
AM I IN IT FOR THE MONEY?

Many are accused of preaching the "Gospel" for the money they get out of it. Here is a frank, open statement of the PLAIN TRUTH. Here I lay my life bare as an open book before you!

by Herbert W. Armstrong

HERE IS a story such as you have never read before.

The state of California, through the attorney general's office, has launched a massive attack against the Worldwide Church of God, myself, and Mr. Stanley Rader. Eight-column banner newspaper headlines screamed to the world the allegation that I, with Mr. Rader, had been siphoning off millions of dollars every year from Church funds for our own accounts and use. After a year and a half, NO EVIDENCE of any wrongdoing has been found.

But WHAT ARE THE TRUE FACTS? Have I been in the Work of the living GOD for what I could GET out of it? Why and for what purpose did I start, 53 years ago? Just HOW MUCH have I "GOTTEN" out of it? Just how much do I have now? How much does Mr. Stanley L. Rader have now?

I had been quite successful as a young man in the advertising profession. In my own office in Chicago's "loop" in downtown Chicago, Ill., I was making, on the 1980 dollar-value more than \$175,000 per year before 30 years of age.

Then, in 1927, at age 34, the living GOD opened my eyes to HIS TRUTH, unpreached in this world. I came to see that the orthodox Christian teaching of my childhood and youth was the very antithesis of the truth God reveals in His Word, the Bible. In His Word God revealed to me that there are just two ways of life. One is "GET"—the way of SELF-centeredness—the way of "I'm in it for

what I can GET—I love ME, and I don't care about you." The other—GOD'S WAY—is the way of "GIVE"—outflowing love and concern for the good and welfare of others—the way of LOVE to God and LOVE to neighbor."

Last Sunday I saw a preacher on television say, "We can't know the CAUSE of all the troubles, evils and suffering in the world—but we know that God is suffering along with us." I don't believe that. God has revealed to me the root CAUSE of all the world's evils and sufferings. Every evil in the world has come from living by the "GET"—the "ME-FIRST" philosophy.

I wanted to GIVE this amazing truth to the world. In my conversion I did not just "GET"—RECEIVE—Christ as personal Savior. Rather I GAVE this sinful self of mine to HIM. I received Him and His truth, NOT to "GET" for myself, or to "GET" salvation and eternal life for myself—but rather, that I might GIVE this precious truth and understanding to the world—that I might SHARE it with thousands and millions of others.

I GAVE UP the business life and its rewards. Seven years later, in poverty, I began GIVING the precious truth over radio.

I started in poverty—from nothing of this world's goods. It was a work of FAITH from the start. I had one pair of shoes. They were righteous—they had "holey soles." I had a suit of clothes for every day in the week—and the one I was wearing was IT! I had no car.

And what did I preach? I preached Jesus Christ and HIS TRUTH—the most DIFFICULT teaching and doctrine in all this world's "Christianity" to proclaim—the HARDEST for my hearers to accept.

Would anyone start out with the most hard-to-accept teaching to make money? Does that make sense? It was a teaching and doctrinal TRUTH that has brought continual opposition, accusation, persecution. It's no way to make money, let me tell you!

I devoted my life to GIVING. My family and I went HUNGRY—and I do mean HUNGRY! That was part of the price paid for GIVING out of love for others, in a world adjusted to "GETTING."

Yet the living Jesus Christ blessed this Work in marvelous ways. Faith was rewarded. Prayers were answered—continually. The Work of the living GOD prospered.

In 1947 I founded my first college—GOD's college, that is! And on sheer FAITH, with no income whatsoever that was not already appropriated and obligated for radio time and operating expenses. By FAITH it survived!

I incorporated the Church and college on improper legal advice—or we should not be suffering this State versus Church lawsuit now. But I thought the legal advice was good. It was that of a lawyer who had been an attorney in the Internal Revenue Service of the government in Washington for some 12 years. But I took pains to incorporate so that I,

personally, could never GET anything out of it, except for modest salary earned. For this, I appointed this ex-government lawyer and two people not related to me as a committee of three to set my salary. I did not even set it myself.

This work of God grew and expanded at the rate averaging 30% each year over the year preceding for 35 years—probably a record of growth unmatched. God allowed me to be responsible for handling many millions of dollars of His money. It was handled honestly.

Along the line, now about a quarter century ago, I came to know Mr. Stanley Rader, a very brilliant young certified public accountant. I employed him to establish at our headquarters an accounting system that is puncture-proof. It would be IMPOSSIBLE for me, or any officer or employee, to get away with anything more than his honestly earned salary or compensation for services.

Mr. Rader then graduated from the University of Southern California Law School with the highest grades on record. Yale Law School awarded him a Sterling Fellowship, and all doors in the legal profession were open to him. But he was working more and more with us, and preferred to stay with the Work of God.

Finally, some years ago, we told Mr. Rader we would like to have him devote his full time with us. This meant giving up a well-paying CPA business and an established law practice—he was a member of the bar in California.

Neither Mr. Rader nor his family were then members of the Church. It is understandable that Mr. Rader did not want to lower his family living standard. We agreed to pay him a salary equal to his income at the time. It was the highest salary on our payroll—well above my own. I am reminded of a large milling company in Minneapolis that used to have a slogan for its flour—“Costs more—worth it!” A Rolls Royce car costs more than others—but will last 30 or 40

years—cheaper in the long run. God says “the servant is worthy of his hire” (Luke 10:7). God would not have had me pay him less than he was worth.

Mr. Rader’s kind of specialized talent and ability, like a Rolls Royce, may cost a little more—but is WORTH IT, and he should not be underpaid. However, let me add here that both Mr. Rader and one of his daughters now are baptized members of the Worldwide Church of God. And the whole family is firmly loyal to the Church at heart.

Now, today, after all these many years, WHAT DO I HAVE—and WHAT DOES MR. RADER HAVE?

The government Internal Revenue Service has gone thoroughly and with a fine-tooth comb over both our personal accounts and absolved us completely of any of these false allegations.

All I have in the world is my home in Tucson, Arizona, bought 3½ years ago with small down payment and a long-term loan with many years yet to run before it is clear, the use of a 3-year-old car belonging to the Church, and a checking account in the bank. My wife owns a car, clothes and some jewelry I bought for her with personal funds after taxes, tithes and offerings. That’s all!

Mr. Rader has a bank account about double mine and his home in Pasadena and is buying an interest in a small horse ranch in Tucson. His wife has some money in her own name, but it all came from her own mother—not from the Church.

Jesus Christ suffered persecution—was finally put to death on testimony of false witnesses. He said if they persecuted Him, they would persecute those who followed HIS TEACHING AND WAYS.

For 53 years I have lived a life devoted to the principle of *GIVING!* But those who GET do love to accuse falsely and persecute those who *GIVE!* WHEN WE ALL turn to living the *GIVING* way, there will be PEACE on this war-weary earth! □