

THE WORLD TOMORROW

Herbert W. Armstrong brings you the Plain Truth about today's world news and the prophecies of The World Tomorrow

God's Authority

And greetings friends. This is Herbert W. Armstrong with the Good News of the World Tomorrow.

Now, in continuing, I want to get back into this theme that we've been in, of going through the New Testament -- Matthew, Mark, Luke and John -- to see what Jesus Christ did preach and why you have not been hearing it. Why you have not been hearing the true Gospel of Jesus Christ -- but rather a man-made gospel about His person, which has been substituted for the Gospel that God sent by Him and which He proclaimed and preached, which He taught His disciples, and that which the early Church -- as it started out in all of its purity -- did preach.

Now, we had come to the place here in the eighth chapter of Matthew. Jesus had come into Capernaum. There was a centurion; he was a Gentile; he was a Roman; he was the captain in the Roman army over one hundred men. And he came beseeching Jesus saying,

"Lord, my servant [or my son] lieth in the house sick with the palsy grievously tormented."

"And He said unto him [Jesus said], I'll come and heal him."

"But the centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof. But only say the word and my servant shall be healed. For..." Now, notice why He said that: "For, I also am a man under authority, [or as the correct translation is: set under authority] having under myself soldiers."

Now, he was under authority. He knew all about government and about authority and he had authority over those under him. And he knew that where there is authority, there must be obedience.

He says, "I say to one [one of those under him], to this one go, and he goes; to another, Come, and he comes; and to my servant do this and he does it."

"And when Jesus heard it..." Now, He understood what the man meant. The man meant that Jesus Christ was in authority over sickness and disease, that He is the Lord from Heaven and that God is the God of authority and that God is the God who created not only but who created beside dead or static matter that He created forces and energies and all laws that are acting and moving and that God sits as it were at the central controls and directs and controls all of those laws. In fact, He sustains them, He keeps them active, He keeps them in existence, He keeps these powers and these forces moving and God directs them. He is in supreme authority. I wonder if we realize that.

It's very difficult I know to understand or to grasp the idea that God is in authority over all. He is in authority, the Ruler over this whole earth and yet here we find that men have rejected God's authority and men seem to have been able to repudiate it and to spurn it and to do their own way and men have done the way that seemed right in their own sight. And that's exactly the whole trouble with this world today. People today, say, "Now, I just want to be let alone. I want to

be let alone so I can do what I please. I want to be able to do the way I see it."

Well, you know God has let us alone and God is letting us to the thing the way we see it and the way that seems right to a man, the ends thereof are the ways of death and we're living amid nothing but death and poverty and suffering and sickness and disease and unhappiness and empty lives and everything that goes along with it. Because that is the way that man is traveling. We're traveling in that direction, we're doing the things that are not good but we seem to believe that our ways are better than the ways of God and we seem to think we know better and we don't believe in God's ways or His Laws.

Now, this centurion, this captain in the army of Rome, he recognized that God rules over all powers.

Well, first I want to go back and explain this thing that I started to: how can God be the Supreme Ruler in actual authority and actually the ruler over this earth, and yet, not be in authority and men setting up their own governments and their own ideas as we have done and rejecting that of God. Now, let me explain that. God is working out a purpose here below. In order to work out that purpose, God put us here for the very purpose of recreating Himself or reproducing Himself.

Do you know that child birth and human reproduction is the exact picture and type of the divine reproduction that is going on -- the spiritual reproduction? God is a spirit. But God made us mortal. Now, the only way that we can ever be reproduced as God or members of the God Family because God is a Family, a Kingdom, not one person but a Kingdom or a Family of persons. It's a Family that has a Father at the head of it and He's called the Father, God the Father. Jesus Christ as the Son who was resurrected from the dead and was equal to God, was the first born of many brethren and we're

to be His brethren and we shall be like Him, we shall see Him as He is. And if He was equal to God so my friends shall we be.

But listen. What is God? God is supreme character. God is not only Creator and Ruler, but God is perfect character.

Now, character is something that must be a separate individual entity and when a child is born there is a separate mind. And the only way that God's purpose can be perfected is that we must have minds that are separate from God -- entirely separate entities. And to develop character that is an individual matter. And it requires individuality and personality and it requires volition -- the ability to think, to plan, to design, to make decisions and to carry them out.

Now then, if our minds were not able to make wrong as well as right decisions there could be no character. Character is making the right decision but you have to have the ability to go the other way and the power to go the other way, otherwise there couldn't be character. If we had to go the right way, we'd be like the sun or the moon or the stars that I was talking about the other day, there is no character there. Anything that God has set in motion automatically, it can't think, it can't plan, it can't say, "I don't agree with you, I want to go the other way." There's no character there. And such a thing could never become one in the Family, the Kingdom of God. And so we had to be made with the ability to go the other way. And God's purpose could not be carried out if God had not decided as the Supreme Ruler, I give you the power and the privilege (as He did for a certain length of time) to reject my Government, to think out your own idea, to go your own way, wrong though it may be and let you find out, that, for instance, the stove is hot by burning your own fingers. To let you learn by experience.

Now, we have, most of us in this world, rejected God and gone contrary to God, because God made us so we could, and because God the Supreme Ruler decreed that we might if we so will and has permitted us to do it. And still God is the Supreme Ruler. And God

could step in and take that right and privilege (if you call it a right, I doubt it being very much of a privilege), but He could take it away from us instantaneously anytime it suited His purpose. But God is all wisdom and God knows that it wouldn't be right and He is doing the thing the right way regardless of how we see it. And so God is the Supreme Ruler back of it all. And when we come to recognize it and to have the good sense to know it and to submit to it and to look on God as the Ruler and the Supreme Ruler and to put ourselves under that rule and to realize that as God has given us a mind which no other being that we know possesses, but that we are limited and that God purposely did not give us a mind that is the equal of His because what God did give us, the intelligence, the mind He gave us, the abilities, the powers that He permits us to exercise mankind has turned into diabolical destruction. And Man has abused and misused it all. And if God had given us more powers the greater would have been the destruction. So God put a limit on the amount of power that a man has and for a very wise purpose. God is, O thank God, He has wisdom to see and to foreknow, to foresee and to do these things.

Now, we should then come to realize that our minds are about the size of a pinpoint by...compared to God. Let's say that God's mind is as big as the sun up there or the biggest star or planet that is filled with intelligence and capacity and brain power and mind capacity all the way through and our minds are about the size of pinpoint by comparison -- that might be a good comparison.

Now, if God's mind is so all-seeing and so all-knowing and He has wisdom and He knows the end from the beginning and He knows how this or that or the other course is going to wind up and whether it's going to result in happiness and prosperity and in peace and in good for us and joy and everything that we want or whether it's going to end up disastrously. And if He is able to tell us in advance which is the right way, which will produce the right result and which would injure us, wouldn't it be the point of good sense that we would go to this all-seeing, all-knowing source provided God is as He is

also love and mercy and compassion and has only our good at heart and ask Him and say, "Father," since He is our Father if we are converted and become His children, "Father, I know that I know very little and I know that you know so much and that you know everything. Guide me, lead me, show me, open my mind. I acknowledge that my mind is little and it knows very little. Give me wisdom and show me the right way." Wouldn't it be the point of sense that we would do that?

My friends, can you realize how much it's worth and could you measure it in money, how much it is worth that we can go to God in prayer; that we can do that very thing; that we can go to God if we lack wisdom and ask Him for it and that we can know that we are going to receive it and that He will give it to us?

Now, how can I know that? Well, God has said so, the Bible is His Word. Now, I don't know whether you believe that or not, but I know it because it's been proved to me. And if you wanted to have it proved and have your mind is open and God would prove it. It's been proved to me by many infallible proofs: one of them is about how God kept His prophecy to Abraham and where the United States is mentioned in prophecy -- that's one of the proofs, answered prayer is another, fulfilled prophecy is another, the fact that it makes sense and there is no contradiction in it is another, the fact the Bible was written over a time period of many centuries from different men in different parts of the world, one not knowing the other and each piece dovetails right into each other piece making a perfect whole that there is not a contradiction. Oh, there are so many infallible proofs if your mind is open to see it and if you want good sense and right knowledge and the right way that you can know that the Bible is the inspired Word of God. I mean in its original writings.

Now, we have copies and we have translations and human error to some extent has crept into those things. Well, we can realize it, but always there's a way if we will consult all the translations and even

original languages and you know God gave us a mind to think with it. Well, you say, "Well, I haven't time to do that and I don't know how." Oh yes, you have a mind and you have time, you have twenty-four hours a day, the same as I have. And you could do it and it's the biggest thing in life and perhaps you're just putting other less important things as more important in the place of it, that's the only reason you don't do it. You're just making a lame duck excuse if you don't do it. So, let's face it, my friends.

Now, the Bible is the Word of God and how are we going to know? He says here through James, "James, the servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ..." And God inspired these words through James. James was merely like a secretary who wrote them down.

"My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into different temptations [or that is trials or tests of faith]..." What do we do? Count it all joy? I should say not. Oh, we gripe, we grumble, we complain, we get angry and some of us get angry at God. Yes, some of us get angry at God and we think God isn't fair because He let's these trials to test us and to strengthen us come upon us. My friends, why are we placed on this earth? To become God. And to achieve the character of God. And we have to be tried and tested to ever achieve that kind of character. I wonder if you realize it. Why if God didn't let us come through these trials, these tests, we'd never develop or strengthen. We could never develop on toward God. Of course, it takes the Spirit of God and the help of God and all of that and finally God will have to just make us to what we become. But He only does it if we're willing. And it takes our willingness and our ascent to it. And the development of character -- we have our part in it.

Now, "Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience." That's why you don't get an answer to prayers most of you because you ask God for something and if He doesn't jump at the crack of your whip and do it right away, you say, "Why didn't God do it?" God didn't answer my prayer. Are you so sure?

Faith is the evidence of things not seen. And after you get the answer you don't need faith anymore. And if God tried your faith as to work patience and you just weren't patient and you decided God didn't do it. And the minute you decide that, you gave up having any more faith, you quit believing and you begin to doubt and well whatsoever is not of faith is of sin and you're just sinning the minute you do it. You're making God out a liar, because God has promised He'll answer if you'll just believe Him and just trust Him and just be patient and wait till He does.

But now, get this.

"Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, nothing wanting." "Be ye perfect," you read in another scripture, "...as your Father in heaven is perfect." We can be made, through the Power of God and with our ascent and our willingness and our effort; we can be made as perfect as God. God is able to make us that way and He wants to do it if we only had the good sense to realize it.

Now verse 5, here's what I wanted you to get, here it is. "If any of you lack wisdom..." And with our little peanut size or birdbrained size minds and we ought to realize it. The mind of man is the greatest thing we know and we should glorify God when we realize how far above the dumb animals it is. But when we compare it to God we should realize what a birdbrained, peanut size mind we have and come down to our own size and come down off of all this vanity and realize how great God is by comparison and how God's mind knows everything.

Now, "if any of you lack wisdom [and you don't have wisdom at all if you don't realize how much of it you lack], let him ask of God [that's in prayer, is the way you ask of God], that giveth to all men liberally." There's God's promise. God says He gives to us liberally, not stingily, but liberally, lovingly, in great measure and "upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." There's God's promise -- "it shall be

given him." Do you think, my friends, that God could go back on that promise? God says if you lack wisdom, there's a command, ask God. Are you obeying God or are you disobeying? Now, he says if you do, that God gives liberally and He will give. It shall be given. That's the Word of God and that's God's promise. You obey His command; He will keep His promise.

Now, let's read the next word. "But let him ask in faith..." You've got to know God's going to give it to you. You must believe it and keep on believing until you get it.

"Let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed." Did you ever go out and watch the waves back and forth out on the sea? I love to do it at times; I get a great relaxation of going over to the coast somewhere to watch the waves come in. But as those waves come in, there's an undercurrent, the water's going back out and then it rolls back up and back and forth but it doesn't stay steady. Now, here it is: "He that wavereth is like a wave of the sea." I guess the word wavering comes from the word wave. Back and forth, a wave of the sea, driven with the wind and tossed; it doesn't seem to have any self direction or any power over itself. "Let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord." Aren't a lot of you in that condition and in that class? Now, don't you think you ought to begin to trust God and rely on Him and have patience and wait until He does it and you'll get your answer.

As a young man, I desired wisdom. I read back here that when God gave Solomon a chance to say what he wanted that Solomon wanted wisdom. Solomon wanted wisdom, and God gave him more wisdom than any man who ever lived. Now, there's a difference between wisdom and understanding. When I was young man, even at age sixteen, I begin to come to the place where I craved and desired understanding. Now, there's a difference. Understanding is grasping and really understanding and comprehending things and getting an

understanding of certain knowledge. But, wisdom, my friends, is ability through correct reasoning to apply your knowledge by making a wise and a right decision, of learning what to do about it. Now, that's what Solomon wanted.

Well, I wanted understanding. And God began to give it to me. And He gave me quite a measure of it. I sought it, I wanted it, I was willing to get it. I found that if I would have understanding I had to pay a price. I found, in the first place, if I would have understanding I'd have to understand some things about myself that were not very pleasant and I would have to face it and I would have to go to work on my own self.

And I found if I would have understanding I must understand that I am my own worst enemy. You know we think other people are our enemies. Well, I may have had enemies, but, the worse one I ever had was Herbert W. Armstrong. And I'll tell you this, Herbert W. Armstrong is an enemy but only to himself and not to you or to any other man. I have never been an enemy. I know that because I know what's in my heart whether other people do or not. Now, I have had other enemies because in the work that God has called me to and set me in, I have had to suffer a great deal of opposition and persecution of all kinds. If I hadn't, I couldn't be the servant of God. And I have had enemies but not one of them has been as bad an enemy, as dangerous an enemy as Herbert W. Armstrong. I've been my own worse enemy. Now, I had to come to realize that and that isn't easy. Can you realize that you are your own worst enemy? Or are you willing to face up to that fact? You're about one in a thousand or perhaps ten thousand if you are. That's the hardest thing in the world; most people won't do it. As a matter of fact, I don't think I would have if God hadn't just, well, He didn't just knock me down and blind me quickly like He did the Apostle Paul, but God struck me down and over a period of years in another way and knocked me down so many times that finally there was nothing left of me practically speaking.

Well, anyhow, I came to realize it. And I had to come to have understanding of a lot of my own faults and weaknesses and go to work on them and try to overcome them. I haven't overcome all of them yet. Now, I hope you don't know any of them or what they are, that's alright, I try to keep them from others; but, I know what they are and I know that God knows and I'm still working hard on them and praying my heart out about it. Are you doing that for your own self?

Now, another thing, if you're going to have understanding, that isn't easy, you have to find out that you can't have very much faith in people. You have to find out just about how rotten humanity is. And you have to come to understand that you're going to be disappointed in even in your best friends and love them still and that is not easy either. You become disillusioned and most people can't take it, my friends, it would throw them. They can't see the real rottenness in this world and how much evil there is in human nature. Of course, there's good in human nature. We talk about so and so having such a good heart. Oh, yes. Perhaps he does, but he's also got another side that's the other way and there's something very foul and evil and rotten and it's in every one of us. The thing is are we going to confess it, are we going to acknowledge it are we going to repent of it and try to get away from it and cry out to God and say, "God Almighty, take this away from me. Tear it out of my nature. Make me what I ought to be." Are you willing to do that? You never can get converted; you're never going to have any salvation unless you can. Unless you've come clear down into the sub-gutter and asked God to pull you up and come to see yourself as you are, you've never been converted.

Well, I had to undergo all of that. But, you know, when God put me in His ministry and I came to face some of the problems of a minister of Jesus Christ, I began to become very well aware of the fact that of all men I seemed to lack wisdom. I had understanding. I was getting it. I was acquiring certain knowledge. There's a

difference. Knowledge -- a man can have knowledge, he can have knowledge of that which is false as well as that which is true. We have a lot of men that are highly educated in this world and some of them are only educated fools and lot of them have knowledge that isn't true. They have knowledge of error. They have knowledge of false things. And they just don't have good sense, some of them. You can have lots of knowledge but that's not understanding. Understanding involves certainly a certain degree of knowledge of course, but, it means that you really comprehend and understand it and have a good balance about it. But still, that's not wisdom. Wisdom is having both knowledge and understanding and the ability to use it to make a right decision and to steer into the right course. And I began to find out that I had to make decisions and I have learned it since and that in my position, in God's Church and as God's minister, very often we have to make decisions in regard to other people and their circumstances and their lives and God has given us certain keys to the Kingdom of God and He has given us the power, the authority to bind and to loose and it takes wisdom to do that. And of all men I lacked it. And I came to this in James, years and years ago. And I had to ask God to give me wisdom because of all men I think I lacked it more than any man I knew. I was utterly devoid of wisdom and I had to acknowledge it. I had none naturally. But when I asked of God I found God would give me wisdom. And whenever I have needed it, He has given it.

Now, I'm afraid that in my ministry there have been times when I didn't go to God enough for wisdom and when I didn't pray enough about it and when under pressure or this or that or the other thing I've made decisions on insufficient knowledge and I've made mistakes. We're all human and we all do those things. But I want to tell you that whenever I have gone to God sufficiently and asked wisdom and trusted Him to give it to me, He has always given it and He will you. So we can come to know those things.

Oh, my friends, when can we come to see ... I get off the track of this thing. I'm not going through this actual Gospel of Jesus so rapidly. That's alright, we'll come to it. But these things I'm giving you, my friends, are worth millions of dollars to you.

Well, listen. If you could go to some human being to give you good advice and tell you what to do. You know, a lot of people go to astrologers or fortune tellers and pay them big prices and what are they getting? Oh, they get misled in the greatest deceptions in the world. But if there was someone that had all knowledge and could foresee the future and had a knowledge of all the facts that are hidden from you in making business decisions and this and that and the other decision and you'd know that if you could go to that certain person you would always be guided right to make the right decision, how much would you pay for it? I tell you if you were the head of multi-million dollar corporation you might be willing to pay at least one million dollars for that and probably several because it would save you several million.

Well, you can have that my friends for nothing if you'll just go to God. If you lack wisdom, go to God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given, free, God won't charge you and He won't send a bill around.

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