changed us—for the rest of the age!...

“There have been stunning recent developments in the number of *World to Come* broadcasts being watched. Recall that in July, we had 14,256 broadcasts viewed. We had been basically static for the six previous months at a number similar to this. But August suddenly, and very unexpectedly, increased to 41,484. September similarly shot up much further to 76,785 broadcasts viewed. Now in October, despite having had very low numbers during the Feast because we were not advertising very much, the number still further shot up to 92,277 broadcasts viewed—almost six and a half times July’s total! Note that just the last *week* of October was 31,410, or well over twice the entire total for July.”

“What effect might my History Channel appearance next week have on this growth? (Also recognize that this series will not occur in many countries for some months.)

“What about the fact that our YouTube totals grew quickly after our launch in the *second* week by 50 percent above the first week?”

“What about the fact that the ‘Nostradamus Effect’ series is having a profound and spreading impact on millions of viewers around the world through Google searches? This has been a wildly popular series that almost by itself has vaulted The History Channel’s ratings into the stratosphere. It is obvious to us that God has worked it out that we are *automatically* going to at least temporarily benefit from this, and maybe for a long time, as more and more showings of this series occur in the United States and elsewhere with the passing of time.”

“And finally, what about the most important factor of all—BY FAR!!—that of the power of God evidencing itself more clearly than ever in His Work? We have seen a recent string of very dramatic healings—I can think of four or five right now—but we also need to realize that these began about a month ago at the Feast as all of God’s people were told to pray first for the POWER OF GOD above all else in our prayers regarding the Work. We should not be surprised that this power is presenting itself in the growth of the very Work itself.”

In late 2009, Mr. and Mrs. Pack also had opportunity to visit New York City. They were treated to a special tour of the area, which included a unique inside view of the United Nations building and New York Stock Exchange. This all-access tour allowed the Packs to see things very few have the chance to experience. While in the United Nations building, they were able to see firsthand the Security Council Chamber, where decisions are presented to news media. Mr. Pack also visited the UN General Assembly Hall, where international leaders address the world.

Mr. and Mrs. Pack also spent another day elsewhere in Manhattan, visiting Ground Zero, Central Park and One Penn Plaza, where Mr. Pack once worked as a minister in

the WCG. His office overlooked Madison Square Garden to the south.

Here is more about the trip from Mr. Pack's September letter:

"I wanted all of you to be able to appreciate some of the extraordinary opportunities that God worked out for us to be able to see and experience. *The Pillar* includes a kind of 'miniature slideshow' that all of you can appreciate. On several occasions, we were given what could only be described as 'VIP treatment.' The photographs selected for your viewing are focused on my trip to the New York Stock Exchange, as well as the detailed and thorough tour we received of the United Nations building, in all of its parts...We were given an almost unparalleled access that very few others would receive..."

### **New Booklet—and More Statistical Surges!**

As God's Work was racing forward, a new need arose. Because of professing Christianity's focus on Bible prophecy, and rampant confusion about the subject, Mr. Pack decided to expand an article on the anti-christ into a new booklet. From his December 2009 *Brethren/Co-Worker Letter*:

"Included in the monthly mailing is a new booklet titled *The Antichrist—Who, What and When!* Perhaps you heard that it was coming. This booklet was not remotely on the horizon until I revisited our article on the antichrist in preparation for *The World to Come* broadcast on this subject. I realized that the existing article would need to be expanded into a medium-sized booklet due to the popularity of the subject and widespread confusion that surrounds who and what is 'antichrist'..."

“A couple of important—and very inspiring—statistics need to be reported. The first is that of the increasing explosion of *World to Come* views. Recall that in October we had 92,277 viewed on our website, plus 1,357 viewed on *YouTube*, for a total of 93,634 for that month. In November, we had 147,596 broadcasts viewed on our website, and 2,441 watched on *YouTube*, for a total of 150,037. This is a 60.2 percent increase—and in a month with one less day.”

“Brethren, we are exploding in *every statistic* that measures the Work. I hope all of God’s people are thrilled at what we think these monumental increases mean for the scope and size of the Work and Church of God in perhaps *very* near time to come. We can all thank God that He has timed the development of ministers around the world with what He must have always known was going to be this massive explosion of interest in God’s Church and Work. Truly, God is the Master Potter (Isa. 64:8) at work in all facets of His Church.”

## *Dramatic Advancements*

**I**n the beginning of 2010, Mr. and Mrs. Pack were able to visit brethren in South Africa. The following comes from his January 2010 *Brethren/Co-Worker Letter*:

“My wife and I are very much looking forward to meeting the brethren in South Africa in now less than two weeks. This would include being able to spend some time with a number of ministers from across the African continent, which is also important both for myself, but also for Mr. Kevin Denee, who will be staying for a couple days longer than my wife and I. I have never been to South Africa, nor has my wife, but we are eager to be able to make more of these trips as my schedule permits.”

Once they returned, Mr. Pack related this in his *Brethren/Co-Worker Letter* for February 2010:

“My wife and I (and my son-in-law) have recently returned from a very positive week-long trip to South Africa. We were able to see all of our happy, unified

brethren and to also spend quality time with most of our African ministers, covering a host of important items. We also especially enjoyed the opportunity to visit a large game reserve for half a day. To turn a corner and see 15 elephants approximately 40 feet away coming toward you—requiring you to back up for over 100 yards before they left the road—was an experience hard to forget.

“I had never been to this part of Africa. While the country is certainly beautiful, the conditions that we observed were in many cases deplorable—large and unending shantytowns (35 white ones just surrounding Pretoria, the capital), pollution from gold, uranium and other kinds of mines devastating the environment and the nation’s breadbasket, trash piled high in Johannesburg and Pretoria on many major street corners, crime almost everywhere and at a staggering level, with *entire neighborhoods* secured behind bars, razor wire and electrified wiring very comparable to a *medium*-security prison in America, and giant billboard-sized full nudity lining the highway in various places. To watch the blessings so obviously disappearing right before our eyes, in what was once one of the nations that had received the special abundance of birthright blessings promised to Israel, was difficult to endure. I was left to realize that other rich, great birthright nations cannot be far behind, and what they will look like when they ‘catch up’ to places like South Africa.”

“I am delivering perhaps what will be the most important prophecy broadcast yet as soon as this letter is completed. It is destined to cause a stir of immense proportion, whether sooner or later we just do not know. Titled ‘Europe and the Vatican—What Is Coming!’, it connect dots in a way that I have not previously even done in the Book of Revelation or Beast of Revelation

series—or the one on the Antichrist, the one on the New World Order or any other broadcast. Once you view it, you will have no doubt that we are doing the warning part of God’s Work with all the power that we can possibly summon. I expect many tens of thousands of people will view it just in the near weeks to come. All of us need to be praying about the kind of response that such broadcasts will bring. We should hold no illusions about the potential level of persecution such messages carry. DO NOT MISS IT!”

### **First Ambassador Center Graduation**

During this time, preparation was already underway for the first Ambassador Center graduation. Mr. Pack outlined this in his April 2010 *Brethren/Co-Worker Letter*:

“This will almost certainly be the most inspiring *Brethren/Co-Worker Letter* you have read. God’s Work is going forward with TREMENDOUS POWER, and this letter is chock-full of all kinds of comparative proof!”

“Everyone is racing to get ready for (1) the first Ambassador Center graduation ceremonies for what will be 95 men and women and (2) the simultaneous arrival of ministers and wives (and some others) from around the world for our first Ministerial Conference in two years and ten months, this time for a *full-time* ministry able to remain for a full ten days.”

“A LOT IS GOING ON! BUT THEN THIS IS THE WORK OF GOD, SO WHAT DID WE EXPECT?”

### **Fundraising Efforts**

As part of the Grand Pattern established under Mr. Armstrong, Mr. Pack announced the creation of a fundraising

project. This has become a kind of “project without end” to raise significant funds to *regularly* help advance the Work:

“I have asked the coordinator of the new fundraising project team to write a report on what is happening in regard to this project announced in last month’s *Brethren/Co-worker Letter*, and first mentioned last summer. Here is a preliminary statement and list of ideas that should be helpful and inspiring for what could become an annual August event that can greatly benefit God’s Work. As you read, recognize that we realize the relatively small size of many of our congregations—and thus that you can only do what you can do. But let this never be an excuse to say, ‘There is nothing I (or our little congregation) can do because we are too small.’ Collectively, we can all do more than we think. Just keep thinking about the potentially extraordinary impact on the Work:

“Opportunities to fundraise abound! We need to be creative and ‘think outside the box.’”

“Fundraising as a group can be fun, and can strengthen friendships among brethren. Do not discount our potential—think BIG! Begin exploring your area for creative opportunities and potential locations.”

### **Ministerial Conference—and Third Website Announced**

As more structure was being brought to all elements of God’s Work, the need to develop a third website dedicated to *World to Come* broadcasts became evident. This was covered along with updates regarding the Ministerial Conference in his May 2010 *Brethren/Co-Worker Letter*:

“[Regarding] *The World to Come*, the time has arrived to announce that we will soon have a separate

website solely to advertise the program. There are many advantages to this from a marketing point of view. In the end, we think this will cause the number who view the broadcast to grow and even potentially *skyrocket*! The projected date for launch is 10 weeks from today, or Friday, July 9. We will keep you posted on the progress—and on a couple of related big projects that should occur within four additional months, or by early November.”

“Ministers have been arriving for the last two days, with many more arriving tonight for our back-to-annual Ministerial Conference, which begins on Monday of next week and lasts through Friday. As more ministers are being hired and stationed in all quarters of the United States and the world, a seemingly endless need for basic instruction, clear policy and general communication about issues that are arising make this Conference vital.

“The points to remember are three—and they are BIG: (1) We have grown much *larger* than previously thought, (2) this has therefore happened *faster* than we anticipated and (3) such increases are *continuing* rather than showing any signs of slowing down. We can probably safely project that perhaps *many millions* of *World to Come* views will occur in just the year 2010—and this can be coupled with what can also be as safely projected to be *many thousands* of inquiries from those who want to be part of God’s Church and Work as a result of all that God is doing.

“Brethren, this is all tremendously—and I do mean TREMENDOUSLY!—inspiring and exciting for all of us around the world to ponder. Prophecy reveals that God’s final Work before Christ’s Return will continue to rear up like a colossus, bearing both the wonderful *good news* of the coming KINGDOM OF GOD, but also the *bad news* of the GREAT TRIBULATION TO

the rebellious, sinful nations descended from ancient Israel, who prove to be ever more DESPERATELY in trouble with the passing of each month, making a simple synopsis of the growing problems that are contained in these monthly letters ever more difficult to report!”

In his June 2010 *Brethren/Co-Worker Letter*, Mr. Pack looked back at the Conference, and gave an update on a new department:

“While you might expect I could report that things are slowing down a little and returning to normal now that the Ministerial Conference, college classes and graduation are behind us, that is really not the case. But slowing down probably never will be the case! In fact, we will likely see certain things constantly speeding up, going forward in the same way as are events in the world. This will be more clear later in the letter. I do want to report in this letter that also goes to all of our co-workers that the Conference was one of exceptional camaraderie, helpfulness, thoroughness, unity and overall impact. It has been very, very inspiring to see the all-powerful living Jesus Christ so rapidly putting together a trained and qualified ministry that can reach all parts of the world relatively quickly—in other words, in all the places where Christ is calling, working with people, granting them repentance and putting them into His Body, these men can counsel and baptize them.

“The next report concerns the important development of a News Bureau finally coming into place for our Editorial Department, and also as an aid to help me personally. We have long hoped to see this day, and its arrival at this particular time makes it more vital than ever to God’s Work going forward:

“The time has come to *focus* our zeal and *coordinate* our efforts. The ultimate goal is to collectively and effectively watch ALL of the news occurring around the world *each day*, thereby allowing the most important news, trends, facts and statistics to be sent to Headquarters and potentially to be used in God’s Work.”

In the same letter, it was also reported that another radio interview had been requested:

“Another opportunity has arisen for an interview before a large radio audience, and this will occur in 10 days on the Sabbath of June 12. The one hour taping will be the day before. It involves an evangelical commentator in a major metropolitan area interviewing me regarding the coming of the kingdom of God, as well as the events foretold in the Bible to proceed it. This started with his viewing my recent Part 1 broadcast about God’s kingdom. He was intrigued by what he heard (and requested the booklet), and added that he wanted to talk about prophecy because so many millions of Christians have become frightened at the rapid advance of world conditions toward circumstances that even they understand point in some way to Christ’s Return. As with *The History Channel*, we are even being asked to write the questions that will be presented. I hope all of us will pray about this open door, and I intend to say more about it in the upcoming sermon referenced above.

“It is my hope that as these opportunities continue to present themselves, I will have time for all that appear to be meaningful. Of course, we will always try to examine them in advance so that we choose the best ones. It is my hope that time will be available in my schedule to accept as many of these as possible.”

### ***The Bible's Greatest Prophecies Unlocked!***

In the summer of 2010, another major advancement in the Work took place. A unique book titled *The Bible's Greatest Prophecies Unlocked! – A Voice Cries Out* was released. Mr. Pack discussed this in his August 2010 *Brethren/Co-Worker Letter*:

“I have never written anything like this and shall never do so again. Mr. Armstrong said that his most important book was *Mystery of the Ages*. He stated that it was perhaps the second most important book ever written besides the Bible. I will state—unequivocally—that this new, long volume is the single most important (and no doubt the largest and most thorough) book ever written on the subject of prophecy. Never mind that it is the most truthful and accurate. I believe the book is destined to bring both growth and persecution in levels we have not experienced. Finishing touches are still being put on it as I write. We plan to send the book to everyone prior to the Feast of Tabernacles.

“IT IS A MUST-READ FOR THE WHOLE CHURCH!!! I can only wish that everyone on Earth would read this book.”

“You may be aware that the number of *World to Come* views for July, the slowest month of the year for Internet usage by far, still set a record, with the total number of views being 260,068. The previous high monthly total was about 252,900.”

In the September 2010 *Brethren/Co-Worker Letter* Mr. Pack reported more about this important new book, and announced the creation of an annual Manpower Brochure as was produced in the past:

“Brethren, there could be no better time for all of God’s people to read the now soon-coming most important book that I have written, or ever will write—*The Bible’s Greatest Prophecies Unlocked! – A Voice Cries Out*. This 550-page book, with 12 pages of charts and graphs, on virtually all aspects of prophecy is scheduled to be given out on the first night of the Feast. With the passing of time, the book has grown stronger and stronger, as well as more and more clear and thorough. It has become our recognition that this volume is destined to make an impact far beyond what I originally anticipated. These are not just my words, but those of the many ministers and others who have been involved in the proofreading, now scheduled to be completed later today. Printing begins tomorrow.”

“You may now also look forward to *another* very special gift to be given to all brethren worldwide at this year’s Feast. A magnificent brochure, *The WORK OF GOD Around the World (Fall 2010)*, is almost complete. I will review it upon completing this letter. You must see it to believe it, and when you do you will see that it becomes an absolutely wonderful tool for use in your daily prayers for all aspects of God’s Church. This brochure represents the return of an important piece within the Grand Pattern of God’s Church and Work in the last century. (Of course, everyone can still look forward to two other gifts to be given at the Feast—totaling five—the Music DVD, and another special brochure of quotes from the past by Mr. Armstrong.)”

“Another piece of encouraging news is that in the 31 days of August we grew by more total households and more total people than any previous month in our history. (And realize that August is usually one of our *lowest* growth months.) We can only wonder what this portends going forward. I know you will be inspired

about it and will want to deeply thank God for this ongoing and even improving trend as you contemplate Feast sites that are larger than ever, with some jammed to capacity, and including two new sites this year—one in India and another in Kenya.”

“We are in the most exciting and inspiring times to do God’s Work that I have experienced in my lifetime. Having been called into the Work six months after turning age 17, and now three months from age 62, it is fair to say that this Work has been more than all of my adult life. I repeat: These are *the most* exciting and inspiring times this servant of God has seen. We cannot possibly have very much more time to complete our commission. Hence, expect to hear more exciting announcements in near time to come.”

“This is the 12th year that The Restored Church of God is keeping the Feast, and we all know that ‘12’ is the number of ‘beginnings’ or ‘foundations’ seen throughout the Bible—12 sons of Israel, 12 tribes springing from them, 12 original apostles, 12 gates into New Jerusalem, 144,000 saints in the First Resurrection (12 times 12,000), and some others. We began our 12th year May 3, 2010 (of course it will continue until next May 3), and we are in a sense in the middle of a *special year*. I have felt this for some time, and the evidence indicates that the *foundation* of the Work of God has been laid so carefully, strongly and thoroughly that we can almost certainly soon anticipate a major initiative *beginning* soon, perhaps at the end of the 12th year.”

### **World to Come in Audio!**

After the 2010 Feast of Tabernacles, the Work was poised to surge forward. In Mr. Pack’s October 2010 *Brethren/Co-Worker Letter*, he described the latest update—*World to Come* audio broadcasts:

“I am thrilled to be able to finally announce that the daily 15-minute audio broadcasts (Monday through Friday, posted at noon daily) began today. (I have already recorded one today and hope to record another one before leaving this afternoon if I can complete this letter soon enough.) Perhaps you will have already heard one or more new broadcasts by the time you receive this letter.

“An incredibly busy schedule has finally cleared in a way that I can devote myself to adjusting to the daily and weekly routine necessary to produce these broadcasts alongside a weekly 30-minute video broadcast (still to be posted early afternoon each Friday).”

“At launch, the broadcasts will already be available to users with smartphones, tablet computers (such as the iPad), desktop computers, and so many more devices, through the use of podcasts. (The term *podcast* came from blending the name of a popular music device *iPod* with the word *broadcast*. Today it essentially describes *any* form of regularly posted webcasts, especially audio.)

“The trend online is becoming that the majority who ‘consume’ podcasts do so from a growing number of sophisticated *portable* devices, including many types of cellphones. Think what this means for the Work of God!”

“On top of website changes, there have been many meetings and much organization to make sure we are prepared to distribute this new—and powerful—facet of God’s Work.”

### **Addressing the WCG Splinters**

As 2010 was coming to an end, Mr. Pack explained the ongoing turmoil within the United Church of God in his *Brethren/Co-Worker Letter* for December 2010:

“Only rarely do I mention what is going on in the splinters and slivers of the Worldwide Church of God. (Most of it just does not concern us.) However, this is one such rare occasion. UCG is now apparently undergoing a major rupturing from within. In a positive way, this is affecting Restored—and it could affect you directly. Incredibly, and this is because of the wrong form of government adopted there, approximately one-third of the ministry in this organization is calling for the entirety of its 12-man council of elected leaders to be removed. Of course, there would seem to be no chance this will happen. Many hundreds and perhaps thousands of brethren are fed up with what has become a disgraceful public fight on the Internet for now going on eight months. I felt it needful to write another ‘Open Letter’ to the membership and ministry of this church. *Many* thousands there have now read it. (Over 12,500 read the first one.) Some have already come with us, others are considering such a decision, while new people are contacting us usually at the rate of several every day. On one day last week, 87 households from this organization wrote to us. Throughout this period, some write asking for literature, others ask questions, still others ask for the *Splinter Explanation Packet*, yet others ask to attend with us, and some ask to speak with a local minister. Positive responses have outnumbered negative responses by over twenty to one. (Of course, we understand that prophecy indicates that probably the great majority of these ‘separated brethren’ will ultimately not decide to return to God’s Church, full Truth, Work and Government.)”

### **Another Local Grandson!**

In late December, a different type of announcement was made to the Church:

“Mr. and Mrs. Kevin Denee are pleased to announce the birth of their second son, Peter David, who arrived on Saturday, December 25, at 7:37 p.m. He weighed 10 pounds, 8 ounces and measured 22.5 inches. Grandpa and Grandma (Mr. and Mrs. Pack) are also happy to welcome their newest grandchild.”

### Looking Back on 2010

In the January 2011 *Brethren/Co-Worker Letter*, Mr. Pack summarized all that had been accomplished in the Work in 2010:

“While men are turning the corner on how they count years, and in the case of the year 2011 how they count decades, the Work of God is turning the corner in a powerful way. It is now evident to us here that the next calendar year will be very different from any previous year. Today we officially begin the final third of the 12th year of the reconstitution of God’s Work—and those who have been in God’s Church for some years know the importance of 12 as the number of ‘foundations’ or ‘beginnings.’

“Brethren, anyone watching prophecy knows the Work of God has to soon speed up in a VERY BIG WAY! Therefore, this is no time to let up in our prayers and sacrifices for this great Work of the living God. We simply must not permit this. The generosity of God’s people is making a profound difference. *If it continues*, it will mean we can in a few months project perhaps an additional eight or more much needed fulltime ministers just in the United States this year.

“We could also expect that a significant number of congregations in the United States and elsewhere will be able to move into desperately needed halls. If

more come from the splinters, as we anticipate may be occurring at this time, then we may soon be able to talk in terms of a much bigger Work than we have yet experienced—and I mean in *2011*, not later!

Another year had passed and the Work was about to grow beyond anyone's expectations...

## *Race to Finish the Work!*

**T**he month of January started out with incredible statistical growth. Mr. Pack wrote about it in his February 2011 *Brethren/Co-Worker Letter*:

“A truly awesome month of growth has come to a close. None of us have *ever* seen anything like JANUARY 2011!—and you will see that this is across the board!

“First, The Restored Church of God grew 4.2% in January—the largest single month of growth we have ever seen! Some years ago, when the Church was much smaller, we may have seen a higher *percent* of growth once or twice (I do not remember), but never have we seen a month of such *numeric* growth. (Obviously, it takes a greater number coming with us each month to equal the same growth percentage.)

“Before bringing more statistics, realize that there will be additional ministers ordained in various parts of the United States and the rest of the world all through this calendar year, enabling us to constantly take care of continuing growth.

“Next, regular record monthly download numbers in the final quarter of 2010 continued to increase in January 2011. Total downloads also increased from 1,005,414 in December to 1,036,012 in January.

“More people visiting our websites of course has meant *many* more Church Inquiries. Our previous monthly record of 550 (just last month) was broken—and by far. This month’s total is 674. This is a truly stunning 22.5% over the previous record-setting month—one month ago!

“*The World to Come* program in audio and video (including YouTube) continues to draw the greatest numbers, regularly now accounting for more than half of *all* downloads. Last week, an average of 19,501 broadcasts were viewed *every day!*”

### **Final Book to the WCG Splinters**

With the split in UCG and the formation of COGwa, it became clear to Mr. Pack that a new and final book to the splinters and slivers would be required. He expanded his “Open Letter” on the subject of the one true Church into a very thorough booklet. It makes clear through Mr. Armstrong’s words and Scripture that Jesus Christ leads one, undivided organization. It also proves where the confusion in the splinters on this topic comes from, and how the WCG apostate leaders influenced modern splinter leaders. Mr. Pack wrote about it his February letter:

“By now all of you have heard my sermon describing the ‘new’ *Splinter Explanation Packet* book (*The True Church—One Organization, or Many?*) proving to those in the splinters that Jesus Christ only built a single organization in AD 31. Well over 4,000 people have read this book already in letter form in just its first 11 days. Letters we are receiving from some of

them (daily) are showing that this document is having a real effect. It is also generating an increase in Church Inquiries from the splinters. The book will be sent to all members within two weeks or so.”

Mr. Pack expanded on this in his March 2011 *Brethren/Co-Worker Letter*:

“This book removes every shadow of doubt that Jesus Christ had in mind ONE UNIFIED ORGANIZATION when He said in Matthew 16:18, “I will build My Church.” Every member of the Church should read it and understand what so many have lost sight of in the wake of the apostasy. (My book *Except the Lord Build the House* has been officially retired, and will no longer be sent. The quotes in it have virtually all ‘migrated’ to other splinter books. There is simply no need for its existence any longer.)

### California Visit

In this letter, Mr. Pack reported more about progress in the Work, and also wrote about another trip he and his wife were planning:

“By now you know that every month in God’s Work dramatically exceeds the accomplishments—the fruits—of what God did the previous month!

“What has become an every-month rate of about 650 Church Inquiries is yielding a level of Church growth we have simply never seen before. We talk now in terms of about *one percent growth* in God’s Church every week.

“The absolutely beautiful new *Ambassador Center Envoy* is just now coming back from the binder. These will begin to be shipped this week, starting with the

international brethren. I wish every one of God's people could have one of these truly special books. They are not 'one whit' behind the superb quality of the especially beautiful Ambassador College *Envoys* of the 1960s, and early 1980s."

"The last point on the list is something that is already happening. My wife and I will also be doing this more as we can, starting with a trip to the Los Angeles, California area in two weeks.

In Mr. Pack's April 2011 *Brethren/Co-Worker Letter* he spoke about the trip to California in hindsight, among other developments:

"Mr. William Behrer (Restored's Director of Operations) has been invited back to New York today, April 8. The purpose of the invitation involves meeting the Israeli President Shimon Peres at a private press briefing. (Mr. Behrer has interacted—when he was an executive in the America-Israel Friendship League—with Mr. Peres several times when he was Prime Minister, Defense Minister and now President, and knows his son quite well.) Mr. Behrer flew out early this morning, and he expects to be able to at the very least briefly talk personally to President Peres. Last week, Mr. Behrer was in New York and spent time with the Israeli Consul General to New York, the next highest official of the Israeli government in America after the Ambassador, who of course resides in Washington. (It is interesting that the Consul General had heard about my daily audio broadcasts from a source in Los Angeles, who was describing them in the presence of others.)

"On a personal note, my wife and I just experienced a wonderful trip to California on the Sabbath of March 26 to meet the brethren from many surrounding

areas. Since we were meeting just four blocks from the Pasadena campus of Ambassador College, also the Worldwide Church of God Headquarters, we adjourned the Bible Study and about 35 of the brethren met for a one-hour tour of the campus. I told them that this ‘old’ tour guide was probably officially giving his last tour of Ambassador College. Everyone seemed to enjoy the event very much. But none more than I at the privilege of leading it. It was truly inspiring to see God’s true Church meeting again in this way in Pasadena, California, for the first time since the apostasy—and so close to the Church’s former Headquarters. (The next morning my wife and I drove to San Francisco for a couple days respite before flying home last Wednesday.)

“Also note that in the first three months of 2011, the Church grew as much numerically as 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003 and 2004 COMBINED! And this is not because the Church declined in any of those previous years. We have grown every year since our beginning, and in all of those early years we *averaged* over 15 percent growth. It will be exciting and inspiring to see what happens through this year—but maybe even more in the time remaining after that.”

### **100th Broadcast!**

In the same letter, Mr. Pack reported another milestone in the Work—the completion of his 100th *World to Come* broadcast:

“I filmed my 100th *World to Come* broadcast last Friday morning. (It will be posted in seven days.) While this is certainly a milestone of sorts, what is more important is that we have covered now a tremendous number of topics (and with ever more

powerful and effective graphics). Many millions will see these broadcasts just this year and will be able to study in-depth all of these subjects through both video and audio form.

“I can only wonder if I will ever complete 200 *World to Come* broadcasts, simply because at a point I think we will be on television.

“*The World to Come* downloads increased in all categories—videos, MP3s, YouTube videos and daily audios. Interestingly, 590,000 *World to Come* broadcasts were viewed or heard (again, obviously a record), exactly half of the 1.18 million total downloads.

“Brethren, let’s never lose sight of the people—individual human beings—that these numbers represent. This is the way to really remain excited about the ever-expanding presence and reach of the Work of God on the Internet, but also in every other way!”

### **Restored’s 12-Year Anniversary**

In Mr. Pack’s May 2011 *Brethren/Co-Worker Letter* he noted the occasion of Restored reaching its 12-year anniversary:

“I am pleased to report that The Restored Church of God—the reconstitution of Christ’s Work on Earth—turned 12 years old on Tuesday, May 3. About a year ago, I made the point that the number ‘12’ is God’s number of ‘foundations’ or ‘beginnings.’ Reaching this milestone may be more important than now meets the eye. We are all more than interested in what it could mean for God’s Work in the final few years remaining to complete what is still before us. We have already seen a great deal of progress in a host of areas in a way that we have also never seen before.

“And we think what is happening is only the beginning!

“It has come time to release a free version of *The Bible’s Greatest Prophecies Unlocked! – A Voice Cries Out* on our *rcg.org* website. As of tomorrow night, the book will be available in HTML, PDF and another form of e-book called ‘E-pub.’

“Offering the book to the broadest audience possible has ALWAYS been my intent! Making money was certainly *never* the goal. It must now be available to more people. The shortness of time left in the age drove the decision to release the book in a larger way to the world as a whole and to the modern nations of Israel. Brethren, we can all pray that God uses this development to grow the Church and the Work in a BIG way! Those who wish to have a hardcopy will still be able to purchase one—but no one any longer needs to.

“Please pray that God continues to provide the finances needed to carry out all that is being planned. We are truly undergoing a giant overhaul surrounding our 12th anniversary that portends big things for the Work VERY SOON.”

### **Addressing the False “May 21” Prophecy**

In Mr. Pack’s June 2011 *Brethren/Co-Worker Letter* he described a unique event, which involved the posting of an article and a *World to Come* broadcast countering the teachings of a false prophet that had gained widespread notoriety:

“The biggest news event this month may have been the *worldwide* hysteria caused by the May 21, 2011 ‘Judgment Day’ prophecy (which would see the earth completely destroyed five months later on October 21). Most of you are aware that a California cult leader and his group Family Radio had undertaken

a massive advertising campaign to ‘warn the world’ of impending catastrophic events. Despite there being no biblical basis whatsoever for his claims, it became obvious that tens or even scores of millions, and in nearly all nations, were worried—with many terrified and panicked!—and at the very least confused about the possibility of May 21 being ‘the beginning of the end.’

“It is critical to mention that, just as I had forecast, after May 21 came and went, this man announced that the judgment day had come, but had been ‘spiritual’ in nature, and not ‘factual.’ He announced that October 21 will still be the ‘end of the world,’ but also now will be the ‘time of the [supposed] rapture.’

“When we posted a *Real Truth* article and a *World to Come* video on the May 21 subject, by now you probably have heard that interest in both EXPLODED almost immediately! While we anticipated a potentially large response—*no one* could have envisioned what came. We have so far reached right around 1.4 million people *directly* in nearly all nations and territories of the world. Each one of these represents from one to potentially *many* people, making this a single event where God’s Work reached multiple millions of people.

“This has certainly *never* happened before!

“Visitors have downloaded over 668,000 copies of *The Real Truth* article ‘Is May 21, 2011 “Judgment Day”?’—and this within a relatively short period of time. *The World to Come* broadcast ‘May 21, 2011—NOT Judgment Day!’ was seen over 108,000 times. In addition, over 623,000 people have watched this video on YouTube to date. (632,000 is the highest number that have ever watched a religious channel video on YouTube. This record number may be surpassed by the time you read this letter.)

“Tens of thousands also came to our websites from the homepage of Google News. In the days leading up to May 21, *The Real Truth* article was consistently featured at or near the top of the news giant’s ‘Spotlight’ section, which selects ‘news and in-depth pieces of lasting value.’ The video received similar press, was ‘embedded’ by prominent websites such as *ChristianPost.com*, and went on to reach additional *uncounted* tens of thousands. This is one more reason God’s Work has reached millions of people in this *single event*.”

### **Return to Israel, and Visit to Jordan**

In late July 2011, Mr. and Mrs. Pack, along with a number of Headquarters ministers and staff, traveled to Israel and Jordan in what become an even more enlightening and inspiring trip than his first one. He described it in his August 2011 *Brethren/Co-Worker Letter*:

“So much has taken place since my last letter that I hardly know where to begin. In regard to the trip I had mentioned was on the horizon, I can finally report that 13 staff members, including my wife and me, recently returned on Sunday from a trip overseas. We visited Israel and Jordan, and this included a series of extraordinary visits with various government officials.

“It was one of the most productive, informative and inspiring trips I have ever taken. Although I visited Israel 23 years ago, a great deal has changed in the tiny nation since then. The many purposes of the trip included meeting with a number of government officials, filming *World to Come* segments on location at a variety of sites, visiting—and examining—Petra in Jordan, as well as a little meaningful sightseeing fit in as we could. We were led by an experienced and

very knowledgeable tour guide. Also, the experience and knowledge of Mr. William Behrer, who has now been to Israel 40 times, facilitated this remarkable trip.

“We were able to bring very sophisticated equipment with us that enabled me to film on location a total of seven times. We first filmed at Megiddo, where armies that will fight Christ are scheduled to assemble. Next was the Garden Tomb, where Jesus was buried. Also, two clips were filmed from the Mount of Olives, including one overlooking the Temple Mount on the coming fulfillment of the Abomination of Desolation. Then came the synagogue at Capernaum, where Christ attended. Another segment was filmed on the Mount of Beatitudes where Jesus delivered His ‘Sermon on the Mount.’ Finally came Caesarea Philippi, in the far north, which is the place where Jesus was standing when He said He would build His Church. These productions will be used in a number of different ways. First, as stand-alone, on-location broadcasts to be posted in the coming weeks and months. Second, we plan to roll some of the footage into existing broadcasts. Third, we hope to incorporate some of it into this year’s ‘Behind the Work’ film. These special filmings were fascinating experiences for all involved. You ‘old-timers’ in the faith may recall Mr. Armstrong having done them at times.

“God’s people can look forward to seeing these ‘clips’ here and there going forward. As you view them, realize that all of them were filmed in the sun at a temperature above 100 degrees Fahrenheit. The need for everyone to ‘hydrate’ almost minute-by-minute is not evident. I am most grateful for the dedication of all our crew in making these filmings possible under such trying circumstances.

“The meetings with various government officials were also productive. We had a private dinner

with Uri Bar-Ner, the former Israeli Ambassador to Turkey, and met for an hour in private with the Deputy Mayor of Jerusalem, Naomi Tsur, along with Benny Kashriel, the Mayor of a very large city/suburb outside Jerusalem. We also met with a member of the Knesset, Dr. Einat Wilf, who would be the equivalent of a Congresswoman in the United States. We were also privileged to receive a private tour of the Knesset before the meeting with Dr. Wilf. Also, a professional film crew accompanied us on all of these contacts.

“Everyone felt that all the meetings went quite well, and presented valuable learning opportunities for all involved, certainly me included. I should say that a copy of the beautiful 2010 Ambassador Center *Envoy* was presented to each of the four parties mentioned.

“These government meetings represent a new and very important ‘open door’ that has appeared before God’s Church. I will explain more about this and its connection to Revelation 10:11 in my sermon tomorrow. All brethren can look forward to hearing a much more detailed report of the trip, as well as some impressions after visiting Petra, in this sermon.

“I (and I believe all the others) have come away from Israel and Jordan more inspired than ever about the AWESOME RESPONSIBILITY we have to complete the Work of God. The world is burning down—but it is we in God’s Church who must be ON FIRE to finish what God has commissioned only us to do!”

### **Building Plans Expand!**

In his October 2011 *Brethren/Co-Worker Letter*, Mr. Pack also announced dramatic plans to expand the building program:

“The entire Work is changing in ways that are difficult at this point to even quantify. It is a story of miracles and open doors appearing almost daily. Know that the obedience of God’s people to Christ’s commands (not mine!) appears—and until everything solidifies, I say at this point *appears*—to be now taking God’s Church and the scope of His Work to a place where I might have hoped we would be in two or three years. There is way too much to report in this letter. But I will likely have much more to say at all the North American Feast sites beginning in a couple weeks, with all other brethren to hear the same report as soon as possible after the Feast, per the pattern of past years.

“I should report this much: The plans to move into our own buildings are developing solidly. In this regard, a team of us toured the Pasadena campus a week ago with a very different eye than any tour I have ever led before on the campus. We looked for the kinds of things—attractive patterns and ideas, among other elements—that can be repeated to make beautiful the visible part (the outdoors) of God’s coming new campus without spending large sums of money. You can all look forward to what I think will be awe-inspiring renderings to appear first in this year’s ‘Behind the Work’ film. But you will see them in other places as they ‘mature.’”

More progress on this and other fronts was reported to the Church in Mr. Pack’s November 2011 *Brethren/Co-Worker Letter*:

“After returning to Headquarters from the Feast, we all ‘hit the ground running’ with the many projects that are underway regarding the buildings, the dramatic expansion of Ambassador Center

attendance, the imminent arrival of *The World to Come* program on nationwide television, and all the other inspiring developments in the Work that those in North America heard about in my Update Message at the Feast. Events are developing so rapidly—and in so many different directions at the same time—that regular updates may need to be presented just so the Church can move together—can stay on the same page—regarding these sudden large expansions of the Work.”

“Next, we are planning for nationwide television, and not merely on little public access stations that virtually no one watches. (Television is now in the budget, as is the cost of the enormous amount of additional literature that we will be distributing as a result.) When this new medium for the Work is launched, we will be able to reach vast numbers of people on top of those we are already reaching via the Internet. The scope of this new development is ABSOLUTELY HUGE for God’s Work. This much should be obvious. We can project that almost 1 in every 25 people ON EARTH will have access to the VERY FIRST *World to Come* broadcast when we begin on television. Brethren, again, this is staggering to contemplate.

“You can imagine how excited and inspired we are at Headquarters about expanding the reach of *The World to Come* program in such a powerful way, and so suddenly—before we ever thought possible at this level.

“In short, soon nothing will ever be the same!

“All will be inspired to know that on Tuesday, October 25, we completed purchase of the land upon which we will build. Beginning yesterday, a small team of staff members with chainsaws and other tools began to clear brush and trees in preparation for

God's magnificent new and final World Headquarters complex of buildings prior to the time Christ's feet arrive on the Mount of Olives (Zech. 14:4)."

### **Everything on Track**

In Mr. Pack's December 2011 *Brethren/Co-Worker Letter* he outlined all that was involved in the building program:

"Everything is progressing toward a monumental expansion of the Work, beginning in the spring of 2012. We are all working very hard in a host of different arenas to keep on track to meet all deadlines over the next four months. I cannot tell you how thankful I am on behalf of God's Work for the team of skilled people that Christ has slowly assembled among His Headquarters staff to carry out all the assignments necessary to make God's World Headquarters a shimmering jewel of spectacular beauty—*without* having to have paid what would have been the enormous cost for such a project. Before moving on, one of the developing stories within the daily miracles that God is bringing to pass is the number of uniquely trained people who are 'coming out of the woodwork' in various places within the Church offering their 'skill set' to this gigantic project.

"Here is an excerpt from an announcement we posted on our website two weeks ago, titled 'WHY an Entire Headquarters Campus?':

"Some may be curious as to WHY The Restored Church of God will begin construction of a new Headquarters campus next spring. This is a reasonable question. Many have forgotten or never knew that the 20th century leader of God's Work, Mr. Herbert Armstrong, never hesitated to make the needs of the

Work known, both to the Church and co-workers, but also sometimes to the world at large through local newspapers.

“The reasons for major expansion—then and now!—can be summed up in two words: HUGE GROWTH!

“God’s Work today is rapidly growing on *all* fronts! This should be expected if it is God’s Church. Where the true God is at work, growth will be abundantly evident. In fact, it was long understood to be one of the fruits that demonstrates *where* God is working.

“This pattern was seen in the 20th century in the Worldwide Church of God. Throughout the decades of Mr. Armstrong’s leadership, the physical environment where the Work was carried out was continuously ‘under construction.’ Buildings were regularly acquired, renovated, built, enlarged and in some cases demolished and replaced. Cranes, construction tape, barricades, ‘wet paint’ or ‘wet concrete’ signs and detours were a way of life for Ambassador College students, faculty and Headquarters employees. This was dictated by the expansion of membership, the student body, general operations and overall workload—all of which produced the need for an ever-growing staff. Existing buildings became cramped, and more space was ALWAYS required.”

“The Restored Church of God’s current quarters are becoming very cramped. Our circumstances have become unsustainable, and this is just in light of many additional necessary hires on the *immediate* horizon. Due to extraordinary efficiency, we are able to fit into about 20,000 square feet across three floors (with no more space available) in a rented office building—paying *someone else’s* mortgage. Good stewardship of God’s assets involves seeing a Church-owned campus

as an important investment, and one that can meet future needs. *Every* businessman understands this investment. While the enemies of God’s Work who came later did not understand this, and threw it all away, Mr. Armstrong certainly understood this.

“Looking ahead, the Work must continually train more ministers (and wives), other leaders and a variety of different kinds of full-time employees. Increasing numbers of qualified students are now available to attend the Church’s training institution, Ambassador Center, and we project 71 graduates next spring just at our *current* size. Therefore, a minimum of three buildings are required to satisfy the Church’s future needs. But realize that these three buildings will only be *part of one* campus, not three *entire* campuses as in the past. Mr. Armstrong *often* emphasized, ‘I am not in the college business. The three Ambassador Colleges are to train ministers and leaders for God’s Work. As soon as the colleges are not needed, I will shut them down!’ We say the same.”

“It is important to note that all of these plans are but a tiny microcosm of what was done in the past. Compare this one campus to three campuses (Pasadena, Big Sandy and Bricketwood), several large Church-owned Feast sites, multiple summer camps around the world, and corporate jets...”

“In summary, the stunning growth of The Restored Church of God has made this expansion both prudent (Prov. 22:3; 27:12) and necessary...”

### **2011—In Summary**

In January 2012, Mr. Pack wrote another Open Letter to all WCG splinters titled “RCG Fruits—Obvious Fingerprints of God!” It provided a summary of what had taken place in the previous year. Here is an excerpt from the letter:

“Every year the statistical growth in all categories within God’s Church and Work show an increase, and usually all of them a significant or large increase. But what follows is nothing short of a STATISTICAL TIDAL WAVE unlike anything we have seen before—and we have seen a lot of growth!

“Here is a bullet list of simply staggering—PHENOMENAL!—statistical increases. Some numbers compare the year 2011 to 2010, but others include additional years to help show a trend. Take time to savor what you read. Then compare each category with your organization:

“1. WEBSITE VISITORS

2008—2,523,452

2009—3,215,594 (+27.4%)

2010—4,557,793 (+41.7%)

**2011—6,748,760 (+48.1%)**

“2. WEBSITE DOWNLOADS (in December we passed 56 million downloads since launch on our three sites)

2008—4,282,034

2009—4,819,707 (+12.6%)

2010—7,886,972 (+63.6%)

**2011—13,445,333 (+70.5%)**

Books: 395,074 (+68.2%) Articles: 409,480 (+41.3%) Bible Course: 105,334 (+36.4%) Splinter Books: 98,213 (**+108.2%!!**)—This huge spike represents more in the WCG splinters researching us.

“3. *WORLD TO COME* BROADCASTS (video and audio)

2008—275,545

2009—907,003 (+229.2%)

2010—2,898,690 (+219.6%)

**2011—6,420,415 (+121.5%)**

*Video*: 3,615,873 (+49.1%) *Audio*: 295,597 (+484.5%) *YouTube*: 2,461,405 (+608.1%)

#### “4. *THE REAL TRUTH* MAGAZINE

“*The Real Truth* had its most expansive year, with 1,633,881 downloads—a **134.06%** increase over 2010. The online subscriber list grew by **50%** above 2010, with subscribers in **162** countries/territories.

#### “5. Church Inquiries

2008—806

2009—1,428 (+77.2%)

2010—4,789 (+235.4%)

**2011—7,795 (+62.8%)**—Be sure to ponder the *message* in these annual increases.

#### “6. CHURCH GROWTH

“Restored experienced **20.4%** increase in attendance over 2010. Since its inception, the Church has *averaged* just over **20%** growth *every year for 12 years!* More important, the first five of these years (2000-2004) averaged **15.2%** growth, while the next seven (2005-2011) averaged **23.5%**—when the baseline number was naturally growing bigger, and thus making it *much* harder to even grow at the *same* rate. As with income, we do not list our attendance. This is because, however large we have become, size is not important. Certainly not in the Laodicean age. Realize that thousands consider themselves members with us. Their emails tell us this. While *we* do not officially count these, it should be obvious that 20% growth for 12 straight years puts our *official* attendance in the thousands.

#### “7. FIELD MINISTERS AND STAFF

**2011—7 fulltime ministers added** (9 more are planned in 2012)

“All ministers (and wives) in The Restored Church of God ministry undergo a *very* extensive, sophisticated training program, via Ambassador Center, *The Pastor General’s Report*, numerous special Pastoral Care lectures, and an annual Conference for all ministers,

among other means. *Nothing* like our training program is occurring *anywhere* else. In fact, nothing else is close. Headquarters *staff* grew from 56 at the end of 2010 to 64 at the end of 2011. (*At very least* 14 more hires, including some students, are already scheduled for just the next five months, and just at Headquarters. Ministerial hires will be separate.)

#### “8. TOTAL 1ST TITHE AND OFFERING INCOME

##### **2011—102.2% above 2010**

“It is my prayer that God will help everyone in the splinters understand what the statistic you just read—growth in income—should mean to you. It should be literally IMPOSSIBLE to miss God’s fingerprints in just THIS SINGLE NUMBER. So repeated Mr. Armstrong many times. But in fact it is just one of many incredible increases listed. Think of Restored’s 2011 income in this way. The millions of dollars we received in 2010 *more than doubled* in 2011!!!—and this occurred in the worst economy since the Great Depression!

#### “9. FUNDRAISING

2010—\$72,231

**2011—\$442,742 (+512.9%)**

“Last year saw an historic worldwide local congregation fundraising effort. The hard work, dedication and vision of God’s people were incredible. The 2011 goal began at \$120,000 and became \$200,000 by June. This number seemed almost unattainable. But the brethren nearly quadrupled the original goal! They more than *sextupled* 2010’s amount. The goal for 2012 is a tremendous amount more. Of course, it should be understood that local fundraising is a tiny fraction of our income.

“This evidences a zeal that critics simply cannot comprehend.

“10. ...

#### “11. TELEVISION AND ADVERTISING

“In July 2012 *The World to Come* broadcast will go on national television. We are now considering a variety of popular cable stations. The program will of course be in high definition (HD).

“Due to its vast reach and the targeted audience, TV broadcasting will have a *tremendous* impact on the number of people contacting the Church in 2012. Our research shows a huge increase in overall requests is coming—for literature, but also Church inquiries.

“According to industry professionals, the high quality of our existing 125 *World to Come* broadcasts means they *already meet the requirements imposed by the FCC and major cable networks!* The reader can imagine *why* this is of enormous internal importance to our workflow—more obvious fingerprints of God’s guidance and blessing. Since we had honed the craft of videocasting on the Internet and YouTube, while successfully reaching many millions of viewers, exploding income made it impossible not to suddenly go forward with television when *all* of our broadcasts were pronounced ‘ready to go!’

“12. ...

#### “13. LITERATURE DISTRIBUTION

“There was a 27% increase in hardcopy literature distribution in 2011 over 2010. (The book *America and Britain in Prophecy* rose 238%.) Plans are also being implemented to increase the budget for distribution each month. And with the arrival of *The World to Come* on television, the amount of material we give away in hardcopy will go up exponentially.

#### “14. AMBASSADOR CENTER

“We have been extremely busy preparing for the expansion of Ambassador Center (AC). The staff has been working hard in this multi-faceted effort—

processing applications, arranging housing, adapting and expanding the curriculum, designing new courses, and much more.

“Some statistics: 125 students have graduated since AC’s inception in late 2008. There are now 84 students—from almost 20 countries. Also, the beautiful new edition of the *Envoy*, Ambassador Center’s elegant hardcover yearbook, is progressing well.

“15. ...

#### “16. VISITING WORLD LEADERS

“The ‘short Work’ (Rom. 9:27-29) of ‘prophesying again’ to ‘peoples, and nations, and tongues and kings’ (Rev. 10:11) saw new doors opened, with opportunities to meet with national and municipal officials in the nation of Israel. I was received by dignitaries from the Knesset, the cities of Jerusalem and Ma’ale Adumim, and dined privately with a former ambassador. These meetings, along with growing contacts with diplomatic missions at the United Nations, are paving the way for invitations to meet with other world leaders in 2012...”

The letter continues:

“We are pleased to announce that a longtime minister in God’s Church, Mr. Dale Schurter, has resigned from the United Church of God (UCG) and, with his wife, Mona, come with The Restored Church of God. A resignation letter to UCG brethren and ministers explaining the reasons for Mr. Schurter’s decision has been posted on [rcgtruth.com](http://rcgtruth.com). Over the last five days, a great many people from every corner of the world have *contacted us* from UCG, but also other organizations, because of Mr. Schurter’s powerful letter and call to action. Our Mailing Department has been extremely busy. To see more and more people waking up to the false doctrine, wrong standards, poor

fruits and continually worsening condition of their organizations has been most encouraging. We will have more to report with the passing of time.

“All brethren in the splinters, regardless of affiliation, will want to visit the above website often, where Mr. Schurter and other ministers who have come from the splinters, including UCG, will make exciting announcements and take you inside Restored. This website has unlimited potential to report positive news—healings and other miracles, statistical increases in the Work, open doors before it, growth of income, Ambassador Center matters, building developments, world leaders reached, Restored standards explained, growth in staff and ministry, growth in attendance, and a host of other positive fruits that our enemies are always very careful to distort or avoid reporting. It will also include (usually a series of) quotes from Mr. Armstrong on specific doctrines as they would be helpful in defeating misinformation and lies about what he taught. False teachings, standards and traditions in various splinters will be addressed by those who may have just left such splinters. These men will also occasionally counter and debunk years of spin, lies, rumor and hearsay about Restored and its leaders, including me. Mr. Schurter and others will also answer questions sent by readers.”

“All eyes in God’s Church are looking ahead to the absolute explosion of additional growth that this letter heralds for 2012! It will surely be a year like none other for the reconstitution of God’s Work for this final age. It could now be said that we are on the *last few pages* of the last chapter of God’s Work!”

### **Almost 13 Years of Productivity**

As the end of the age draws nearer, increasing numbers around the world are being led to recognize where the living Jesus

Christ is at work today, and who God has selected to lead His Church. These volumes in many ways serve as a record of the fruits for which Jesus instructed His servants to look.

“This age almost certainly does not have 13 *more* years for the Work to be accomplished. Many big projects surely lie just beyond the horizon.

“A Headquarters campus is an imminent reality. In fact, we could not go past a point without at least one main administration building of our own. Very soon, television will enter the picture. It would seem that prophecy indicates so also would eventually come more engagement with world leaders in some form. Ministers located on every continent, and in every major nation, as well as in all parts of the United States, is a certainty of which this volume speaks.

“There will be many advancements in all elements of God’s Church, Work and Training Center that are yet to be announced.”

Reading these two volumes, of over 1,200 pages, required a considerable investment of time. Mr. Pack’s hope all along has been that readers would find such a commitment to be inspiring—but also of lasting value.

“In the end, the *greatest* value is that my biography helps and strengthens the reader in the certain knowledge of these 20 words: ‘Jesus built a Church that does a Work under a Government that explains and declares the Truth through Two Commissions.’”

## **Books by David C. Pack**

- The Bible's Greatest Prophecies Unlocked! – A Voice Cries Out
- The Awesome Potential of Man
- Tomorrow's Wonderful World – An Inside View!
- Saturday or Sunday – Which Is the Sabbath?
- America and Britain in Prophecy
- Where Is the True Church? – and Its Incredible History!
- The Trinity – Is God Three-In-One?
- Sex – Its Unknown Dimension
- Dating and Courtship – God's Way
- Train Your Children God's Way
- Herbert W. Armstrong – His Life in Proper Perspective
- The Bible's Difficult Scriptures Explained!
- The Ten Commandments – “Nailed to the Cross”  
or Required for Salvation?

All books listed, in addition to scores of booklets, articles and sermons, can be found at The Restored Church of God website ([rcg.org](http://rcg.org)). Mr. Pack's *World to Come* broadcasts are available at *The World to Come* website ([worldtocome.org](http://worldtocome.org)).

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BIO - 121614

## **The Restored Church of God**

1000 Ambassador Drive  
Wadsworth, OH 44281  
USA

P.O. Box 4064  
St. Catharines, ON L2R 7S3  
CANADA

Phone: (330) 334-2266

Fax: (330) 334-6513

E-mail: [info@rcg.org](mailto:info@rcg.org)

Web: [rcg.org](http://rcg.org)