

The “New” Church of God Messenger

A Newsletter for the People of God

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Publisher: Church of God, Bismarck, Darwin & Laura Lee, **Editor:** Laura Lee, **Assistant Editor:** Darwin Lee We do not necessarily agree with all contributors or their works submitted and printed in this newsletter. It is up to you to get out your Bible and see whether these things are true. Iron sharpens iron.

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Articles

Vaccine Folly - Mask Hysteria by Richard Frates (Easley, South Carolina)



Why are so many wearing a facemask? Monkey See Monkey Do: Who is Making a Monkey out of You? Socialize Hand-Shaking Distance: Shackled Dependent Slaves of the State? Healthy men and woman wearing Masks, and Social Distancing themselves, **identifies them as Defeated, Fearful; whose faith has been Captured by Media, and the CDC Masters of Fear and Paranoia Dr. Frankenstein Fauci. Facemasks are a - Virus Trap - health hazard.** Workers are being Fresh Oxygen Starved - Re-Breathing Exhausted Air. More moisture, warmer, darker, diminished oxygen around the mouth and nose is inviting - to a lonely virus looking for a home. You cannot hide in a Mask from the Air - Stupid. Viruses will be sucked in

the sides of a Mask so; Duct tape the edges; and breath hard? You can smell food and perfume with your mask on How stupid are you America? Do you Not realize - media, politicians, and CDC are Liars - who intend to Dominate you?

2 Corinthians 3:18 NIV: Christians “with Unveiled faces all reflect the Lords glory.” God said, “Do Not fear” Facemask yourself Reflecting Fear is an offence to God. God decides who gets Sick, and who Recovers Not the State. FAITH - is the opposite of fear. SOCIALIZE - Hand Shaking Distancing Covid-19 is Spreading God given Immunity to most. Testing All inspires Needless **Panic**. 98% of those who test positive have God given immunity. **Deaths from CV-19 should be accepted, without, Subjugating Americans, as we accept deaths from the flu each year.** Idiot Arrogant *Governor Superhero will Mask your face, kill your business, and Job and claim to save you? All the thousands of new cases of CV-19 are a Fraud.* In the past: Being hospitalized created a case. Hospitals are paid a bonus for Covid-19 deaths; around 10% of deaths claimed: really died from Covid-19.

The **Socialist Evil Seed** of Bailouts: Governors shackle businesses and Jobs depending on federal dollars. If federal deficit spending were Not an option: America would be FREE. **Freedom to work and live unrestricted is the answer – Not federal dollars.** Business and Jobs Shackled - is America’s Killer not Covid-19. **Sweden Never shut down business or school:** They have less death than 90% of the nations that shut down and most would test positive without being sick. CV-19 is Here Providing God Given Protective Antibodies. That Upsets Dr Frankenstein Fauci who wants to pedal his vaccine immunity. Two% will get sick and 98% of them will totally Recover. Why the Shutdown Panic?

Elitist Insanity - The Living must be - Shackled - until we save the sick and dying. Forcing the healthy - to behave as if they were sick is Tyranny. The Flu kills many more Children. Of the Covid-19 hospital patients in New York - 66% were in Home Lock-Down - Demonstrating - Social Distancing and Face masking everyone is folly. Shutting down businesses and Jobs is NEVER Justified.

The President Should: Create this - *Make America - Free - Again* - Executive Order. **1.** Home Prison Order by Governors Revoked. **2.** The killer of Jobs - Mask and "Social Distancing" is an Individuals free Choice. **3.** No Shopper, Employee, Traveler or Worshiper of God, is to be forced to wear a face mask or social distance. **4.** Judges, are to Dismiss Lawsuits, by money chasing damned Lawyers, because someone became sick or died from Covid-19. **5.** CDC and WHO Covid-19 Regulations Revoked.

CDC Witch doctor Fauci: Would you Surrender your 380-thousand-dollar salary until no one is at risk from Covid-19? No! The CDC, Democrats and Media do Not care about Lives: *Using Covid-19 to destroy the Economy, Gullible Republicans is their strategy.*

My 80-year-old - home lockdown - brother and his wife got Covid-19 and recovered. His wife never got sick; now they are IMMUNE. Vaccine? We have vaccines for the flu and many thousands die from the flu. God's Perfect Vaccine: INDIVIDUAL herd IMMUNITY - Protective Antibodies through Normal Socializing is free. When Frankenstein Fauci's Artificial Antibodies meet God given natural Antibodies some may get sicker and will we end up Generating Covid-20? **Dr Fauci wants your Blood.** So, he can Steal God's freely given immunity - mix it with - Yuck - and sell it. Damned Elitist Promote Fear, Criminalize Normal Socializing and Despise, God Given Immunity. Are they, fearful of competition from God? Trust God to decide Life and death.



Dangerous Socialist - Taxpayer Bailouts to STATES: Facilitates Business and Job killing restrictions by incompetent Governors. **CV-19 Phantom Emergency:** Send money to businesses when their Customers **have been driven Paranoid by media.** Millions have been turned into - **Dependent Slaves of the State**. Tear off your Mask America - Socialize Hand-Shaking Distance. Demand freedom or Submit to Tyranny. God has committed all - once to die, and then Judgment. Banish Fear and Trust God. Our Father in heaven has provided: Life

that is Not subject to death. God paid our debt of sin by the sacrifice of his Son. Jesus Christ Crucified: The Great Light that Shines Beyond the Grave. Repent and believe that good news.

If You Believe

by Bud Cocherell (San Jose, California)

If you believe that Herbert W. Armstrong restored all truth and that you do not need to follow the instructions of the apostle Peter to Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, then read no further.

But if you believe the prophet Hosea's prophetic warning: My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because you have rejected knowledge, I will also reject you, that you shall be no priest to me: seeing you have forgotten the law of your God, I will also forget your children.; and if you believe the apostle Paul's instruction to Study to show yourself approved to God, a workman that needs not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth but shun profane and vain babbling: for they will increase to more ungodliness, then please read on.

Yes, Herbert W. Armstrong did teach much truth, and those who have benefited spiritually from his ministry should be extremely grateful. However, it is an undeniable fact that he also taught much error that led to the demise and destruction of his ill-conceived organization after his death.

The following list contains things that Mr. Armstrong neglected to teach but are extremely important to the elect during this gospel age of salvation. Also listed are some of his teachings that contained major errors and omissions.

Discipleship and Stewardship
Observance of the New Moon
Where God Places His Name
Congregational Meeting Places
The Day of Atonement
The Weekly Sabbath
The Night to Be Much Remembered

Tithing

Deacons and Deaconesses

Believe it or not there is awesome, dynamic, and life changing truth still being revealed to God's people. However, it is not being revealed to those who already believe that they have all truth (See Rev.3:14-22).

There is much truth yet to be learned and much error yet to be discarded by those who have passed through the Worldwide Church of God (WCG) experience. There is also much truth that former ministers of the WCG do not want you to know. There is much that these men would rather you not investigate, because this truth reveals their true motives and in many cases their lack of spiritual maturity and honesty in dealing with the Sovereign Father's truth and way of truth.

Remember that six of the seven churches noted in the Book of Revelation are punished because they hold attitudes, behaviors, and/or doctrines that are in opposition to the Father's truth and way of truth.

Evil Prevails

by Clyde Ferrell Jr. (Mount Calm, Texas)

The bible says, "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, who can know it" (Jeremiah 17: 9) There is also a saying that "Evil prevails because good men do nothing."

In reality, "Evil Prevails." The movie Lords of War? starring Nicolas Cage attests to the evil that men do as it is based on actual events of an American munitions dealer. It is a fact that men use the War card as their license to kill people legally. The more wars there are the more money arms dealers make. Commerce, commerce, commerce (my words) is the root of all evil.

(1 Timothy 6: 10) For the love of money is a root of all evil.

Just take a look at the world today and in your mind picture the overwhelming truths of what men do and then think on the past and realize what men have done. The number one determining factor in the establishment of manmade government in the past, present and future is WAR. There are those who say war is evil and there are those who say war is a necessary evil. There are those who are considered by our standards today, to be good men, who believe that war is a necessary evil. I ask the question, Is it? Does man's heart deceive him to the point that he thinks the killing of human beings is not murder as long as it is done in the name of war?

Evil prevails in our world because men do not believe in the true Creator, they believe in the manmade Gods of religion. It is these false gods that have condoned, approved, and initiated many of the wars of this world. The Creator says, 'Love your enemy and do good to those who persecute you and use you.' (Matthew 5:44 - 48) Man says, kill your enemy don't pray for him, hate him. So! What do we as humans do? We had rather hate than love, take life rather than give life. Why do we think that way? (Isaiah 58: 8 - The way of peace they have not known.) Nowhere in the New Testament does the true Messiah condone man's physical warfare. It is just not there.

Just think about this! The world's largest arms suppliers are the United States of America, United Kingdom, Russia, France and China. These five countries are five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council. Do you really think these countries want war to end? Not only no but Hell! No. Who is selling the guns, ammunition, tanks, bombs, etc., etc., etc. to these warring countries? The members of the UN Security Council are. Hello! Am I missing something here? We send American soldiers to fight wars where they get shot at and killed by munitions that we have sold to the country we are fighting. I forgot to mention, of the five Security Council members, the US is the largest munitions dealer in the world. Does Evil Prevail? Who is benefitting from war?

"The great masses of people will more easily fall victim to a big lie than a small one." What luck for rulers that men do not think? {Quote by Adolph Hitler}

"Beware the leader who bangs the drums of war in order to whip the citizenry into a patriotic fervor, for patriotism is indeed a double-edged sword. It both emboldens the blood, just as it narrows the mind. And when the drums of war have reached a fever pitch and the blood boils with hate and the mind has closed, the leader will have no need in seizing the rights of the citizenry, infused with fear, and blinded by patriotism, they will offer up all their rights unto the leader and gladly so? How do I know? For this is what I have done. And I am Caesar!

Why does evil prevail? Evil prevails because "We The People" let it. We let it because we do not really believe we are the property of the Creator God. We believe we are the property of manmade governments. Deceived, you bet! Would a

King be King if the people did not support the King? Would a government be in charge if the people did not support the government? There are more people (citizens) than there are government leaders. However, the man made combines of politicians and military have woven into the fabric of human existence, the man-made laws of control of the human race. Being dumbed down by the educational system, we have become slaves and do not even realize it. Just read a little bit of what the bible says about the children of Israel in Egyptian slavery. Exodus 1: 8-12, Now there arose a new King over Egypt, who did not know Joseph. And he said to his people, Look, the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we; Come let us deal wisely with them, lest they multiply, and it happen in the event of war, they join our enemies and fight against us. So! They set taskmasters among them.

What is a taskmaster? A person who imposes a demanding workload on someone. Do we in America work under taskmasters who demand from us? Ask the question, "Does our government make demands on us and if we don't comply what happens?" Think about it! I paraphrased some of these scriptures, but I think you get the picture. Evil prevails and we do not even know it because of the way we have been wisely dealt with by our government. Just as Israel did the Kings bidding in building Egypt, we citizens have done the same for a wicked and evil system that we think is great. We do nothing because we have straw to make brick and we like it!

How do you stop war? Quit supporting the war effort, quit paying taxes. You want gas to be cheaper? Quit buying it. If we did all this in the millions, We the people? could take back our God given rights of sovereignty as human beings, but we will not because we are good little selfish slaves. God help us all as Evil Prevails.

Other Items

SIGNS OF THE TIMES: Is dissent a thing of the past? by Curtis Dahlgren (Stephenson, Michigan)

The function of liberal Republicans is to shoot the wounded after battle." Senator Eugene McCarthy

BARRY GOLDWATER RECOMMENDED SAWING OFF THE EASTERN SEABOARD. "When the wind is in the East, 'tis neither good for man nor beast," and here are some quotations from the Ivy League region of the country:

"The chief problem of the lower-income farmers is poverty." Nelson Rockefeller

"The streets are safe in Philadelphia; it's only the people who make them unsafe." former mayor Frank Rizzo

"Marvin never tells a lie if he can give you a misleading statement instead." friend of former Maryland Governor Marvin Mandel

"The system has not failed but some of us have failed the system." Edmund Muskie

ONE THING COMMON TO ALL LEFTIES IS THE OLD SAYING: "There are no enemies on our left only the Right." They don't believe that Communism failed in the USSR it was only "mismanaged." And socialism didn't fail in Cuba; it was only persecuted by bullies up north.

I suppose the sexual revolution of the "sixties" hasn't back-fired either. It was "only mismanaged," eh?

But as Edmund Burke said, "The grand Instructor is Time." And the only thing necessary for the triumph of Evil is for the good to be silenced by; to paraphrase, the *real* bullies on the Left. President-elect Obama won't have to select a Minister of Disinformation; the Associated Press and most of the MSM is already working on that Mission Impossible.

NEVER FORGET Fascism or National Socialism is to the Left of our classical Liberals, not to their Right. Hitler always knew that he could buy the media. What he didn't know is that he could get them so cheap.

"We have now sunk to a depth at which restatement of the obvious is the first duty of intelligent men." George Orwell
You don't need to go to the comic strips anymore to get your laughs. I don't even buy the newspaper anymore; I just read a few headlines. Here are some sample headlines from the mainstream media as well as the Internet (only slightly paraphrased):

"RESEARCH STUDY SHOWS THAT LIBERAL AND CONSERVATIVE BRAIN FUNCTION DIFFERS." [duh!]

"Research: Being fat is bad for your health." [what took them so long to find out?]
"New study: Church attendees live longer lives." [for this we need research?]
"New research proves that vegetarians suffer brain shrinkage." [dittoes]
"Cell phones distract drivers more than passengers." [who would have guessed?]
"Homosexual lifestyles unhealthy" [DUH]
"California driving instructor driving DUI; arrested" [dittoes]
"Indian hotels and Jewish centers attacked by Islamic extremist terrorists."

BUT IF YOU ONLY READ THE NEW YORK TIMES, YOU WOULDN'T KNOW THAT. The *Times* prefers terms such as "insurgents" or "militants" (code words for Freedom Fighters). To the mainstream media, there are no enemies on the Left nor on the Taliban extreme either. The Palestinian and Afghan "liberation movements" haven't failed they've only been "*mismanaged*" again, I guess!

The MSN is trying to curry favor among the Islamic radicals, which will be in the long run about as successful as John McCain's last 8 years of currying favor with the New York *Times* (to state one of the obvious facts of life).

What our teenagers and the MSN have in common is that they need to face up to reality of their false sense of superiority before it bites them in the butt. A culture that forbids criticism of the "politically correct" issues will end up forbidding ALL freedom of speech.

In case I didn't make it obvious enough, "my point" of this column is that we must not allow the Age of Discussion to become a thing of the past. Polarization and polemics are good things, not bad. "Polemics" is the antonym of "one-sidedness." In the dictionary, "polemics" (the art of disputation) stands right between police-state and polecat.

In a very real sense, indeed, polemics or the art of criticism must be preserved as a barrier between the dead skunks in the "middle-of-the-road" and a possible Police State. Once all opposition to one-party rule has been silenced by intimidation or embarrassment, all hopes of Freedom are extinguished. Right now, the flicker of the flame of Freedom is burning lower and lower. Thank God our Founding Fathers are asleep in their graves to spare them the pain, and the rest of us, their WRATH.

A few good words by Jefferson:

- "To compel a man to subsidize with his taxes the propagation of ideas he disbelieves and abhors is sinful and tyrannical."
- "It is error alone which needs the support of government. Truth can stand by itself."
- "Ignorance is preferable to error, and he is less remote from the truth who believes nothing than he who believes what is wrong."
- "Delay is preferable to error."
- "I have sworn upon the altar of God, eternal hostility against every form of tyranny over the mind of man."
- "An association of men who will not quarrel with one another is a thing which has never existed... "
- "If God is just, I tremble for my country."

NO WONDER THAT THE FOUNDERS ARE CONSIDERED PEA-BRAINS AND ARE NEVER QUOTED IN PUBLIC EDUCATION OR "HIGHER LEARNING."

[Now that an "African-American" has been elected President, can we now get some true American History taught around here?] (From December 5, 2008)

Mathematical Viewpoint

Sent by Rich Daniels (Wisconsin)

From a strictly mathematical viewpoint:

What Equals 100%? What does it mean to give MORE than 100%? Ever wonder about those people who say they are

giving more than 100%? We have all been in situations where someone wants you to give over 100% How about achieving 101%? What equals 100% in life? Here's a little mathematical formula that might help you answer these questions:

If:
A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

Is represented as:
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26

Then:
H-A-R-D-W-O-R-K
 $8+1+18+4+23+15+18+11 = 98\%$

And
K-N-O-W-L-E-D-G-E
 $11+14+15+23+12+5+4+7+5 = 96\%$

But
A-T-T-I-T-U-D-E
 $1+20+20+9+20+21+4+5 = 100\%$

AND look how far the love of God will take you.
L-O-V-E-O-F-G-O-D
 $12+15+22+5+15+6+7+15+4 = 101\%$

Therefore, one can conclude with mathematical certainty that:

While Hard work and Knowledge will get you close, and Attitude will get you there, it is the Love of God that will put you over the top!

The Khazars Tribe 13

by Yair Davidiy (Jerusalem, Israel)

"The KHAZARS" were a semi-nomadic people who became prominent in southern Russia and its neighborhood in the 600s to 900s CE. They were quite powerful with a far-reaching influence and well-developed civilization. They protected the Jews while giving full citizenship rights to Christians and Moslems who served them faithfully. "The KHAZARS" converted to Judaism and henceforth were Jewish. Some people (including many anti-Semites) claim that most Jews today are descended from "The KHAZARS". This is not true on the whole, but "The Khazars" did contribute to the Jewish Nation. The Question is: Who were they?

Map taken from Davidiy, "The Khazars. Tribe 13."



Map designed by Estelle Schutte

We traced the ancestors of "The KHAZARS" to four different regions:

- Northern Mesopotamia and South of the Caucasus.
- North of the Caucasus.
- The Don River region.
- The Volga region reaching eastwards into Central Asia.

We found proof of Israelite ancestry (Exiles from the Ten Tribes and from Jews) in all these areas. These different though related groups were to form the Khazar nation. Related peoples who had been with "The KHAZARS" and had the same ancestry as they had moved westward and founded Western Nations. In some cases, "The KHAZARS" and Khazar offshoots also moved westward. These contacts testify to the Israelite origins of the western peoples in question.

This work, "The KHAZARS. Tribe 13" dedicates quite a lot to proving the Israelite origins of the KHAZARS. Much of this information is quite new while some of it was known in the past but in recent times has been overlooked, or it was not available in the English language heretofore. We discuss every aspect of the subject and endeavor to hide nothing and not to evade any claim that would appear to contradict us. "The KHAZARS" neighbored Turkish groups, ruled over them, and for a time were in part ruled by them. The same applied to all the surrounding peoples who were dominated by Turks. This accounts for those aspects of Khazar culture that showed Turkish influence. "The KHAZARS" however were not Turkish. "The KHAZARS" were Hebrews from the Lost Ten Tribes and from Judah in origin. The ruling House of "The KHAZARS" was from the House of Jesse meaning that they were descended from King David as were other rulers of Scythian nations. The KHAZARS mostly referred to themselves and were described by others as Jews or as Israelites from the Lost Ten Tribes.

They had traditions that they descended from the Tribes of Manasseh and Simeon and other Israelites. Manasseh was the Thirteenth Tribe. The leadership of the Khazars derived from Manasseh and their general culture had Manasseh-type characteristics. "The KHAZARS" may be considered "Tribe 13". The Khazar Empire has similarities in attitude and form to the USA. The present leading elites in the USA of Irish and Scottish ancestry in part are descended from Manasseh and of kinship to "The KHAZARS". The KHAZARS had been part of the Sacae/Scythians. Ancestors of "The KHAZARS" in both the east and west practiced cults derived from the Biblical story of Joseph and his reconciliation with his brothers. They were related to the Picts of Scotland, the Scandinavians, and to the Anglo-Saxons. "The KHAZARS" supplied the coinage and part of the manpower of early Scandinavia. The ancestral heroes of Scandinavia, the "Aseir", and of the Anglo-Saxons were actually of Khazar origin. Khazars (as Agathyrsi) and Alans also settled in Scotland and had an important presence amongst the Picts.

Descendants of those Khazars who converted to Judaism on the whole either merged amongst the Jewish people or migrated to western nations.

This work, "The KHAZARS Tribe 13" has broken new ground. "The KHAZARS. Tribe 13" proves NOT ONLY that the Khazars were of Hebrew Ancestry but also that they were of kith and kin to several western nations and that they too descended from Israelites. The Khazars were a brave and noble nation. The story of the Khazars is inspiring.

For whoever has ever dared to stand alone and defy the crowd or even just admired from a distance, others who have done so: "The KHAZARS. Tribe 13" is for you! "The KHAZARS Tribe 13" is your book!

You will enjoy reading "The KHAZARS. Tribe 13" and benefit from reading it. **(NOTE: The link for the book is posted on our website under "Books".)**

A Blast from the Past

Go To Your Brother... by Arlan Weight (Bismarck, North Dakota)

From my first encounter with the **Worldwide Church of God** in the late 60's and early 70's 'suspension' and 'disfellowshipping' were common practices. Prior to either one of these measures being taken, there was an effort to reconcile with the one involved in the infraction. From my perspective the effort usually involved the ministry, maybe not always, but usually.

Over the years I have always had this nagging thought that many people were never reconciled or encouraged in a right way such that they would return and consequently were disfellowshipped. Once disfellowshipped they rarely ever returned. Again, this is my view of things. How about you? How many people have you ever seen return to the local church congregation once they had been officially disfellowshipped?

In Matthew 18:15-17 Jesus gives a short and clear guide to solving problems in the church between brethren. Does the prescribed method work? Has it worked for you? If it works, why didn't the majority of cases become reconciled, or so it seems to me. Could it be we may have overlooked some things in the instruction that would have made all the difference? Let us take a close look at what Jesus said.

"Moreover, if your brother shall trespass against you, go, and tell him his fault between you and him alone: if he shall hear you, you have gained your brother. But if he will not hear you then take with you one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglects to hear the church, let him be unto you as a heathen man and a publican. (Mat. 18:15-17)

Notice the word "Moreover" beginning the verse, which seems to indicate this instruction is adding to some previous discussion. The discussion in this chapter is dealing with offenses so you have to back up to verse 1. Here Jesus is explaining to his disciples that they need to be very careful not to offend the "little ones". He is letting them know how serious an infraction that is. In fact, it is so serious he covers it twice in the same setting; verse 6 and verse 10. Then in verse 15 He launches into the discussion again of offenses and how to handle them.

Jesus stresses the importance and how to deal with a problem with your brother... or sister, which seems to imply someone close to you, maybe a family member, or from the context someone who has been called to the same hope... another church member. In a general sense, though it can also mean anyone because we are all brothers and therefore the prescribed guidance is for anyone.

Notice the most important aspect of dealing with issues of people having problems with other people and that is it should be between the two parties only and no one else. This seems to be the most vital part of the equation to guarantee the success of the reconciliation... keep the matter private... between you and the other person.

Talebearing

Of course, I was not close to many of the cases, but it always seemed to me that too many people knew of the problem early on. There were sometimes when I knew for certain, there could be no possible way the minister could know of the goings on, unless someone else informed him. Therefore, this appears to be a clear violation of the instruction given. Even if it only involved one other person, namely the minister, this violates the instruction. So, could it be this was the first thing that limited the success of the reconciliation?

It most assuredly hinders the success, especially if the first time the person involved in the infraction, finds out, is when the minister shows up at his or her doorstep. How often has this occurred? And then we wonder why the bad attitude. How would you feel if you are confronted by the minister of some perceived problem and it is the first time you became aware of it? What kind of thoughts would run through your mind? What kind of feelings would it generate toward the people you suspect informed the minister? Would you have a bad attitude?

Look at what Proverbs 18:8 says "The words of a talebearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly" ...kind of like an ulcer. If you have ever had one, you know it is always a touchy thing from then on. So also, is talebearing, it is always in the back of your mind of what someone else said about you. They may have thought they were doing right when they told the minister, but again it is not what the instruction says. It says, "go and tell him his fault between you and him alone."

In fact, the problem may just go away by itself if we give it a little time to let the dust settle. Take a look at Proverbs 26:20. "Where no wood is, there the fire goes out: so, where there is no talebearer, the strife ceases."

So, this is the first thing that went wrong in trying to reconcile a brother over some perceived problem. Instead of helping the situation, telling the minister introduced another problem, and maybe involved more people now. It is not hard to see how some simple little thing can grow and grow when this kind of thing takes place. Let us be honest about it, can we admit that this has happened, maybe we were even involved in the telling.

Gaining Your Brother...

Going to your brother, one on one is for the purpose of 'gaining your brother'. One can see this from the context and the way it is written. If it is just for the sake of airing out your grievance with him, there would be no need to do the next phase of taking one or two others with you.

When coupled with Matthew 5:24 one can see Jesus' strong emphasis is on reconciliation and nothing less. One can see it is so important that unless you have spent effort to reconcile, you might as well forget your prayers being answered. He is saying don't even think about talking to me until you've settled matters with your brother.

With that understanding one can also see the frame of mind we should be in when going to our brother. Have we always gone with the frame of mind of Galatians 6:1-3? Have we always approached our brother by admitting our faults to him as well? How strongly have we desired him to be back in good terms with us? Let us be honest, and I think if we are really honest about it, we would have to admit many times we went to him in a grudging manner, where we say to ourselves "it says tell him his fault" and so here I am, I told him his fault and now it's up to him. Well now... really... did we really live up to the intent of the instruction? hardly.

I think we can safely say, unless we recognize the 'beam in our own eye' ...when speaking with our brother, the chances are slim on our reconciliation progress. But if we do go... acknowledging our own faults, we will be successful 99% of the time. If we do it right, there will not be a need to take one or two others with you. You will have gained your brother the very first time you go.

“Take One or Two More” ...

If you are not successful when you privately go to your brother, then tell it to the minister and take him with you. Is this what Jesus is saying? Let us read it again.

"But if he will not hear you then take with you one or two more." What? One or two more... no mention of a minister, not even a deacon? But most often isn't this the way it happens? If at first you did not succeed, the idea is to let the minister know and he then, if he wants to, can bring a deacon along? Isn't this the way it usually is done? Isn't this the way you remember it? Maybe you have personally experienced this scenario.

This is just another area where we fail to follow explicitly the instruction. If it does not say take the minister, it means just that. Sometimes the Bible speaks as eloquently in what it does not say, as well as what it does say. We must not read into it something that is not there! It says, "one or two more", not necessarily the minister. But why not? Why not take the minister? Why not take a deacon?

Let us ponder this question for a moment by putting ourselves in the shoes of the person who committed the 'trespass' ...the person with whom we are trying to reconcile with. How does he or she view your coming to him? Does he view it with disdain in that your coming to him is to simply point out his mistakes or shortcomings? How did you present your case to him when you went to him privately? Did you do it with 'meekness, considering your faults' also?

As was mentioned above, most often if it has been done this way, your success to reconcile is most often guaranteed. But because you went to him merely to point out his faults you were not well received. And now your coming with someone who is viewed as having authority... the minister. It can be intimidating.

Again, try to think of it in this way, by taking the other side. How would you want to be entreated? With a show of force? Or gently? By taking the minister are we coming to him gently? Think about it... if we take the minister, deacon, or someone viewed by everyone to be an authority... are we coming with meekness? Hardly!

So, this is the first thing. How are we approaching our brother, with meekness or with force? The second thing is this. What is the purpose of taking one or two others? Is it to make sure you have enough fire power? Is it an effort to make sure the one who trespassed is firmly convinced of his trespass? Let us look at the instruction again.

"Take one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established". Read it again. It is simply to witness... to record the words being said. As far as we can tell here the witnesses are not even needed to help out in the dispute. They are meant to be objective bystanders... to make sure "every word is established". Maybe some of the fault is with the one going to the brother. Maybe they can see some of the 'beam' in his own eye.

So, let us say, up to this point you've done everything explicitly the way the instruction says. You have gone to your brother privately first. As far as you know, no one even knows there is a trespass. And you considered your own faults and you really want to be on good terms again, but the person simply rejected you. So, you persisted and took one or two others, maybe even friends of the person who committed the trespass, and still, he or she is not hearing you. So, what then?

Tell It to The Church” ...

"And if he neglects to hear them, tell it to the church"... The word 'church' comes from the Greek word 'ekklesia' meaning 'that which is called out'.

Over the years we have all been taught that this is the time when you bring in the ministry. This is the time when you turn it over to him. But is it really? Look closely. The word 'ekklesia' is used 115 times in the New Testament. Three times it is translated 'assembly' and 112 times 'church'. It is the same word as 'church' in Acts 2:47 "The Lord added to the church"... Acts 5:11, "great fear came upon all the church"... Acts 7:38, "This was he that was in the church in the wilderness"...

In every case the word 'church', from its context, cannot be viewed in any other way but by that of an assembly of people 'ekklesia', the called-out ones. Could it be... could it really be that we have had a bit of misunderstanding here? All these years we thought, or so we have been taught that the 'church' was to be the ministry. Could it really be that we have been wrong about this? Could it really mean tell it to the congregation of believers?

Telling it to the minister alone is like seeing him as representing the church. But does he? What is the church anyway? Is it not the body of Christ, (Eph. 1:23) having many members? (1 Cor. 12:12) Again let us not try to read into it something that is not there.

So, in revealing the problem to the church how should it be done? Let us try to envision it this way as to an assembled group and as an effort to reconcile, not to establish your own position. What could be the advantage of this? First of all, everyone hears the same word spoken. Secondly you have now harnessed the entire assembly in this effort, other friends, and acquaintances, who are as interested as you are, to see the person back in the fellowship. Everyone knows the whole story, not bits and pieces and not done behind anyone's back.

Take a look at Galatians 6:1-2. Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ".

Yes, indeed it makes good sense to tell it to the 'ekklesia'... the called-out ones. There may indeed be someone in the entire group who is more qualified to go to him or her. Someone least expected who may be more spiritual who can make all the difference, maybe a more personal friend, not to mention now you've opened it up so everyone can pray for the reconciliation. So now what? What if all the effort is to no avail, the trespasser still remains cold? What then?

“Let Him Be to You as A Heathen Man and A Publican” ...

The key word here is Let. Cut him some slack. Let him have his own life. Do not force him into trying to be or do something he just doesn't want to do. Let him live his life in freedom to choose. This is God's way.

So, then what should be our relationship to the person? How should we relate? Should we shun or avoid him or her? Think long and hard about this issue. What kind of thoughts does it engender in the other person?

Years ago, I can remember it being said, if we avoid contact with persons disfellowshipped, it will make them feel ashamed or put them in a repentant mood and they will want to return. Think again!... Instead of pointing them in the direction of apology, it only hardened their resolve to stay away. Shunning or avoiding people sends a clear message to them. It says "Don't come too close, you'll defile me! For I am holier than you!" (Isa. 65:5) What does God think of it? "They stifle me. Day in and day out they infuriate me."

So then “Let him be to you as a heathen man and a Publican” Publican simply means let him alone but treat him with the same dignity and respect you should have for all human beings. Do not shun him and do not carry a grudge.

"Don't take the law into your own hands. Instead, feed your enemy if he is hungry. If he is thirsty, give him something to drink and you will be heaping coals of fire on his head. In other words, he will feel ashamed of himself for what he has done to you. Don't let evil get the upper hand but conquer evil by doing good." (Rom. 12:20-21)

If the intent is to bring awareness of the wrongdoing to the one who has trespassed, this is the way it is to be done, by doing good to them, not by shunning or avoiding them... just the opposite. Even after you have done all of the above steps, this last approach remains and is to be in force as long as you both shall live. It is the last attempt, but who can tell, if after a long time, the offender will really come to himself and he or she will have a change of heart.

Was all the effort worth it? Indeed, it was! If, after a lifetime of effort... if it takes that long, will it have been worth it? Absolutely. Reread again God's will in seeking out them that go astray. What is the final end? ... Great Joy!... greater than that of the one who went not astray.

"If a man has a hundred sheep, and one wanders away and is lost, what will he do: Won't he leave the ninety-nine others and go out into the hills to search for the lost one? And if he finds it, he will rejoice over it more than the ninety-nine others safe at home! Just so, it is not my Father's will that even one of these little ones should perish."

Summary

When we look at Christ's instruction and compare it to our actual performance, we can see why people feel jaded or betrayed. It comes down to the fact of not carrying out the instruction explicitly. Often, we put our own twist on it or read into it something that is not there.

If we deeply value the fact that it is God who does the calling and causes the repentance, and if we deeply recognize our own failures and need for forgiveness, we can then be useful tools in God's hands to... "Go to your brother".

(This article has been updated and re-printed from “The Church of God Messenger” March/April 2001—Issue No. 2.)

Iron Sharpening Iron

New American Standard Bible (Proverbs 27:17)

As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.

Try to hold this to one or two paragraphs. And email it to: church-of-god-bismarck@hotmail.com Be sure to let us know what you are commenting on.

Can You Know WHEN? by Nathaniel Burson (Big Sandy, Texas)

It's been a long time since I've heard from you. Mr. Burson's piece indicates he has a day in mind for the return of Christ, but he didn't offer it to the readers. I attended UCG from 1995-2005, but voluntarily left at that point.

Steven M. Collins (Sioux Falls, South Dakota)

Holy Days 2021

Passover - March 28, 2021 (Observed at Sunset the Evening Before)

Unleavened Bread - March 28, 2021 to April 3, 2021

Pentecost - May 17, 2021

Trumpets - September 7, 2021

Atonement - September 16, 2021

Tabernacles - September 21 to 27, 2021

Last Great Day - September 28, 2021