

THE WORLD TOMORROW

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

What the True Church Will Be Like

This is Herbert W. Armstrong with the *Good News* of the *World Tomorrow!*

Why is it my friends that you have *not heard* the *true* Gospel of Jesus Christ but rather a message of *men*, a gospel of *men* about His person but not the message that Christ Himself brought and preached?

Now, do you know that that message was not the message of Christ either, so far as that is concerned? It was not Christ's message at all, actually. It was the message of *God* the Father. And so when we read the 5th chapter of John and verse 30, Jesus said here, "I can of myself do nothing." I wonder if you have all realized that. A lot of people never did. They thought Jesus had Power inherent in Himself to perform all miracles and to do all of the things that He did. He said that He was helpless, He was a human like you and I. He said that of Himself He could do nothing. "I can of myself do nothing. As I hear I judge my judgment is righteous because I seek not my own will but the will of him that sent me."

My friends, do you know the difference between the Church that Jesus *actually* did build and every other church? Where is that Church today? Jesus Christ said, “*I will build my church*”.¹ You have a lot of churches today. Which one is His, any of them? Let me tell you how to find the *Church* that Jesus built. There are a lot of earmarks, a lot of *ways*. One thing is, Jesus Himself foretold that His Church would be a little flock not a great political *power*, not a *great* pressure group or anything of the sort, but it would be a little flock. Prophecy shows and Jesus said that His Church would be persecuted even as He was. Prophecy said it would be *scattered*, that they would be *scattered* and not organized in a great *powerful* group or having any political influence at all.

In the Book of Revelation, you find *two* prophecies of *two* different churches. One is the church in this world that is politically *powerful*. It's called by a very ugly name. It is a church that has committed fornication spiritually speaking. And that fornication was committed by having a *political* relationship with the governments and the kings of this world, and going into *this* world's politics. That makes it a church *of this world*. And the *god* of this world *is* Satan the Devil.² And it is the implement and the church, the instrument of Satan the Devil. Now, that church is called by a very ugly name. But that church was politically powerful, it ruled over many nations, speaking many different languages, and over the governments of the Western world.

Another church is pictured in the 12th chapter of Revelation, which is a church driven to the wilderness, the desert, the mountain fastness, away from organized society by the military and the police powers of the organized state — a church that was scattered, a church that was persecuted, a church whose members were *martyred*. And this *great* church that is a *fallen* church was *drunken* with the *blood* of these *martyrs*, because that church had *caused* them to be killed. It didn't kill them directly. Oh no, it was merely the one that *caused* them to be killed. It declared them heretics and

the powers of the *state*, the civil government, with its secret police, its military forces took hold of these Saints and put them to death after a great deal of torture, inhuman torture almost impossible to bear, and tortures even perhaps more fiendish than those that we have heard of in modern wars. We have heard of terrible tortures inflicted by the Germans in World War II and the Japanese. Well, there were tortures as bad or worse that were inflicted and that great church, yet professing to be the church of Jesus Christ, the true Church of God on this earth is drunken with the blood of the martyrs that had been tortured until dead.

Now, the true Church of God is pictured as one keeping the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus and people that did not love their lives unto death as the Bible explanation or description of it is in the 12th chapter of Revelation, but which it had to flee.

Now, there is another earmark of the true Church. How are you going to know the true Church? Let me tell you something. The *true* Church that Jesus did found that is the Church of which He is the head, and Christ is the head of it, and God is the head of Christ, it is a church which will be continually admitting it has made some mistakes, which will change its doctrines as fast as it finds they have been wrong and will have a record of having admitted that it had had some wrong doctrines and some wrong practices and will have straightened up and will have changed and accepted the *Truth* where it has come out. It will be church that will have progressively grown in Bible knowledge and will have added to its doctrines such new light and truth as has come from time to time. Now, do you know any such church on the face of the earth today? I'm sure you don't. I don't think that you know any organized group that calls itself a church, any sectarian denomination, any organized church or political group that goes by the name of a church today that has ever changed its doctrines, that has ever admitted it had been wrong, that has ever admitted that it had taught something that it now finds was an error and admits publicly and tells the people it had been a error

and now it preaches the Truth and straightens the people out on the thing it had misled them on in ignorance before it had come to see to know better! Do you know any such church?

Listen, my friends. Any church is merely the sum total of its members. Is that not true? What is a church? It is a group of human beings and the true Church of God are those human beings that have been begotten by God and in whom God has put His Holy Spirit that is *led* by the Spirit of God.³ Now, it's true, it will be a lot of people joined together in the Love of God and by the Spirit of God and the harmony that comes from that Spirit and on the basis of love but all human beings are carnal and have a carnal nature even though they have now *also received* the nature of God through the Holy Spirit. And so the natural nature of man and the natural man *wars* against the Spirit even after a man has been converted and received the Spirit of God.

Why, even in Jesus Christ who never sinned, He *was tempted* in all points like as we are.⁴ He couldn't have been tempted, my friends, unless there was something within Him, within His mind and within His flesh that did cry out to want to be satisfied in a wrong way, unless it tempted Him and made Him *want* to do what in His mind He knew was not right. Only He had the *will power*, He had the control over *self* to refuse to let Himself *do* those things that His *passions* and emotions cried out to do that His spiritual mind being led of God showed Him He should not do. And also He had that power of *will* to propel Himself with a propulsion to *do* those things which He just didn't want to do and shirked from doing and tended to shrink back from but which His mind led by the Spirit of God showed Him He *ought to do*. Do you do that? Of course you don't always. Do you know anyone who is living perfectly like that, like Jesus Christ did? I've know people that bragged they did, but their very bragging was the worse sin of all — spiritual pride.

Now, that battle is going on within all of us and the very purpose of our being here is that we overcome all that is wrong in our own natures, that we come with our minds to be enlightened to see what is right and where we are wrong and to have the self control and the self direction and the *will* and the *volition* to build a character that will do what is right and reject what is wrong and that will force ourselves when we feel lazy or feel that we don't want to, to do even unpleasant things that we see we ought and must do. Too many people shirk those things, they never do them. And too many other people are always doing things; perhaps not other people either, the same people, doing things that they just want to do but which, perhaps they know they ought not, but they're just so weak they can't prevent it. And so we develop habits and we become the creatures, the victims of *habit* until we're slaves of habits of different kinds. We can't seem to shake them off or break them.

Now, my friends, overcoming and coming to a knowledge of the Truth is something that every Christian *must do*. And we're told in Peter, in II Peter, it's the very last verses of Peter's letter, the 2nd letter of Peter that "we must GROW in GRACE and in the KNOWLEDGE of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."⁵

Listen, did you come to all the knowledge of God perfectly until you fully understood *everything* in the Bible all at once in the split second that you were converted or do you know anyone who ever did? I know a good many of you listening to me aren't converted now. But do you know of anyone who upon conversion just *all of a sudden*, quicker than you could bat an eye, all of a sudden had all of the understanding, the comprehension and the knowledge of everything in the Bible and the full knowledge of God and knew everything that God could impart and would want them to know? Do you know anyone who ever got it that fast and that quickly? Of course not. What would you think of baby when on conception instead of growing large enough to be born in its mother's womb, all of a sudden in one second became a six foot man or a baby upon

birth that would all of a sudden go up to about six feet eight in the next one or two seconds? You know it has to grow. Things like that grow. Physical things grow, they don't happen so suddenly.

Now, we're told that we have to grow in knowledge as well as in grace. And this whole thing, it's just common sense and it makes sense. It's a matter of just learning the true values and the things that *really* make you *happy*, the things that *really* make life worth *living*, the things that help you to make other people more happy and that are good for everybody until it's just *good* to be alive. Anything wrong with that? Of course not. My friends, that's the Gospel Jesus taught, it's the Gospel that I preach, the same Gospel Jesus did. It's the way of life that will make everybody a lot happier and make life worth living. I don't think you can find fault with that. I don't think there's anything wrong with it.

But listen my friends, we have to grow into it and there are inclinations and *pulls* in our nature that pull us the wrong way. I think we all know it. You know there is evil as well as *good* in human nature. The thing that Adam and Eve took of in the Garden of Eden was the Tree of Knowledge of Good *and Evil*⁶ and there was good and evil mixed. And good and evil is the mixture in every one of us.

Oh, I know in the comic strips and in the movies and in the plays and in the fiction stories the hero is always just 100 percent good, he's perfect, there's not a *fault* in him. And the villain is *always* 100 percent evil. Oh, he's just of the Devil 100 percent. But in real life it isn't like that. No, in real life there is so much good in the worst of us and so much bad in the best of us and there's a little of the Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde in nearly everybody in real life. We're built that way. And everyone of us has a wrong side we have to struggle to master and to control or it's going to get away with us and run the wrong way and we all have our regrets.

Now, we have to grow toward the right way if we're ever going to get there. And what is the Church, but the sum total of its members of the individuals that are together and compose it. Can a church grow in knowledge any faster than its individuals, or than at least its leaders? And can its leaders, they're human men, do they get into it all at once? Do they just hocus-pocus of a snap of your finger quicker than you can bat an eyelash, do they come into all knowledge? Has any church done it?

You go back here at the beginning of a lot of churches, take the beginning of the Protestant churches three, four hundred years ago and you find there was a leader and the people found that leader and they thought he was a great man and he came to see a certain amount of truth, that's true, but he didn't have it all. And I remember of one leader — John Wesley. And he told his people that he had not found all of the truth. He had tried. He said he had found a lot of truth. He had restored some truth he felt. But he said I haven't got it all and after I'm gone I want you people to *continue* to *acknowledge it* when you're wrong and *continue* to grow into *more* knowledge and *more* truth and get things straightened out better than I've gotten them.

You know he wrote a wonderful sermon or preached it, I've read the copy of it in writing, of a wonderful sermon that John Wesley wrote one time on repentance in believers. That repentance isn't just something that you do once before you *get saved* as they say, you know, and then once you've repented and you've felt a little sorry for the way you've lived and that's about all it amounts to with a lot of people anyway. And then you're all through with that and from then on you can become *vain* and *egotistical* and think how good you are and get spiritual pride and think what a wonderful Christian you are. He showed that a Christian is one of humility and that in order to retain that humility that really does make for true righteousness and true greatness for that matter, that there must be a *spirit* of repentance continually in the mind. There must be that spirit of

humility and teachableness and *willingness* to be taught, *willingness* to unlearn, *willingness* to confess it when we're wrong. You know that's the hardest thing in human nature for anybody to do? Why, people find it very easy to bristle up and resist and fight and refuse to acknowledge they're wrong and try to accuse the other fellow of being wrong and then you get into a lot of untruths when you do that. That's the way most people ride right over their own evils and faults and sins by trying to accuse the other fellow, so they ride right over it. Hardest thing on earth is to admit it when you're wrong. Now, any true Christian is one who will admit it when he's wrong. And therefore the True Church is merely that body of people made up of such people and the Church as a whole must be one that is humble enough to admit it when it's wrong!

Now, I think maybe perhaps a lot of the *leaders* and *founders* of a lot of these churches and denominations that we have around had that idea, but when they died what did the people do? They said, "No, that's what he set and we're not going to change it. He was a great man. He was a great leader." Yes. . .

Well, you know I found that I got into the Church that Jesus Christ started myself. It was just a little group of scattered people, world never heard of them. And under their direction I started preaching in a little country school house up eight miles west of Eugene, Oregon. And there were nineteen converts and a little church of nineteen people started out. We moved to another little country school house four miles farther away, started holding services there. And later there was another group organized in Eugene and then another in another town. Then we bought a property in Eugene and moved the whole church in there and it began to grow. But you know, it grew because we were growing. And it grew because when we found we were doing something wrong we quit and we changed. And when we found we had preached something wrong, we corrected it.

I remember the woman that didn't like me very well stopped me on the street one time in downtown Eugene, Oregon. She said, "Herbert Armstrong, you're all wet!" You know that's modern slang means you're in error, you are wrong. That was a little bit hard to take from that woman because I knew she didn't like me. I said, "Well, I don't think so, but where?" And so she began to point it out. And you know she had me stumped before she got through. Well, I said, "Now, I'm not going to just jump around at anything just because you tell me. I'm going to look *into* that. And if I find you're right and I've been wrong I'll straightened it out but I'm not going to just be easily be led around with any old little wisp of doctrine that comes along but I certainly shall check into it.

Well, the passage, and one or two passages in question and the whole truth I studied into and I had felt there was a mistranslation from the Greek language of a certain verse that I couldn't explain. And when I looked it up I found there was no mistranslation. It meant just what it says in plain English in the King James or any other translation. And on careful research and study to *prove* and we're not to be easily led around one way or the other. I don't think we should be too quickly led even into truth because how do you know it is truth until you proved it. I never have been. Now, I studied this for days. I looked into it thoroughly. I went into exhaustive research and I had to admit I had been wrong and this woman was right.

Well, you know at the next church service in that little church in Eugene, Oregon the subject of my sermon was that very thing and I straightened out the membership and showed them we had been wrong. That was the subject of my next broadcast. My friends, I've had to do that more than once but I don't have to do it so often any more because every time you get one error rooted out and you get another truth in you're getting a little closer to the whole truth and you don't have to do it so often. But you certainly have to start out.

Now, some people will say, “Well, that can't be God's Church. Why they don't even *preach* the same thing they used to, they've changed one or two things.” My friends, you can't be God's Church if you haven't because you're not perfect. No human being ever is. And the only one that can be the true Church of God and is the same Church that Jesus founded is the Church that *can be corrected by God!* Have you never read what we read here in Hebrews in the very Word of God of how God corrects every son that He loves and that if we are not corrected and if we are not chastened, that we're not the sons of God?

Let me read you a little of it here. Beginning the 5th verse of the 12th chapter of Hebrews:

“And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children. My son despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art REBUKED of him.”

My friends, what's the Bible for? What *is* the Bible? What *good* is it?

“All scripture. . .”, as Paul wrote to Timothy, “. . . is given by inspiration of God and is PROFITABLE. . .”

Oh yes, it's profitable but what for? For argument, to have your *own way*, chew the rag around with someone else? Oh no. But “. . . is profitable for doctrine, for REPROOF, for CORRECTION, for INSTRUCTION in righteousness.”⁷ But oh, how we do hate to take that kind of instruction. We don't *like* reproof. We don't *like* being corrected when we're wrong. That's what the Bible is for.

Did you ever read the letters of the Apostle Paul that he wrote to the people over at Rome, (they weren't Romans, some of them were, some of them were not) and to the Ephesians and the Colossians and the Galatians and the Thessalonians and the others? Did you ever notice that every one of those letters are *corrective*, that Paul is

correcting those church members and straightening them out and telling them where they're wrong? That's what they are. The whole Bible does that and the Bible is like a *sharp two-edged sword*,⁸ it cuts both ways. It's sharp on both sides and which ever way it goes it's going to *cut* and it *hurts* — it's human nature.

Listen. “For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth. . .”, He corrects us, “. . . and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.”⁹ You know that isn't human nature.

I believe I may have told you this before but most of you weren't listening then. I've a little grandson, he, oh let's see, I forget how old he is, this was when I believe he was only about three years old. And we had driven over to one of these grocery markets you know, these glorified grocery stores that we have in this day and age. And my wife and his mother who is our daughter, of course, had gone into the store for groceries and left the little fellow in the front seat of the car with me. And he got to playing around with the little sun shade up at the top of the windshield and I thought he was going to injure it so I told him not to do it. But he didn't pay any attention. He went right ahead. He was bending the thing all around and I told him again and he went ahead and I said, “I'm going to spank you.” He went ahead, so I started to spank. He looked up to me so quick, said, “Grandpa, Grandpa, Grandpa you love me don't you, Grandpa? You wouldn't spank me if you loved me would you?” And you know before I thought I had to burst into a lot of laughing. That just caught me and after I began to laugh I couldn't spank the little fellow, but he needed it. But his argument was — you wouldn't spank me if you loved me would you? And I had to explain to him that I would spank if I loved him.

And later, he says, “Well, Grandpa,” he said, “Why does my daddy spank me?” He says, “My daddy wouldn't spank me if he loved me would he?” So I explained it something like this, I said, “Look, does your daddy spank other little boys?” “No.” “Well, he doesn't love

those little boys like he does you. Your daddy spansks you because he doesn't want you to do wrong because it's going to *hurt* you if you do wrong. And your daddy doesn't want you to get *hurt* and he wants you to do the way that will make you happy and he'd rather spank you a little bit and hurt you a *little* bit than have you punish yourself a lot more and hurt yourself and grow up to be the wrong kind of a man some day.” Well, I think I finally got him to see it.

But you know a lot us have never had that explained. We think why if God loved us He wouldn't punish us *would He?* Well, He says He would.

“ . . . whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth EVERY SON WHOM HE RECEIVETH. If ye ENDURE chastening. . . ”¹⁰ Endure, doesn't say *enjoy*, does it? No, if you *endure it*. Oh you don't enjoy it. “God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?”¹¹

Well, in modern *wacky* psychology they don't believe in it. They say, “Well, let the sweet little. . .,” what'll I call him, little brat, little. . . “sweet little thing, just let him do what he wants to. And just let him act *on impulse*.” Oh boy, these psychologists don't even know human nature yet.

“But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.”¹² I read that out of the Bible. That's Bible language. That's pretty *plain* isn't it? Doesn't mince words about it at all.

“Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of spirits, and live? . . . Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous. . .” Oh, how true. People just don't like it, do they? “. . . but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the PEACEABLE FRUIT OF RIGHTEOUSNESS unto them that are exercised thereby.”¹³

You see my friends, the true Church of God is a church that God is going to be correcting and *chastening*. And the *ministers* in that church will correct and chasten it or it is *not a true Church of God!*

Now, Jesus didn't teach anything of Himself. He said, "Of myself I can do nothing. I seek not mine own will but the will of Him who sent me."¹⁴ Every true Christian is the one who's given up his *own* will and is *seeking* the will of God! And if you're not doing that and living by every Word of God and studying the Bible to find God's will and put your own will down and out where it is contrary, *you* are not a real Christian. Maybe you've been kidding yourself, but you're not. And any church that isn't seeking the will of God and *changing* as is necessary is not the true Church of God! Why don't you apply that to yourself to find out whether you're a *Christian* and why don't you apply it to *your church*? Has it ever corrected any of its errors? Has it ever admitted it had been *wrong*? Has it been willing to be *chastened*? Has it advanced in new light and truth as God *reveals it*? If it hasn't and if you must answer *no*, it is *not* a Church of God but a church of this world and Satan is the god that the churches of this world worship. That's something to really to *think* about. That ought to knock you out of your chair. I hope you think.

VOICEOVER:

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Notes:

1. **Matthew 16:18.** *(back to text)*
2. **I Corinthians 4:4, Revelation 12:9.** *(back to text)*
3. **Romans 8:14.** *(back to text)*
4. **Hebrews 4:15.** *(back to text)*
5. **II Peter 3:18.** *(back to text)*
6. **Genesis 2:17, 3:6.** *(back to text)*
7. **II Timothy 3:16.** *(back to text)*
8. **Hebrews 4:12.** *(back to text)*
9. **Hebrews 12:6.** *(back to text)*
10. **Hebrews 12:6-7.** *(back to text)*
11. **Hebrews 12:7.** *(back to text)*
12. **Hebrews 12:8.** *(back to text)*
13. **Hebrews 12:9, 11.** *(back to text)*
14. **John 5:30.** *(back to text)*
15. **Click on link *Just what do you mean . . . CONVERSION?* to view booklet.** *(back to text)*

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