

Mystery of the Ages

(a 2nd critical review)

By William Hohmann

Does this book by Herbert W. Armstrong truly contain mysteries? Or are these things no more than the philosophical questions pondered by men throughout time, with one man's particular spin applied to them? Are we truly going to have secrets revealed, or are we to be misled, having our attention distracted through the sleight of hand of religious misinterpretation?

Calling these things "mysteries"—secrets hidden from mankind—only to be revealed now, and by Herbert Armstrong, gives them an aura of hidden knowledge, and who isn't tempted to know the hidden things?

Those who teach false gospels take the focus off of Jesus Christ as the sole Savior and King of His coming Kingdom, diluting it with other things they claim are necessary, required, (and desired) in order to attain to salvation.

This review is based on the 1985 hardback version.

[Update: Gerald Flurry of Philadelphia Church of God (PCG) deleted and changed portions of this book. Read: April 13, 2004 letter to ESN.]

"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." ~ II Timothy 2-4:4

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Author's Statement and Preface:

In the opening statements of Herbert Armstrong, he makes this observation and claim:

The Church was infiltrated during the first century with another gospel. Many false teachings and false churches under the name of "traditional Christianity" arose. As God reveals in Revelation 12:9, the whole world has been deceived. These basic truths have been kept a mystery. Even sincere and well-meaning men among the clergy have received their teaching from other men as handed down traditionally in these churches. They have assumed these false teachings to be the true teachings of the Bible. Instead of putting the various pieces of the jigsaw puzzle properly and sensibly together, it has become the practice and custom to read an already-believed false teaching into each particular scripture, taken out of its context. In other words to interpret the Scriptures to say what they have already been taught and come to believe. The Bible needs no interpretation because it interprets itself. This becomes clear when one sees the various scriptures of each subject properly put together, and the Bible itself says, "here a little, and there a little" (Isa. 28:10).¹ Even the world of a professed traditional Christianity has been deceived." (pp. xii-xiii)

What HWA did, due to his own pre-conceived views, was to fulfill his own observation. He realized that the first century church indeed was infiltrated and another gospel was preached by these infiltrators, but he never bothered to study the Scriptures to discover who these infiltrators were and what they taught that was another gospel. He makes the assumption in these introductory comments that what has been taught by "traditional Christianity" was: "—that God has been trying desperately to 'get the world saved,' (p xiii). This is the basis of what he saw as the false gospel. When one takes this comment by HWA and examines it carefully, problems develop.

Was God desirous that men should be saved or not? The true gospel is a message of salvation. Why then teach that the gospel was preached for the purpose of disguising this salvation-knowledge? Didn't Jesus say that those who believed the gospel would be saved, while those who do not were condemned already? (John 3:18)

What is of interest then regarding the gospel is to ask if any of these "revealed" truths or "re-revealed" as he likes to claim, have anything to do with the gospel and the preaching of the gospel, along with being important regarding salvation.

HWA also claims in his opening comments that the Bible is a "coded book" (p.x) and that one needs to put these pieces of the "jigsaw puzzle" together properly. This premise is slipped in as an already established fact, however Scripture does not support this "coded book" concept at all. The Scriptures are actually quite "plain" in what is stated. It is people who refuse to believe what they read.

2 Corinthians 4:3-4: "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world [age] hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."

Note then something HWA cited above regarding Isa. 28:10 with the "here a little, there a little" method of biblical understanding.

For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little: For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people. To whom he said, This is the rest wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing; yet they would not hear. *But the word of the LORD was unto them precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little; that they might go, and fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken.* Isaiah 28:10-13

The CONTEXT shows that this methodology of biblical study and interpretation is a means of being ultimately misled.

This then is HWA's method of biblical study and interpretation; a method that leads to falling backward, being broken, snared, and taken.

There are proper methods of biblical interpretation (hermeneutics) which he avoided like a proverbial plague.

Introduction - How the Seven Mysteries Were Revealed

Herbert Armstrong says this about today's world:

It's a magic, entrancing push-button world where work is done largely by machines. It's the glamour dreamworld of the three "L's"—leisure, luxury and license. (p. 8)

Does the reader feel like he (or she) has more leisure time and living in luxury? If anything, this world has become a pressure cooker. Yes, we have labor-saving devices, and as a result, we are expected to produce even more so than before. Our reward for doing so is often followed by taxes that remove more and more of our hard earned wages. But under this scenario, one cannot get away with trying to put a guilt trip on people, making them believe they have no excuse when it comes to funding his work through tithes, seeing as they have all this leisure time with machines doing all the work for them.

What is religion? It is defined as the worship of, and service to, God or the supernatural. It is man's relation to his Creator. Some religions have perverted that definition. They worship not the God who created them, but gods which they have created. Religion involves one's conduct, one's principles, one's way of life and one's concept of the hereafter. (pp. 8-9)

HWA gives an interesting yet limited definition of religion. He states a false religion is worshiping not God, but "gods which they have created." What he refuses to acknowledge is that one could worship something else God created. An example? How about the law? If you examine the writings of HWA, he treats the law as though it were a god, applying the attributes of God to the law. For example, he always described the law as "eternal."

The human mind is not equipped to manufacture truth with no basis for that truth! (p. 11)

One of the common methods employed by those who run religious cults is to make confusing statements to their followers that tends to induce in them a greater reliance on the leader. In order to understand him, they must listen to him, for he says confusing things to them. This creates dependence on the leader. The above statement from HWA is a good example. One need only understand what was happening in the garden of Eden. Adam and Eve rejected what God said, and desired to acquire that which came by the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. They went seeking other truths, and that search was to lead to death.

How, then, did I come to understand the precious knowledge of the TRUTH? Certainly not on my own, or because I sought it or because of any virtues of my own. But Jesus Christ struck me down in a manner quite different from the apostle Paul's experience, yet nonetheless painfully and effectively. (p. 12)

HWA attempts to equate himself with men who were called by God (Moses and Paul). But HWA never stood before a burning bush. HWA never was struck blind by God while fighting against Christians. His experience hardly qualifies as some special calling. But in order to acquire a following, he makes such claims. Didn't HWA claim he went and spent six months, night and day, in a library delving into whether God existed and the proof of the Bible, and whether Saturday or Sunday was the Sabbath? Didn't he study evolution? Yet here he makes a claim that it wasn't from this self-study he acquired a knowledge of "truth." More will be said on this later.

Such basic TRUTHS are revealed, not thought out in any human mind. They come from God, not man! And in all biblically recorded cases the initiative was God's!

Not necessarily so:

"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?" – Matthew 7:7-11

HWA relates a dream of his wife's as a proof of his calling. One should ask themselves, would a false teacher make such a claim? Sure. Where the difference is, is that when it came to Moses and other men called upon by God, they had proofs of their calling. Moses had a staff that turned into a snake. Jonah was coughed up on dry land by a great fish, and no doubt there were witnesses to the event. But in this dream claim of HWA, he is his own witness, and

this is not how God works, ever.

Jesus Christ is the personal Word of God. He, in person, taught the original 12 apostles and the apostle Paul. The Bible is the SAME Word of GOD IN PRINT today. Thus it was the same Jesus Christ who taught both the original apostles, beginning A.D. 27, and 1,900 years later, beginning 1927, myself. (pp. 24-5)

In other writings, HWA claimed "personal revelation" from God. Anyone can pick up a Bible, and read it and misunderstand it "reading into it pre-conceived beliefs". He claims a unique experience, but when examined carefully, there is nothing unique about it. He claims he was challenged over the Sabbath issue; whether Sunday was correct, or the Saturday Sabbath. His very statements regarding this issue show it was a pre-determined exercise; one or the other was correct, with no other possibilities entertained.

But in my initial six months' intensive in-depth study I was undergoing a process of UNlearning—discovering that church teachings had been the diametric opposite of Bible TRUTH! (p. 25)

What really happened is HWA learned how to take the Scriptures out of context and come up with his own form of legalism. I have already provided one example.

But to my utter disappointed astonishment, I found that many of the popular church teachings and practices were not based on the Bible. They had originated, as research in history had revealed, in paganism. Numerous Bible prophecies foretold it. The amazing, unbelievable TRUTH is that the SOURCE of these popular beliefs and practices of professing Christianity was quite largely, paganism and human reasoning and custom, NOT the Bible!" (p. 26)

HWA sets the stage for claiming that observing Sunday as a religious day; or as a commanded day had its origination in paganism. What he conveniently overlooks is that circumcision, for example, was not of pagan origination, but rather was an O.T. command that many Jewish Christians insisted Gentile converts were to practice. The teaching was erroneous and heretical. What then of other O.T. commands and requirements? Seeing as they are not "pagan" HWA perceives them as required of Christians and an integral part of Christianity. Many a ministerial meeting revolved around how to apply O.T. laws to "Christianity." It was a matter of trying to put new wine into an old wine-skin.

Furthermore, where are these prophecies that it would be pagan influences that would create a counterfeit Christianity? And the law, along with the Sabbath command, is in the Bible, hence required in his thinking and theology. If HWA were a false prophet; then would he have "prospered" under these conditions? Yes, through tithing, and all without pagan influences.

The opening of my eyes to the TRUTH brought me to the crossroads of my life. To accept it meant to throw in my lot with a class of humble and unpretentious people I had come to look upon as inferior. It meant being cut off from the high and the mighty and the wealthy of this world, to which I had aspired. It meant the final crushing of VANITY. It meant a total change of life! (p. 26)

Is this what happened? HWA used the money he got from those who followed him to visit the high and mighty of the world, and to associate with them. In essence, he accomplished through religion what he wanted to do through business, but was unable; and he did this beyond the expectations of being a business man. More on this later.

It meant real REPENTANCE, for now I saw that I had been breaking God's law. I had been rebelling against God in many more ways than just breaking the Sabbath command. It meant turning around and going THE WAY OF GOD—the WAY of his BIBLE—living according to every word in the Bible, instead of according to the ways of society or the desires of the flesh and of vanity." (p. 26-27)

HWA made the same mistake the Pharisee Christians of Acts 15 made; believing the law had to be kept. Not living according to the law is perceived as rebellion against God, and demonstrates the total ignorance regarding law and

Christianity. Christianity is not Judaism, and Judaism is not Christianity. Those that confuse the two are described by the apostle Paul in II Corinthians chapter 3 as having a veil before their eyes, blinding them to this truth. Theirs is a false Christ.

HWA's idea of repentance was to turn from breaking the law to keeping the law. The inner man is hardly addressed. Did Cornelius in Acts "repent" or did he "believe"? What was the result of having received the Holy Spirit? Would he have not changed as a result and due to the influence of the Holy Spirit?

Giving up this world, its ways, interests, pleasures, was like dying. (p. 27)

HWA hardly gave up these things. He frequented many very expensive restaurants in the Los Angeles area. If you doubt this, contact David Antion.³ He and his wife were often dinner guests of HWA on these nights out.

On another occasion, Stan Rader⁴ arranged for HWA to have a day out on a fancy yacht. The bill for this day of "giving up pleasures" was \$50,000. Mr. Bob Smith worked in the department that took care of accounts payable when this came through to be paid. It concerned him greatly.

And I can say now, with the apostle Paul, "that the gospel which [is] preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.... But when it pleased God...to reveal his Son in me...immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: neither went I [to a theological seminary, but I was taught by Jesus Christ, the Word of God (in writing)]" (Gal. 1:11-12, 15-17). (p. 29)

If ever there was an outright lie made by a man, this is it. Jesus did not take HWA aside and teach him personally over the course of two years. Earlier he stated how it was a matter of reading the Bible that this came about, and not some personal revelation. But it sounds good, and bolsters his claim of Apostleship. People believed him, and paid dearly for this blind faith in a man.

That is why I have said the experience I was painfully subjected to in this original intensive study was unique in human life and conduct in our time. I know of no world religious leader who arrived at his teachings in such a manner. This world's religious teachings did not come from GOD! Only God is infallibly correct! (p. 29)

Understand what he is claiming here. He is the only one who ever read the Bible in order to come to his understanding and belief system.

I had taken a beating! I had been brought to realize my own nothingness and inadequacy. I had been CONQUERED by the great majestic GOD—brought to a real repentance—and also brought to a NEW ROCK-BASED SOLID FAITH in Jesus Christ and in God's Word. I had been brought to a complete surrender to God and to HIS WORD. (pp. 29-30)

I am sure that the Pharisee Christians who were in the first century church could make the same claims, and they too believed Gentiles had to be circumcised and be made to keep the law also.

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Footnotes for Introduction:

1 The words in Isa. 28:10 do not prove the Bible is a "coded book" as HWA insisted. "Here a little, there a little" was a method that was used to teach young children. The priests and prophets were angry because they felt Isaiah was treating them as if they were such and so they mimicked him.

2 Autobiography of Herbert W. Armstrong, 1957, p. 300-306.

3 David Antion, an evangelist in the Worldwide Church of God resigned in 1974. His message, Firing and Disfellowship is available through ESN.

4 Read more about Stan Rader from OIU Newsletter, Vol. 5, pt. 3.

Chapter One - Who and What is God?

Nevertheless Adam had cut himself off from God his Creator. Undoubtedly, some of the knowledge that God had imparted to Adam was successfully imparted from father to son for many generations. Jesus had called Abel, Adam's second son, "righteous Abel." He did the right thing in offering a lamb in sacrifice. Later, Enoch "walked with God." God spoke to Noah and gave him instructions for the building of the ark. (p. 33)

In the theology of Herbert Armstrong, it is acts or "deeds" of the law wherein lies righteousness. Abel is seen by HWA as being righteous because he offered up sacrifices acceptable to God, whereas Cain's sacrifices were not.

HWA assumes Abel offered a lamb in sacrifice, and in other writings claimed Cain's sacrifices were agricultural and not of livestock. There is no support for either, as the narrative of Scripture is not so specific. Genesis chapter 4 states Abel gave sacrifices of the firstlings of his flock, and does not specify the nature of Cain's sacrifice(s). What Scripture does tell us is that Abel's righteousness was not so much a matter of his sacrifices as much as something else:

"By **faith** Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh." – Hebrews 11:4

Cain had a problem with his brother, and this is what made his sacrifices unacceptable. God addressed this with Cain, and Jesus addressed someone going to the Temple to offer a gift to the treasury to leave off doing so if he had aught against his brother, then once reconciled, return and offer the gift.

After the Flood certain historic accounts imply that Shem, one of Noah's three sons, had some knowledge of the true God. But undoubtedly, as generation succeeded generation of humanity, knowledge of God had become greatly distorted. (pp. 33-34)

It was typical of HWA to make claim to sources of information that somehow never got cited. What could these "historical accounts" be? And although HWA can be regarded as correct in that succeeding generations lost sight of God, he does so with a specific intent in order to draw certain conclusions that were evident in his writings.

The creation is material, visible, and therefore seems real. The system of modern education has become entirely materialistic. The modern scientific concept denies the invisible and the spiritual as having existence. Yet all our seemingly unsolvable problems and the evils in this world are spiritual in nature. (pp. 35-6)

This was another favorite claim of HWA; that mankind's problems are spiritual in nature. If human nature is "spiritual" then mankind's problems would be spiritual; but human nature is far from spiritual, and this is the basis of mankind's problem; his nature; his lineage, being sons and daughters of Adam.

"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: (For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come." – Romans 5:12-14

I am not condemning or judging these people—and I presume they are as well-meaning as any people. God is not judging them NOW—as I shall explain later. Neither is he condemning them. He loves them and will call them all to eternal salvation in his own time. But they DO NOT know WHO or WHAT God is. (p. 37)

"Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device. And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent:" – Acts 17:29-30

HWA did not understand God's judgment regarding humanity. Neither did HWA fulfill the requirement of those who would preach the gospel. He never mentioned Christ and His sacrifice and that only in and through Him one has

salvation when he (HWA) went to the nations, speaking to their leaders.

"He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." – John 3:18

Those in the world are under condemnation until such time they believe the gospel, and believe Jesus Christ as the Messiah; the Saviour of mankind.

In other words, the average person has an unrealized passive hostility against God. Without realizing it actively, they want God to "keep his nose out of their business"—except at a time when they are in deep trouble and they cry out for God's help. (p. 38)

Welcome to Religious Freudian Psychology 101.

Spiritual things—invisible things—are a mystery to them. They do not understand those things, real though they are, because they cannot see them. They remain a deep mystery so they deny their existence. (p. 38)

Another aspect here concerning spiritual things is that, if a person is not led by the Spirit of God, they would perceive physical things as being spiritual instead; for in that they truly do not comprehend the spiritual, they create a substitute spiritual. In the case of HWA, he read where the law given to Israel was spiritual, therefore that law had to be kept in order to be spiritual.

When Jesus Christ spoke on earth 4,000 years later, only 120 people believed what he said (Acts 1:15), though he preached his message from God to multiple thousands. (p. 38)

"And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, (the number of names together were about an hundred and twenty,)" – Acts 1:15:

These were Jesus' disciples. To exclude everyone else outside this group as having not believed Jesus and his preaching is inaccurate, to say the least.

No wonder, then, not one of these religions, sects and denominations, except the small and persecuted Church founded by Jesus Christ (A.D. 31), starting with that 120, believes God, which means these others do not believe what God says in his Word. (pp. 38-39)

What other religions, sects, and denominations were extant? A faulty premise is followed by a faulty conclusion. What happened that first day; that day of Pentecost? About 3000 were added to them. Why? Because they believed. Believed what? What was this "mystery" they believed? That this Jesus was risen from the dead and was/is the Savior of mankind. They were baptized and received the Holy Spirit of God. Did HWA understand this mystery? NO! He believed one had to learn about the law and start keeping the Sabbath before they could be baptized; before they could understand these "mysteries" of his. Belief in Jesus and Him crucified was ancillary to HWA's gospel.

That is what God is—what he does. He creates! He designs, forms and shapes- He gives Life! He is the great giver. And his law—his way of life— is the way of giving, not getting, which is the way of this world. (p. 40)

God's way of life is based upon a law of love. "Giving" poorly explains God and what He is. God is love (I John 4:8;16).¹ Giving, however, subtly sets the readers up so that they conclude they must be giving... to HWA.

But the generally accepted teaching of traditional Christianity is that God is a Trinity—God in three Persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, which they call a "Ghost." The word trinity is not found in the Bible, nor does the Bible teach this doctrine. But more about that later. (p. 40)

The author feels qualified to define what other people believe and what he rejects. Just because the word "trinity" is not in the Bible does not invalidate the concept.² The author then relates the doctrine is not in Scripture, then washes his hands of the subject by dropping it here, claiming he will cover it later.

Are these three "persons" or manifestations of God mentioned in Scripture? Yes. The real problem is man's way of trying to understand this Trinity. It is questionable if man can truly comprehend this in its fullness.

In the author's attempt to answer the mystery of who and what God is, one can only wonder if he even had a clue.

The real issue regarding the Trinity is whether the Holy Spirit possesses "personage" or is merely an impersonal force of God. In order to convince his followers they have to keep the law as the guide in their lives, the Holy Spirit as a guide in their lives must be diminished and rendered ineffectual in this regard. Thus, the Holy Spirit is marginalized.

So here we find revealed originally two Personages. One is God. And with God in that prehistoric time was another Personage who also was God—one who later was begotten and born as Jesus Christ. But these two Personages were spirit, which is invisible to human eyes unless supernaturally manifested. Yet at the time described in verse one [of John chapter 1] Jesus was not the Son of God and God was not the Father. (p. 42)

The author went to the opening chapter of John in order to state there were originally two Personages, ignoring the statements found in the beginning of Genesis.

"And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." – Genesis 1:2

The above verse says it was God's Spirit that moved upon the face of the waters. It does not say God moved upon the face of the waters. But we read in Isaiah 45:18 that God created the heavens and earth: "For thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it." Then John 1:1 says "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." So all three are mentioned in the creation of the heavens and the earth.

Jesus said that He and the Father were one. If you have seen the Son, you have seen the Father. (John 14:9) It is also written that Mary, the mother of Jesus, was made pregnant by the Holy Ghost (Holy Spirit). (Matthew 1:18) And the same thing is mentioned in verse 20: "...fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost."

The author wants to narrow the focus to two "Personages," Jesus and the Father. Because the nature of who and what God is, is not understood by the author, the author attempts to make God over into his conception of God. The author, who was physical, was trying to comprehend God who is spiritual.

Christians have the Holy Spirit indwelling them. Jesus also said that He and the Father would make their dwelling with the Christian.

"Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." – John 14:23

Human rationale tries to determine how these aspects of God are different and distinct. Jesus appears to constantly be explaining they are one. Humanly it can be a hard concept to understand.

The false Trinity teaching does limit God to three Persons. But God is not limited. As God repeatedly reveals, his purpose is to reproduce himself into what we may become billions of God persons. It is the false Trinity teaching that limits God, denies God's purpose and has palpably deceived the whole Christian world. (p. 45)

The concept of God as a Trinity does not limit God any more than HWA declaring God is a family of two. How the Trinity teaching "limits God and denies God's purpose" is not explained. It is put forth as fact, and left at that.

In Genesis 1:26, "God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." We know the form and shape of man. That is the image, likeness, form and shape of God. (p. 46)

The author just finished declaring God was composed of spirit. Form and shape are used to describe things physical. What the author fails to consider (seeing as he tends to look to the physical as spiritual when it comes to the law) is that this "image" man is made similar to could be a non-physical trait, and not a physical one; i.e.,

personality. Man is not like animals. Man is capable of complex thought and reason. Man has mind. God has mind. Man could be made in God's mental image.

One of Jesus' disciples asked him what God the Father looked like. Jesus replied: "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father..." (John 14:9). Jesus looked like the Father. Jesus was, actually, "God with us" (Matt. 1:23). Jesus was the begotten and born Son of God. (p. 47)

First off, Philip didn't ask Jesus what God looked like. He asked that Jesus show him (them) the Father. Jesus did not respond by saying the Father's physical form looked like Jesus. His response is that Jesus and the Father are one. If you have seen the Son, you have seen the Father.

Does the Father look like a thirty-three year old Jewish man of average features, or is there more to it than skin deep? The physical matters nothing. The description of Jesus given in Revelation 1 is no doubt much different than how he appeared to his disciples.

That character³ [of God] might be summed up in the one word Love, defined as an outflowing, loving concern. It is the way of giving, serving, helping, sharing, not the "Get" way. (p. 48)

The contrast to love is hate. The fruits of hate are, in part, living a life of "get" but it is much more. It is a disregard for others. It is a behavior of being willing to harm others and use others in order to fulfill your own desires and ambitions.

Why does the author insist on defining the opposite of love (which he usually opts for the term "give") as "get" instead of hate? The answer will be a bitter pill for some, and others a validation of their own experiences. The author did not love those who supported him. He hated them. He was willing to use them and make merchandise of them to further his own desires and ambitions.

"And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not." – II Peter 2:3

The author was consummately expert at this.

Their way of life produced perfect peace, cooperation, happiness, accomplishment. This WAY of life became a LAW. Law is a code of conduct, or relationship, between two or more. One might call the rules of a sports contest the "law" of the game. The presence of law requires a penalty for infraction. There can be no law without a penalty for its violation. (p. 48)

"Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it." – John 8:44

It is interesting to note that Jesus says Satan did not abide in the truth; not that he broke a law.

There is a "law" that leads to life, also known as the law of faith and the spirit, as well as the law of Christ and Liberty. The "penalty" for its violation is not a death sentence. It is a law that tells the Christian, in whom dwells the Holy Spirit, to be about doing good to all men. One can fail at this, but it is breaking a law that deals with carnal men when they do evil that produces a penalty.

"For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." – John 1:17

"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." – John 14:6:

Satan did not violate some "law," rather he abandoned truth. He abandoned God to do his own will, and went off on his own, seeking a following after himself. He wanted to be his own "god." (Isaiah 14:12-24) Satan rejected God.

As a contrast to this, we see a gospel that asks us to trust Jesus as our Savior. Out of love, we are to embrace God; the God who loved us so much that he demonstrated it by having Jesus (willingly) suffer and die in our place in

order to get the message across to us how much He loves His creation: us. One can either accept the truth — Jesus Christ, or reject Him even as Satan did, and suffer the consequences. Law has nothing to do with it in this light.

The very fact of law presupposes GOVERNMENT. Government is the administration and enforcement of law by one in authority. This necessitates authoritative leadership—one in command.

When the only conscious Life-Beings existed, God was leader- in authoritative command. Thus, even when the only conscious Life-Beings were God and the Word, there was GOVERNMENT, with God in supreme command. The government of God is of necessity government from the top down. It cannot be "government by the consent of the governed." Its laws originate and are handed down from God—never legislated by the people—never dictated by the governed how the government over them shall rule them. Since they created other conscious, thinking life-beings, this very fact of necessity put the GOVERNMENT of God over all creation, with God supreme Ruler. (pp. 48-49)

HWA sees a supposed chain of command between God and the Word which he calls the "government of God."⁴

Elsewhere, the author described the relationship between God and those He created to be His children and as a family. A family consists of a relationship, not a government. But if one wanted to justify how they ran a church, for example, you could see why they would want to describe it this way, and claim the church is but the government of God, in "embryo." Those who come into the group are to be good little minions and do as they are told, shut up and pay tithes and offerings, or be cast out into outer darkness.

Instead of a governmental structure HWA proffers, Scripture puts a different spin on this. There are two classes of people; sons and daughters in the household of God, and slaves, where the slaves do not abide in the household forever. The two groups are treated quite differently.

"He saith, Yes. And when he was come into the house, Jesus prevented him, saying, What thinkest thou, Simon? of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers? Peter saith unto him, Of strangers. Jesus saith unto him, Then are the children free." – Matthew 17:25-26:

God's law is spiritual and can be summed up in one simple but all-inclusive word—love. His law for the guidance of human conduct is subdivided into the two great commandments, love toward God and love toward neighbor. These, in turn, are subdivided into the 10 Commandments. Jesus magnified this law by showing how its principle expands to cover virtually every possible human infraction. (pp. 49-50)

Scripture does not say that the Ten Commandments are a subdivision of the two great commandments. Jesus said:

"On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." – Matthew 22:40

Not only does the rest of the law hang on these two great commandments, but the prophets as well. This is the summation of all the law and the prophets. In love we have the fulfillment of the law, for love bears no ill to his neighbor. (Romans 13:10)

But without the law, there is no government in the sense the author claims. And there is no wielding of control and power over others.

Note also HWA's claim above regarding the 10 Commandments, they being a subdivision of the two great commandments of love. It is an often repeated mantra in Sabbatarian groups that the 10 are an expression of love for God and fellow man. But this is far from the truth of the matter. Refraining from doing evil is not an expression of love. You can refrain from killing someone, yet still harbor hatred for them, and hatred is the spirit of murder. No, the 10 are a short list of things you have to tell people to do who are devoid of love. And because those people being addressed by the 10 are loveless, the law about one's parents only commands them to show proper and due respect for them.

...But IF the Holy Spirit of God dwells in someone, and he is being led by God's Spirit, then

(Rom. 8:14) he is a begotten son of God. But, at the time of Christ's return to earth in supreme power and glory to set up the KINGDOM OF GOD, restoring the GOVERNMENT OF GOD abolished by Lucifer, then all being filled and led by God's Spirit shall become BORN sons of God. The GOD FAMILY will then RULE ALL NATIONS with the GOVERNMENT OF GOD RESTORED! (pp. 50-51)

"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." – Romans 8:14

"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." – 1 John 3:2

Those in Christ now are the sons of God **now**. Why do you suppose the author insists on making a distinction between begotten and born? Because he paints the scenario that a begotten child of God is analogous to being like in the womb, not yet fully born, with the possibility of a spontaneous abortion. If we don't keep this law he speaks of now, in this life, we abort; we don't make it. In other words, it is a sword held over the heads of those who follow him in order to make the followers quietly compliant and suffer hardship and deprivation at the hands of the wolf in sheep's clothing.

HWA however mentions something else interesting, easily overlooked, seeing as the reader is distracted from it. The Holy Spirit leads the Christian. How? In what way? By directing their steps. Guiding them in the way they should go. HWA would have you believe the Holy Spirit defers to the law go guide them, and takes no real active role of His own.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, **hath** [possesses now] everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. – John 5:24:

One needs to understand the nature of the word, "verily" used here. It is a word of absolute assurance, and it is used twice.

But a false religious leader has no power over those that understand this. There must always be the threat and fear of losing out on salvation.

The Trinity doctrine limits God to a supposed three Persons. It DESTROYS the very gospel of Jesus Christ! His gospel is the good news of the now soon-coming KINGDOM OF GOD —the only hope of this world and its mixed-up mankind! (p. 51)

Preaching the gospel as being "the kingdom of God coming" leaves a lot of room for interpretation and misinterpretation. After the death and resurrection of Jesus, the gospel then took on its full meaning and implication. But the author doesn't preach the gospel the apostles taught. It was a gospel about salvation being found in Jesus Christ alone. Understanding fully what God is like does not change this fact one bit. In fact, all this line of reasoning does is discredit the Holy Spirit, limiting him to merely a "force" of God who does not do anything active when it comes to leading the believer. And, by denigrating the Holy Spirit like this, He is seen as an insufficient guide in the life of a Christian. The Christian then needs another guide, in the case of HWA, his truncated law derived in part from the old covenant law, given to, and required of ancient Israel.

This gospel without the law was anathema to many of the Jews the apostles preached to, including those Paul preached to. Their righteousness, therefore their salvation was bound with the law. So the Jews rejected the gospel. Can we believe the Jews rejected the fact that this Jesus was killed and was resurrected with credible witnesses to the events? It would have been a simple matter to examine the prophecies surrounding the birth, life, and death of the Messiah, but when it came to being a matter of belief in Him only for salvation, they did not believe. They had the law and Moses to save them. They had invested a lifetime of keeping the law, which for many of them had been elevated to the status of a god itself. Their "god" was the law. They served the law. They thought there was life to be had in the law.

Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. – John 5:39

Satan has deceived the entire world in regard to the very nature of WHO and WHAT God is

—as well as of Christ and the Holy Spirit. Also of the GOVERNMENT OF GOD, based on the spiritual LAW OF GOD. And further, of WHAT and WHY man is, what salvation is, how it is received, what is the true gospel, what and why the church is and what of the future! (p. 54)

Instead of writing about who and what God is, the author went off on a tangent, claiming nearly everything known as Christian is actually false Christianity, especially in regards to the gospel and the "government" and "law" of God. He claims a false gospel was preached in place of the true gospel. What he has done is make accusations without much solid support of facts.

You will find a prophecy of these two churches in the book of Revelation. In the 12th chapter is the prophecy of the true Church of God, greatly persecuted. Jesus called it "the little flock." In the 17th chapter you will find the prophecy of the counterfeit church—a very great church, named by God "Mystery, Babylon the great, the mother of harlots" (verse 5). (p. 55)

Jesus did not call the church in chapter 12 of Revelation a little flock. This comment is made in Luke 12:32 before there even was a church. He was referring to his disciples. (v.22)

Finally, in briefest summary: God is a FAMILY composed at present of the TWO Persons of John 1:1-4, but with many thousands, already begotten by God's Spirit, in God's true Church, soon to be born into that divine family at Christ's return to earth. Jesus Christ, by his resurrection, was BORN a divine Son of God (Rom. 1:4)—the first so born into the God family (Rom. 8:29). (p. 57)

"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." – John 1:14

"No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." – John 1:18

"In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him." – I John 4:9

The author makes a distinction between being "born" and being "begotten." He claims Jesus was "born" God's Son when he was born of Mary, yet Scripture says He was the only begotten of the Father. This may seem like a minor point, but it has great implications in the theology of HWA regarding the law. Jesus was the "only" uniquely born Son of God, and remains so.

One other thing, mentioned above matter-of-factly, which needs addressing... God's "true church" is the Christian collective. There is no such thing as a "true church corporate" and even HWA at times declared the "church" was the called out Christians. We are the branches, Jesus is the vine, and there is no church corporate in between.

God cannot change. Christians will not, and cannot, be born into a "God family."

"And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but **thou art the same**, and thy years shall not fail. But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool? Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" – Hebrews 1:12-14

"Neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the **children of God**, being the children of the resurrection." – Luke 20:36

"And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ"; – Romans 8:17

The author spent much time in this first chapter describing law, and attempting to claim that he feels what God is not (a Trinity).⁵

The Trinity is seen as the basic false doctrine of the false churches. What the author does not touch on, is what gospel was being introduced into the church in the first century that Paul was vehement enough over as to doubly

curse those who were preaching it, substituting their own false gospel, which was no gospel at all. (Galatians 1:8-9)

What is a false gospel that is no gospel at all? A gospel that is *not* good news. A gospel of law is bad news, for no one will be justified by the law (Galatians 3:11). The law condemns. It does not save.

Did the author uncover anything heretofore unknown regarding who and what God is? No. All the author was interested in was refuting the belief in the Trinity.

Footnotes for Chapter One:

1 God's love is also a holy love; He hates sin. But that is why He provided a Savior who died in our place while we were yet sinners. (See Romans 5:8)

2 Refer to: The Holy Trinity by H. A. Ironside (Uses key verses from both Old and New Testaments showing the Trinity is clearly taught in Scripture.)

3 Character was a word that HWA continually emphasized. The Scriptures describe the attributes and personality of God. "Character" is usually a word applied to humans.

4 "Government of God" translated into absolute obedience to whatever HWA taught. HWA's purpose for placing so much emphasis on "government" and "power" enabled him to use his own power and church government to control members.

5 "Contrary to popular misconception, Constantine did not have a vote, nor did he participate in the arguments for or against the Trinity. After the council of Nicaea, Constantine converted to Arianism. Soon after, anyone who opposed the Arian doctrine was exiled. ... It is commonly taught that Constantine instituted the Trinity doctrine into the church. History reveals that the opposite is true. Constantine was baptized as an Arian. The Arians were anti-Trinitarians. The change in the church was not as the result of the Council of Nicaea. At the council, the historic position of the church was affirmed and written into a creed. It was after this council that historic Christianity was exiled and replaced with the Arian heresy." (Excerpted from: Heresies Confronted by the Early Church, p. 5, by Eddie Snipes, Exchanged Life ministries)

Chapter Two - Mystery of Angels and Evil Spirits

One might wonder what could possibly be the mystery surrounding angels and evil spirits. The answer found between the lines is that there are evil spirits, and it is necessary to motivate you to fear falling into their clutches by embracing the "true church." In and of itself, there is no mystery about these beings in the Bible. The real mystery is how he, and all other cultic churches, use this contrived idea of there being a "true church corporate" thereby implying you can't truly be a Christian unless you are part of this "true church corporate." If you stop and think seriously about this matter, you will come to the conclusion there can be no such thing. There are only true Christians, and false ones. And, any church can have a mixture of the two, where the false ones are described in Scripture as being tares among the wheat.

In Ephesians 6 it is stated that our contentions and strivings are in fact not with other human people, but against "principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness [evil spirits] in high places." (p. 59)

Jesus pointed out something interesting in this regard. The Jews He contended with, being the religious leaders of that time, and dedicated to keeping the law and Sabbath, were declared by Jesus to be the children of the devil, and that they would do the works of their father. Keep that in mind... the children of the devil were big fans of the law. These powers HWA cites work through people; the children of the devil, and if you are not a child of God, you are, by default, a child of the devil.

The Bible explains: "If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world [Satan] hath blinded the minds of them which believe not" (II Cor. 4:3-4). Satan is the god of this world.

The time of UNDERSTANDING has come. (p. 59)

The true "mystery" that is never explained in this book that claims to reveal mysteries is just what the gospel truly is. Armstrong taught a gospel of the kingdom of God being the government of God, and his church being the government of God on earth "in embryo" with him the human head of that government "from the top down." Jesus Christ in Herbert Armstrong's theology was "merely the messenger" of the gospel, and that gospel was not about Christ. He could not have been more wrong. He was blinded to the true gospel in his quest for self-gratification and self-glorification. He who accused the world of being spiritually blind was the most blind himself.

If you take a look at II Corinthians chapter 3, you will see that there is a spiritual blindness associated with those who remain in the teachings and writings of Moses. What then did Moses teach and write in the "book of the law?"

If you want to know what the "true gospel" is, I would suggest you start with Acts chapter 10 and the narrative about Cornelius and company, who heard Peter speak to them, followed by them receiving the Holy Spirit. Read carefully, and see what Peter said, and just as importantly, what Peter did NOT say that HWA claims is related to his gospel.

On either side of God's throne was a super archangel, a cherub, whose wings stretched out covering the very throne of God. This signifies that these superior angels were involved in the very administration of the government of God over all of God's creation. They were aides, ministers, servants, assisting God. (p. 61)

Why does this have to signify that these archangels were involved in any administration of a government of God? It is pure conjecture, but suits the author's needs precisely in order to maintain the myth of "government within the church" as he saw fit.

In chapter 2, Jesus is described as being superior to the angels, having a better name than they, and a few other descriptions of Jesus are made. The author though falls far short of just who and what Jesus is.

And in chapter 3 we will show humans may be actually begotten as sons of God, as yet unborn. (p. 62)

Scripture claims "now we are the sons of God." (I John 3:1,2) It is not some future event; it is now. But in order

to keep people constantly off balance — always unsure regarding their standing "before God" and salvation, the author never addresses this concept; this "mystery" regarding true Christians. This is all about keeping people in doubt over their salvation status. For example I heard with my own ears HWA claim that if Christ were to return at that time he was speaking, less than half the church would be saved. Talk about phobia indoctrination!

[It is stated in both Genesis 1 and 2 that the earth was created at the same time as the entire physical universe. \(p. 62\)](#)

The author was fond of pointing out that the Bible is not a science book. Yet here again the author makes a declarative statement based upon taking a statement from the Bible in a hyper-literal way. Does Scripture say they were made at the same time, or "in the beginning?" Science has proven that the earth was made long after the universe came into being. Certain elements found on earth cannot exist unless and until produced through nuclear fusion within a star.

In the narrative of Chapter 2, describing the function of angels as ministering spirits, Armstrong makes the claim (p. 62) that his wife was warned by an angel to move their daughter Beverly when she was an infant moments before a picture frame fell where she was lying. Further on, he claims angelic intervention on his behalf on other occasions. This brings up some questions that need to be answered here.

Would false "prophets" make such claims that cannot be verified? Yes. As a matter of fact, they often do in order to gain a following. If the reader insists on taking the claims of Armstrong at face value, then no doubt the reader believes Joseph Smith received gold plates from an angel¹, and that the revelations given to Ellen G. White² are also valid.

Would a true minister of Christ make a claim that could not be proven or verified? They might, but their credibility would be injured as a result. One could always ask that person why more miracles are not being done with others present, why they are not able to wholesale heal people. To word this all another way, a true minister or Christian would think twice before making such an announcement, knowing that there is no way to verify the claim. It is interesting to note that many times when Jesus healed someone, He told them to stay quiet about it. False teachers can be counted on to trumpet any such miracles they can attest to that they were a part of.

On page 65, Armstrong makes the case that healings have two conditions:

[1\) we must keep his commandments and do those things that are pleasing in his sight \(I John 3:22\); and 2\) we must really BELIEVE \(Matt. 9:29\).](#)

He then goes on to qualify this, by claiming one may well be healed without having kept the commandments, yet once they understand they are to do so, then there is no more excuse not to. The flaw here is that, once a person is keeping the commandments, but does not receive healing, that person is now deemed to be lacking in faith; their belief is not deep enough. It would seem they need to "really, really, really believe."

The interesting question here then is, which is more important when it comes to healing, belief or obedience to a covenant law you and I were never a legal party to, and a covenant law that legally ended?

What Armstrong does not tell you, which he may well have been ignorant over, is that John makes a distinction between old covenant commandments, and the commandments of Jesus, using "nomos" to denote old covenant commandments, and "entole" for Jesus' commandments. Guess which one is used in the quote above?

Armstrong then makes the statement that the WCG was famous for:

[... and that SIN is the transgression of God's LAW. \(p. 65\)](#)

This is classic proof texting, with a smattering of a mis-translation thrown in for good measure. The Greek does not support this English translation, which translation originally was made in the earlier Bishops Bible, copied in the later Geneva Bible, ending up in the King James. What the Greek is stating is that all sin is iniquity, and iniquity is sin. The transgression of the law did not always result in sin, and even Jesus points this out in His teachings, stating that David and those with him ate the show-bread that was unlawful for him and the rest to eat, as well as the priests "profaning" the Sabbath at the temple through the strenuous work of carrying out the sacrifices on the Sabbath, also being blameless.

Jesus' declaration that it was, and therefore is LAWFUL to do good works on the Sabbath, as contrasted to evil

works, falls on deaf Sabbatarian ears, intent on claiming all sin is a case of transgressing that law, and that because of this interpretation, the fact that Jesus broke the Sabbath, as so stated emphatically by John in John 5:18, and Jesus' own admission of working on the Sabbath, is spun away so that what Scripture actually *does* say, is not believed. Jesus broke the Sabbath by working on the Sabbath. What He had was a "defense to prosecution" where He even cited similar examples that they, the religious leaders He was dealing with, agreed were exempted works.

Another fact that is ignored in Armstrong's theology is that Christians are dead to the law and dead to sin. Neither has control over a true Christian. (See: Romans 7:4; Galatians 2:19 along with Romans 6:2)

Toward the end of page 65, Armstrong relates a story about a man crippled with a bad spine and his wife who were Pentecostal. Armstrong was going to (so the story goes) pray for them and the man's healing, but concluded he could not do so, seeing as they were unwilling to "[obey God and comply with God's written conditions for healing.](#)"

What an incredible attitude! "I won't pray for your healing because you don't "obey" God. You are not worthy of God's healing. Any faith you might have is insufficient if you do not obey."

What if God had this attitude toward us? And is this the example we see in Scripture? Why was Naaman the Syrian healed? Did he "obey" God; keep the commandments? At the end of the narrative regarding Naaman, it is obvious that he did not, and was not going to, seeing as he would continue to go into a pagan temple with his king, and bow before a false god, contrary to the commandment.

Jesus the Christ says Naaman was healed as a matter of faith, and that there were many lepers in Israel at the time; Israelites who kept the Law. (Luke 4:27) So is healing truly dependent upon keeping the commandments, such as the Sabbath? Were all those who were healed by Jesus keeping the commandments, such as Gentiles He healed? Or are we going to insist on reading into Scripture what isn't there?

Along with this same thought of Armstrong's, he continues and says,

["God does not compromise with SIN." \(p. 66\)](#)

Then why did Jesus not condemn the woman caught in adultery? Why did he not condone her stoning, in accordance with the law? If Jesus and those there were so in touch with the law and keeping it, why didn't they "keep" it? What we see here is the typical black and white thinking Armstrong and other religious cult leaders are so famous for.

On page 66, Armstrong writes the following:

["At the next intersection, the steering wheel of the car automatically turned to the right. I felt the wheel turning. I resisted it. It kept turning right. Instantly I applied all my strength to counteract it, and keep steering straight ahead. My strength was of no avail. Some unseen force was turning that steering wheel against all my strength. The car had turned to the right into the street one block east of the home of the cripple."](#)

Are we to believe this event actually happened or is it likely this is a fabrication? As mentioned earlier, there is no way we can verify the account. We either take his word for it, or reject it due to skepticism.

What makes the story even less convincing is that an examination of a map of Foster Rd. that he refers to, where the car made a right hand turn one block after passing the intersection where the crippled man lived, then going a long block which only turned right with no left turn, does not exist the entire length of Foster where Foster heads in an easterly direction. If this section of Foster did exist at all, it would have to be where the 205 now cuts through Foster where Foster is southeast in its orientation. This is highly unlikely. There are no "long blocks" associated with this area off of Foster. Now, an advocate of HWA may well insist this is being picky, but it begs the question of those who support HWA, did any of them ever bother to do what I did; examine a map to see if this was verifiable? Or did they just blithely go along with what HWA said and wrote, without ever bothering to check up on things he claimed to be true?

On page 69, under the heading, "The Supreme Creative Accomplishment" Armstrong makes the case for God being unable by "fiat" to create perfect, holy, righteous character as is inherent in God. This character "must be developed." Yet he also makes the claim that this perfect character comes from God. (p. 70). More Orwellian doublespeak. More confusion fostered in the mind of those who would wish to understand God and His ways.

"It comes by yielding to God to instill HIS LAW (God's right way of life) within the entity who decides and wills." (p. 70)

This claim does not square well with Scripture. If we are talking about God placing His Spirit within a man, it is a matter of faith that this happens and not choosing to live by the law of commandments, given to Israel through Moses, via a covenant. The law God instills in those that believe is a law of love, written on the heart, and not a law that was engraven in stone. (See Hebrews 8) In Armstrong's theology, keeping the letter of the law is seen as the process for developing this character.³

It is also curious as to why he brings up this subject regarding man's character development in relation to God in a chapter that is supposed to be devoted to explaining the "mystery" of Angels and evil spirits.

"What was God's ultimate objective for the angels? Beyond question it is that which, now, because of angelic rebellion, has become the transcendent potential of humans!" (p. 70)

This is "beyond question?" What then of those angels who did not rebel? They are penalized because of the actions of the angels that did rebel?

Again we see an example of the author being emphatic when there is no basis for being emphatic.

"Angels were created with power of thought, of decision and of choice, else they have no individuality of character. Since sin is the transgression of God's law, these angels rebelled against God's law, the basis of God's government." (p. 72)

The author resorts to assumptions here, never truly defining "God's law" and continues with the assumption God is dealing with both angels and mankind through the mode of government. One must understand that Satan rebelled against God; not God's government; not God's law. Eve's sin, for example, helps to clarify all this. First, there was the decision to eat of the tree they were commanded not to partake of. She abandoned faith/belief in God and transferred her belief to the Serpent, believing what he had to say about the matter. Faith was violated first. But, if all sin is strictly the "transgression of the law" then motive is not a sin; what you think is not a sin, and you can take Matthew chapter 5 where Jesus talks about just thinking about a sinful act as being enough to send you packing off to hell, and rip those pages out of your Bible. Likewise, take a look at Genesis chapter 6. Why were people destroyed in the flood? Their thoughts and imaginations were evil continuously. The real problem with sin is your stony, wicked and deceitful heart, and all the law keeping in the world is not going to change it. Only God can change the heart; give you a "new heart of flesh" aka His Holy Spirit, which we have witnessed HWA denigrate.

The author then goes on to claim that "universal sin brings about universal destruction to the physical earth." It is a conclusion drawn from inference. He then goes on to claim the whole earth was destroyed with the flood of Noah's time. Was it truly destroyed? No, the narrative says the earth was covered over with water, resulting in the death of the rest of mankind and animal life. This hardly qualifies as the whole earth being "destroyed."

Armstrong uses the example of Sodom and Gomorrah to back his claim in this regard, yet Jesus mentioned that those of Sodom and Gomorrah would be those who would condemn those religious leaders who held to the law and who were to kill Jesus. Jerusalem was destroyed later in 70 A.D. and this put a final end to the religious system of the old covenant. You could hardly claim, though, that it came about as a result of breaking the law of that old covenant.

Finally, on page 73, Armstrong qualifies part of the mystery of Angels and evil spirits; they inhabited the earth prior to man. There's an earth-shaking revelation.

Again, on page 77, Armstrong makes the case that God cannot create righteous character. Else, he argues, Lucifer would not have sinned. But another possibility arises. Maybe God can create a being with perfect character, but given time, that being can become corrupt instead. Wouldn't the argument for having the power of choice and decision allow for this possibility for one created "perfectly?" What do the Scriptures say about Satan in this regard?

Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee. — Ezekiel 28:15

On page 77, Armstrong now introduces the concept of duality from his theology. Everything, it would seem, has duality. The angels, according to him, were to finish the creation of the earth. They were to "put the icing on the

cake" as it were. The reader is not given much further information on this "duality principle" but you can be sure it will come up later in his writings as an established fact, such as in the very next page.

A Scripture addressed to Israel (Isaiah 14) is given a duality in that it is to apply to "[not necessarily or exclusively the Israelis or Judah](#)". (p. 78) Much of what Armstrong taught was based in the Old Testament and that which applied to Israel and Judah, through dualism, is to apply to Christians as well. No proof or rationale is forthcoming from Armstrong regarding the validity of this dualism. It is to be "self-evident."

Pages 84-5:

[But continue: "Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity \[lawlessness\] was found in thee" \(Ezek. 28:15\)...](#)

[He had turned to lawlessness. He had been trained in the administration of perfect law and order.](#)

Armstrong insists that iniquity be defined as lawlessness, only. Yet the Hebrew word here translated iniquity does not relate to lawlessness; the breaking of a law. In Armstrong's theology however, all sin must be lawlessness; breaking "the" law. Otherwise, a large portion of his theology falls flat as a result. Iniquity was "in" Satan. It was now part of his mental make-up. HWA is trying to say here that people are sinners because they sin, and not the other way around, which is the truth of the matter. People sin because they are sinful, by nature.

On pages 85 and 86, Armstrong gives a scenario as to how the angels sinned. The parallel is obvious in that he is drawing a scenario as to how those who would oppose Armstrong would be perceived by those who remain blindly loyal to him. This scenario does not mesh with what Scripture says; it is conjecture. Scripture says Satan's heart was lifted up. He thought he was more than he really was. If we are willing to see it, this is exactly what Armstrong did. He lifted himself up. He exalted himself. He taught, and apparently ended up believing, he was God's only true representative on earth. He was "God's one true apostle." He demanded loyalty to him. Loyalty to him and "the church" was loyalty to the "Government of God"— and not God! One wonders if Satan might have used this same formula, claiming loyalty to him was loyalty to what God had ordained, what with Satan being the "ruler" of the world. The reader needs to observe that the theme is one of rebelling against God's government more so than rebelling against God.

In the concluding statements of Chapter 2, Armstrong makes his case for mankind having the potential to become members of the God family. He states this as an emphatic, which is a clue to the reader that it should not be taken emphatically. (p. 95) Christians are described in the Bible as being the sons of God. (John 1:12; Rom. 8:14; I John 3:1,2) This should not be confused with being like God as God is God.

Concluding comments on Chapter 2:

Armstrong hammers again on "God's law" and "God's government" being the central theme regarding angels and evil spirits. I am reminded of a man who was on a speech debate team, and regardless of the subject he was given to speak on, he always found a way to tie the subject in with water; the quality of water and the availability of water and the need for water. This is exactly the methodology used by Armstrong in his explanations of mysteries. It is the same tired old repetition of law and government and everything being defined and related to it.

Footnotes for Chapter Two:

1 Joseph Smith (1805-1844), founder of Mormons: The Latter-day Saints, claimed that an angel appeared to him in a vision and told him about a set of golden plates that contained the account of former inhabitants of North America and which were supposed to contain the "fullness of the everlasting gospel." (Richard Lee and Ed Hindson, *Angels of Deceit: The Masterminds Behind Religious Deceptions* (Harvest House Publishers, 1993) p. 230.

2 Ellen G. White (1827-1915), co-founder of the 7th-day Adventist Church (SDA), was said to have received approximately 2,000 visions and dreams. She was first a follower of [William Miller](#).

3 "Developing character" or "building character" is a phrase HWA liked to use, but it is not one found in the Bible. Instead, the Scriptures speak about how Christians are to love one another (John 13:34); abide in Christ (John 15:4); grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (2 Peter 3:18); walk in the Spirit (Gal. 5:16), etc.

Chapter Three - The Mystery of Man

They take the human brain apart and study it, yet the human mind remains a total mystery to even the most advanced psychologists. They do not know WHAT man is or WHY he came to be! That is the great Mystery Number 3 that has never been understood by humanity. (p. 96)

Quite a claim HWA makes here; that the human mind is a "total" mystery to them, even the most advanced psychologists.

Does even the most ardent supporter of HWA agree with him here? The human mind is totally and completely unknown to even psychologists? It is another attempt by HWA to discredit men of learning and intellect in favor of himself; a failed advertising man who didn't even finish high school. If the claim were not so ludicrous, we might find ourselves getting ill on this flight of fancy we are being taken on that is getting pretty bumpy.

Again, HWA makes the case for everyone being ignorant, including today's churches. Not any of these purveyors of higher education know why man is or what man is. In other words, he is blaming the wrong people. These are not academic questions but rather philosophical ones. Churches have answers for what and why man, but HWA is not interested here whether they agree or disagree with him. He is now only interested in discrediting them as a source of knowledge so that the reader accepts him as the source of this "true" knowledge.

Jesus Christ thanked God that the real truths are hidden from the wise and prudent and revealed to those who are babes in materialistic knowledge. (p. 98)

Just those who are babes when it comes to materialistic knowledge? What of those "wise and prudent" who teach religion? Was Jesus beset by the average man or those who were doctors of the law—the religious leaders and teachers?

The wise and prudent are those who have ego problems when it comes to the gospel. They cannot fathom that it is only a matter of faith in Jesus as the Christ that results in one's salvation. These wise and prudent are convinced there is more to it; that there has to be some requirements for them to comply with, some hoops to jump through in order to "prove" their dedication and obedience. The ego demands there be some performance on the part of the individual so that there is something to boast about: "Look what I have done." In the case of HWA and those who would follow him, it was a matter of obedience to the law; the "government" of God, with an emphasis on keeping and observing the seventh day Sabbath. (Read my critique of Herbert Armstrong's book, Which Day is the Christian Sabbath?)

On page 103, HWA makes the claim that, once mankind has been transformed into spirit beings (born into the divine family of God) man will then finish what the fallen angels were supposed to do in the first place.

...restoring the government of God to the earth, and then participating in the completion of the CREATION over the entire endless expanse of the UNIVERSE!

The context of Scripture for that time when there are no more flesh and blood people tells us that there is to be a new heavens and a new earth, with the old heavens and earth being done away with by God.

"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea." – Revelation 21:1

"And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands: They shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail." – Hebrews 1:10-12

"For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind." – Isaiah 65:17

"...the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make..." – Isaiah 66:22

On page 104, HWA claims that one of the proofs as to the true Church of God is the understanding (belief) that man is a mortal soul, and that man does not have an immortal soul.

Therefore the SOUL is physical, composed of matter, and can die. This is a TRUTH believed by very few denominations, and probably by no other religions—another PROOF that identifies the one true Church of God!

Is this truly a proof? Did Jesus declare that we would know who true Christians were based upon their doctrines and beliefs 1, or that they would demonstrate that they have love for one another?

"By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." – John 13:35

"Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love." – I John 4:7-8

Wouldn't arguments over doctrinal beliefs only serve to "prove" that those who were so hung up on doctrines were in actuality demonstrating a lack of love for others?

Now we come to another truth, so far as I know, exclusive to the one true Church. (p.104)

What then, is the function of this 'human' spirit? It is NOT a 'soul.' But, 1) it imparts the power of intellect— of thinking, and of MIND power, to the human brain; and 2) it is the very means God has instilled, making possible a personal relationship between human MAN and divine God. (p. 105)

Again we see an attempt to prove which church is the "one true church" not being a matter of having true love for one another, but based upon understanding what the spirit of man is and what it does or allows. In other words, the "one true church" is known by means of this modern day Gnosticism.

What makes it possible to have a personal relationship with God? God's Holy Spirit, within the believer, and not this Adamic Nature that people are born with, with the attendant heart of stone that is deceitful and desperately wicked.

HWA, speaking of philosophers and humanists, claims:

They are smugly ignorant and unaware of the TRUE VALUES and the incredible but real human potential.

Human life is at once of infinitesimally less value than they suppose, and at the same time of supremely greater potential than they know. (p. 105)

And because people were viewed by HWA as being of little worth, he treated them that way as a result. But what did Jesus Christ and Scripture have to say about the worth of those who belong to Christ?

"Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows." – Matthew 10:29-31

"How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand: when I awake, I am still with thee." – Psalm 139:17

God's children have value. They are, after all, the workmanship of God's hands.

"For we are his workmanship,..." – Ephesians 2:10

Because HWA perceived people as near worthless as human beings, it did not bother him to place heavy burdens on them that were impossible to bear.

What is the real truth concerning human worth? What is the real value of a human life? It is grossly overestimated in its own reality... (p. 106)

The Creator reveals and instructs in a highly coded book, the Holy Bible. Its profound message is opened to human understanding through the presence and in-dwelling of the

Holy Spirit injected 2 into the human mind that has surrendered and yielded completely to the revelation in belief and obedience. To such a one the TRUTH is made plain— wonderful beyond description. (p. 107)

If the reader is convinced the Bible is "a highly coded book" then plain and simple statements in it can easily be overlooked by the one seeking to decode this "mysterious book" that does not reveal knowledge and understanding in a strait forward manner. Is it truly one who has yielded completely to the revelation in belief and obedience? Is this "revelation" those things HWA now claims to reveal, which he insists must be believed and obeyed?

If we compare what HWA claims here to what Scripture "plainly" reveals, there is a conflict. Over and over in Scripture it states that it is belief; faith in Jesus as the Christ—the Messiah, the Savior of mankind that results in one receiving the Holy Spirit and attaining salvation³, and not "obedience" to a law; a covenant given to a particular people, devoid of God's Spirit. If the reader of this critique insists on siding with HWA on this issue, then I offer a simple exercise; a simple "decoding" of this book. Look up examples of the gospel being preached to people and those people receiving God's Spirit as a result. See if there is any reference in any of these Scriptures demanding obedience to the law. It isn't there. It is, however, an example of trying to chop up Scripture and put it back together again like some jigsaw puzzle designed by Picasso.

The Creator's book reveals, contrary to fallible humanist teaching, that man was made from the dust of the ground, and this dust thus becomes soul, mortal—like all vertebrates. Man has continued to accept the first lie in human history—Satan's lie to mother Eve that man is immortal and cannot die. (p. 108)

First off, what do humanists believe in regards to where man came from? Do they believe we are something other than from the dust of the earth? Were we brought here by little green men on spaceships? HWA is simply using every possible occasion to discredit all other sources of knowledge again.

Secondly, did Satan really tell Eve she was immortal? Or was it a case of saying that she would not die as a result of eating the fruit? Or was this lie a combination of truth and error? Were their eyes open to know good and evil like God?

It would appear that HWA would have us believe the only reason Eve ate the fruit is because she was told she would not die; that she was immortal. The narrative refutes this conclusion.

Continuing on page 108, HWA makes the case that animal brain is supplied with instinct, and not intellect. It may well be a minor point, but animals, such as apes and chimpanzees have demonstrated intellect. It may be that the difference between mankind and animals is not as great as we might like.

Through pages 109 and 110, HWA presents his version of the completion of man being when man receives the spirit of God, yet this completeness is actually not totally consummated until such time the individual becomes a spirit being; a member of the God family. He then interjects the statement that abortion is murder because it destroys one that otherwise would have the potential to become a member of the God family. The implication is clear. A Christian, even though in possession of God's Spirit, has the potential to abort; to lose out on salvation. Three guesses how this could happen within HWA's theology, and the first two guesses don't count.

Missing in his description of becoming complete with God's Spirit is how and why this happens. Nothing is mentioned concerning Jesus Christ and faith in Him.

Spirit beings, once a finished creation (as were the one third of the angels who became evil characters), *could not be changed!* Spirit, once its creation is completed, is constant and eternal— not subject to change. But physical matter is constantly *changing*. (p. 114)

HWA resorts to Orwellian doublespeak again. We are led to believe that, once these fallen angels had rebelled, their "creation" was now complete, and they were eternally set now as evil characters. This would mean that the angels that did not rebel are yet not complete in their creation!

What is at play here? HWA wishes to establish that God is constant and does not change, hence "His" laws do not change. The reader is being set up to accept that the laws given to Israel through Moses and a covenant are binding on all mankind for all time. The logic is sophistic at best, but effective with those who have not carefully

studied the subject and how the apostle Paul treats the law.

His Maker talked first to Adam and Eve—instructed them in the GOVERNMENT and spiritual LAW of God—though in Genesis 2 only the most condensed summary of God's instruction to them is revealed. (pp. 114-5)

The reader needs to see what is really being written here. HWA claims Adam and Eve were instructed in God's government and spiritual law, yet the context does not really support this conclusion. A red flag should be going up in the mind of the reader, but often does not in regards to those ensconced in the teachings of HWA. For those, this "discrepancy" does not even raise an eyebrow.

On page 116, HWA asks the question, what would have happened if Adam had taken of the tree of life, and answers his own question on the following page, claiming he would have received the Holy Spirit.

The reasoning and logic here is infantile. If Adam had known about a tree of life being in the garden, as well as the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, surely he would have partaken of that first tree at his earliest convenience. There is so much more to the narrative than HWA wishes to admit to. By partaking of that second tree, he was denied access to the first tree; the tree of life, which would have given eternal life.

Yet Adam and Eve partook of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and as a result, God said: "Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil." So now man was like God in this respect, but unlike God, was put out of the garden and not allowed to partake of the tree of life lest he exist forever in his sinful state. There is more to the story than is revealed here and at that time. A process is at work here, beyond the comprehension of HWA. Adam had no choice. He could not have partaken of that first tree whether literally or figuratively.

HWA then goes on to claim that Adam, and by extension all mankind, was cut off from God and is now mentally perverted, having opened up his mind to the deceptions of Satan. When this claim is examined in relation to what God said after Adam and Eve ate that fruit, we would be forced to conclude that knowing good from evil is a perversion.

HWA was always claiming that there really was no contest between God and Satan (as is depicted in mainstream Christianity), yet here we see him playing on the other side of the fence. There is a conflict and Satan just won this battle. Yet Satan was doing exactly what God knew he would do.

HWA then concludes that mankind has ever since been kidnapped and held captive by Satan. If anything though, mankind has been the captive of sin. Jesus came to rectify that issue.

God would have revealed to Adam God's way of life—which is God's spiritual law. That law is the way of outflowing love—but it would have been "the love of God... shed abroad in [human] hearts by the Holy [Spirit]" (Rom. 5:5). Human natural carnal love cannot fulfill God's holy law. (p. 118)

Poor Adam. If God only would have let him go ahead and eat of the fruit of the tree of life. God could have revealed to Adam His "spiritual law." But this isn't possible without the Holy Spirit being in a man, so HWA claims. Yet earlier he said God instructed him in His perfect law and government back on pages 114 and 115! But then he adds the caveat, "Human natural carnal love cannot fulfill God's holy law." The implication here is that, with God's Holy Spirit in you, you can keep this holy law. So a logical question follows. Those who claim to now have God's Holy Spirit within them are now enabled to keep this law perfectly, right? No? Not perfectly? Christians still sin? How can this be, seeing as God's Spirit is supposed to enable one to keep this law? Maybe... just maybe, there is something drastically wrong with this whole line of reasoning in the first place. Maybe the declarations of the apostle Paul stating Christians are not under the law, and dead to sin and the law has some validity after all.

But the law of God requires action and performance, and LOVE is the fulfilling of God's law (Rom. 13:10), and it can be fulfilled only by the love of and from God (Rom. 5:5)." (p. 118)

HWA cites this but did not completely comprehend it. To him, keeping the law fulfilled the law when it came to the works of the law. He taught that this love from God was the means to keeping the law, and was not fulfilled by love itself. It was the means to that end, and not the end in itself. What the reader needs to comprehend here is the

difference between “fulfilling” law and “keeping” law. Keeping the law has to do with complying with it, despite the wicked, deceitful heart. One can “keep” the law that says not to kill (murder) yet still harbor hatred for another; the spirit of murder. By contrast, “fulfilling” the law is done through love, where you have love even for an enemy.

HWA now gets back to the real theme of his book: God’s law and government, under the subheading "Rejecting God’s Law and Government" on page 119.

But instead Adam chose a different kind of knowledge—he took to HIMSELF the knowledge of good as well as evil. He relied wholly on himself—both for the KNOWLEDGE as well as power of performance of good as well as evil. He REJECTED reliance on God and chose the course of SELF-reliance. The only righteousness he could acquire was SELF-righteousness, which to God is like filthy rags. (p. 119)

HWA’s conclusions here ignore what was already covered, relating that this knowledge made Adam and Eve like God in that respect.

As far as self-righteousness is concerned, keeping the law is a form of self-righteousness, as it is a matter of a person trying to achieve righteousness through their own efforts, and not by God through faith.

"And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:" – Philippians 3:9

This comment regarding filthy rags is like what Paul said in regards to the righteousness found in keeping the law:

"Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ." – Philippians 3:6-7

The first man Adam had been given the opportunity to choose God’s government, to restore that government to the earth, and to unseat Satan from the throne of the earth. Since he failed, salvation cannot be opened to humanity generally, until Jesus Christ, the second Adam, has accomplished what the first Adam failed to do—namely, to unseat Satan and to sit on the throne of the earth, restoring the government of God to this earth. (p. 123)

HWA has been building on this theme without giving much scriptural support for it. Adam was not told to restore any government on earth. He was not informed he was to unseat Satan. It is not a matter of Adam’s sin that salvation could not be opened to humanity, generally or otherwise. Jesus’ accomplishment was not a matter of unseating Satan. It was a matter of Him coming in the flesh in order to be the sacrifice for mankind so that man could be saved through Him. Once man had the knowledge of good and evil, it was important to demonstrate to mankind that it was utterly impossible for mankind to live up to the standard of God. Only God could accomplish it. Yet mankind keeps trying to achieve this standard of God by his own efforts. Now HWA tries to do the same by claiming it is with God’s Spirit one is enabled to keep this law.

The closing of the tree of life from the human family marked the foundation of the present world still ruled invisibly by Satan. How, then, was God going to accomplish his purpose? At that very foundation of this world it was determined by God that the Word would be born on earth as the sacrificial lamb of God to redeem mankind from the rule of Satan the kidnapper (Rev.13:8) (p. 123)

God had this all planned out prior to the creation of the world, not afterward, such as a result of the sin of Adam:

"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began," – 2 Timothy 1:9

"In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began"; – Titus 1:2

HWA asks the question revolving around what if Adam had chosen the tree of life instead, then went on to paint that scenario. That option was never really available to Adam and Eve. It was essential to the overall development of man that he be tested with the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and it was not about law or government. It was about learning. Some refuse to learn the lessons of Scripture, basing their understanding on assumptions.

On page 124 HWA addresses what he considers to be part of the mystery of man: he does not have an immortal soul. This "mystery" really doesn't change the final outcome of things. Either one accepts Jesus as Savior or one does not. Those that do are saved; those who do not are condemned. (John 3:18)

HWA resorts to semantics to make his point, saying the penalty for sin is death, not considering what all that entails. Do all die? Yes. Did Jesus pay the penalty for sin? Yes. It isn't a matter of who dies or whether we die. What matters is who makes us alive for eternity in the kingdom of God, for flesh and blood cannot inherit it. Do all spirit beings inherit it? No, else the fallen angels would be in the kingdom also.

If you want to take this argument of semantics out to its logical conclusion, Jesus said: "whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?"⁴ (John 11:26) Did HWA die?

In HWA's diatribe against mainstream Christianity, he uses the terminology, "...you profess to 'accept Christ'," as one of the main tenants of Christianity he rejects. But it isn't a matter "accepting" Christ; it is a matter of believing Him.⁵ Where HWA and Scripture diverge is that Scripture claims it is faith in Jesus that results in salvation. HWA claims it is a matter of government and law. In this mix, you end up with the declaration it is Jesus who is the Savior, but that He saves via the law. This goes contrary to the "plain truth" of Scripture that salvation is dependent upon faith only in Jesus as the Christ and not Jesus and the law, or any other thing set up in men's minds as a saving force.

The most universal false teaching, believed by virtually all churches called Christianity, except the one and only true and original Church of God, is that ALL are automatically "lost" unless they profess Jesus Christ as Savior—and that now is the only day of "salvation."

But the truth is that those cut off from God are NOT YET JUDGED! (p. 127)

"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." – Romans 10:9-10

This covers the first claim of HWA above. Regarding the claim of mainstream being now is the only day of salvation, if you read this book carefully, HWA claims salvation comes after Jesus returns to rule the earth, with only a few exceptions. The claim that those cut off from God are not yet judged was covered earlier, but bears repeating.

"He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." – John 3:18

This flies in the face of what HWA claimed so emphatically above.

Note also HWA is making the back-hand claim there is only one true and original Church of God – his church. Now that He has died, a number of ministers of his church are vying for the title of being this "one true church" now, yet all teaching essentially the same thing, and claiming to be heir to HWA's one true church... so followers of HWA, which one is it? By what criteria to you make the decision?

Man does not realize that only a real repentance—turning from sin—and the living FAITH of Jesus Christ can FREE him from that penalty! Sin enslaves! It punishes!... (p. 130)

Repentance comes about as a result of turning to and believing in Jesus Christ—believing He is the Savior of mankind, and being in receipt of the Holy Spirit. HWA has it backwards, redefining repentance in a manner that one does not actually turn to God, but turns to the law so as to quit sinning. But again, why does man sin? Because he has a sinful nature, and not because there is a law. The law is what prescribed the death penalty for sin. Turning to the law does not change the sinful nature.

Anyone can rue or regret sin. But repentance is not "turning from sin" and the following passage of Scripture reveals this:

"When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life." – Acts 11:18

Gentiles were incapable of repentance previously. But now, repentance was "granted" to them.

Without offering any proof, HWA claims repentance is a matter of no longer committing sin, sin being defined as transgressing the law. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus points out that the law didn't really cut it when it came to defining what was truly sin for a man. But HWA only concluded that at that time, Jesus was "adding" the spirit of the law to the letter of the law, ignoring those points of Law that Jesus totally negated.

The narrative in Acts 10 concerning Cornelius shows him receiving the Holy Spirit because of what he heard and believed. The Holy Spirit is the seal of God's acceptance of a person, and that person who has God's Spirit has passed from death to life (1 John 3:14). Repentance was granted to him; not something he worked up on his own. Repentance is turning "to" God, and not turning "from" sin to the letter of the law whose purpose was to make sin "exceedingly sinful" for sin existed before the law. (See: Romans 7:13; Romans 5:13)

HWA insisted repentance was turning from sin; turning from breaking the law to keeping the law. This subtle redefining of repentance negates faith. You will not find one example in Scripture where repentance is in the context of sin; turning away from sin. Repentance is turning to God. Israel was constantly being warned by the prophets to return to God, and Jesus reiterated this message; "the time is at hand... repent (turn to God) and believe the gospel." (Mk. 1:15). When the Christian Jews in Acts chapter 11 heard that God had given His Holy Spirit to Gentiles they concluded: When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life. (Acts 11:18) Gentiles were now able to turn to God, which they were unable to do previously unless they underwent circumcision and were then brought under the law. Now they could turn to God through faith.

He [Satan] caused a violent controversy to flare up in the early months and years of the Church disputing whether the gospel to be proclaimed was the gospel OF Christ, or man's gospel ABOUT Christ. Satan caused the latter to win out, and in less than 20 years a false and counterfeit gospel ABOUT Christ was being proclaimed by all but the persecuted FEW who loyally remained as the small and persecuted true original Church of God.

These deceived "Christians" taught, and still teach, that now is the ONLY day of salvation, and that their counterfeit salvation of just "accepting" Jesus Christ, without the repentance of turning from sin and the obeying of God's law, would send people as "immortal souls" immediately to heaven upon death. (p.131)

HWA has now resorted to his "shotgun" approach to covering something that has no Biblical support, and it will take quite a bit here to cover all of it.

Let's break this down, and cover it point by point.

1. The gospel according to HWA is a gospel OF Christ, and not ABOUT Christ.
2. Deceived "Christians" teach now is the ONLY day of salvation.
3. A counterfeit gospel of salvation is teaching and "accepting" Jesus Christ without repentance, defined as turning from sin and obeying God's law.
4. This counterfeit gospel claims people go to heaven immediately upon death and are immortal souls in the process.

Now let's look at each of these.

1. The gospel according to HWA is a gospel OF Christ, and not ABOUT Christ.

The basis for HWA's interpretation of the gospel can be summed up in the words of Jesus Christ where he says, "repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand." (Mark 1:15)

In HWA's theology, to repent is to quit breaking the law which helped to define sin, but not entirely. It is a somewhat logical conclusion, but it is still flawed. HWA touches on some aspects of repentance, but was unable to put it all together. Repentance has to do with a change of heart; going from being motivated by "the flesh" and looking out for your own interests, to having love for even your enemies, and being concerned with the welfare of others. It was assumed this would happen through one who embraced the law, but the exact opposite actually occurred. The more one tried to apply the law in their lives, the less love they demonstrated toward others, and the more

condemnation was applied to others who did not keep the law. Jesus railed on some of the religious leaders who, as He said, traversed land and sea to make a proselyte, and once he was made, he became twice the child of hell than they were. And what did these religious leaders teach the proselyte? To be devoted to the law.

It must also be understood that when Jesus walked the earth, He later taught the people in parables, allegories and figurative language to enlist their interest, and those who wanted to understand would have their eyes opened; those who didn't want to understand couldn't.

"And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables:" – Mark 4:11

"For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance; but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath." – Matthew 13:12

For instance: Mark 12:32-34: "And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but he: And to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices. And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God. And no man after that durst ask him any question."

This scribe was described as being not far from the kingdom of God. Who was he standing near? Jesus.

Notice these other Scriptures that relate to the proximity of Jesus the Christ:

"But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you." – Matthew 12:28

"But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God." – Mark 10:14

"But if I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you." – Luke 11:20

"And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you." [NAS: "in your midst"] – Luke 17:20-21

To better understand then what the gospel is and is not, we need to examine how it is defined in Scripture.

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." – Romans 1:16

Believes what? Believes the law needs to be kept? Believes in the coming of the kingdom of God? The answer to this question is found in the writings of the apostles when they preached the gospel.

"In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,..." – Ephesians 1:13

In the example of Peter going to preach to Cornelius the Centurion in Acts 10, Cornelius and his household received the Holy Spirit at the preaching of Peter. In essence, the Spirit of God came upon them because of what they believed, and what Peter was preaching to them was the gospel.

"And He ordered us to preach to the people, and solemnly to testify that this is the One who has been appointed by God as Judge of the living and the dead. Of Him all the prophets bear witness that through His name everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins. While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who were listening to the message [word]." – Acts 10:42-4

An important questions then: Was this gospel message of Peter a message about Jesus or of/from Jesus?

Those indoctrinated into Armstrongism will have a hard time comprehending this, for they have been indoctrinated into HWA's particular spin on the gospel.

Was anything said by Peter in regards to the "kingdom of God?" If the false gospel is one about Jesus, and the true gospel is the kingdom of God, being the government of God with the requirement of keeping the law, then why did God grant Cornelius His Holy Spirit?

If the reader who holds to the teachings of HWA were to do a simple study of the apostles preaching the gospel, it would come out quickly that HWA was wrong. The New Testament is replete with examples of the gospel being about Jesus. One need only study and understand. What gets in the way is brought out in 2 Corinthians 3 where the apostle Paul points out that those who are ensconced in Moses and the law have a veil before their eyes, blinding them from seeing the true Christ, and by extension, the true gospel.

"But those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled. Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you:" – Acts 3:18-20

"Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities." Acts 4:33: "And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all." – Acts 3:26

2. Deceived "Christians" teach now is the ONLY day of salvation.

"(For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.)" – 2 Corinthians 6:2

Was Paul teaching a false gospel in regards to the "day" of salvation being "now?"

3. A counterfeit gospel of salvation is teaching and "accepting" Jesus Christ without repentance, defined as turning from sin and obeying God's law.

This is an example of re-defining the other person's belief or position. It is not a matter of "accepting" Jesus Christ, but rather believing He is whom He claims to be—the Savior of all those who come to him in faith. One "accepts" the calling of God to repentance; turning to God, in faith.

4. This counterfeit gospel claims people go to heaven immediately upon death and are immortal souls in the process.

This argument is a "red-herring." It is immaterial whether or not a Christian goes to heaven immediately upon death or later at a resurrection. The end result is the same. Those who have God's Spirit are said to already be in receipt of eternal life. 5 Those dead in Christ are described as being asleep. If a Christian has God's Spirit, it can be argued that person now has an "immortal soul" in the sense he or she is assured salvation. God's Spirit is immortal, is it not? And if His Spirit is coupled with your spirit, now an integral part of your being, then what are you when it comes to eternity? Part of the problem here is in how the Bible defines death as contrasted to how HWA defines it. Death is separation from God. A person is seen, now, as being dead in their sins and trespasses. Jesus said in relation to this theme:

And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? – John 11:26

Do you believe Jesus, or HWA? Nothing separates the believer from Christ Jesus, not even physical death.

HWA has claimed in a few places up to this point in chapter three (p. 132), that the tree of life is not to be available until the kingdom of God is ruling on the earth, and that just a few prophets and the few called-out people now have access to the Holy Spirit. If the reader can understand, Jesus IS that tree of life. He is available NOW to those who believe the gospel. If one's gospel is restricted solely to the kingdom of God and its physical establishment on the earth, God and His Christ are diminished. The King of this kingdom is relegated to the position of mere messenger. He becomes a figurehead, and the real power is wielded by the "true church" which is the one controlling the church. HWA in this scenario is the modern day "Shogun" with Jesus as the Emperor, but with no real power. It is the law and the government wherein lies the power; and the one that controls these wields that power.

Those who, as Jesus did, overcome Satan, their own selves and sin (the "called," that is) will sit with Christ in his throne when he comes to set up THE KINGDOM OF GOD and to

restore the GOVERNMENT OF GOD, which the former Lucifer rejected and ceased to administer! (p.132)

Can we, as Jesus did, overcome Satan, our own selves and sin? Absolutely not! Yet here is HWA making the claim that it is by our own effort these things are accomplished. If so, then there would be no need for Christ! Or do you think that it is a matter of Jesus forgiving your sins, so that you can start from square one and try all over again to overcome these things? Every time you stumble, you would require Jesus Christ to be sacrificed for you all over again. But you are saying to yourself what HWA said to you; that God's Spirit in you enables you to keep the law and not sin. Has that been your experience? You never sinned after your "conversion?" If God's Spirit was there to enable you to keep the law as it was meant to be kept, then you would be keeping it! But this is NOT the function of the Holy Spirit. Read and study what the Holy Spirit does for a person. Jesus came to do for us what we could never do for ourselves; make ourselves acceptable before God. We have to take on Christ's righteousness.

On page 133, HWA gives his formula for conversion: receiving God's Spirit.

And none can receive the Holy Spirit until that person 1) REPENTS— of his sins, his transgressions of God's law; and 2) has complete faith in Jesus Christ—relying on Christ—which includes BELIEVING Jesus Christ. I mean, believing what he says—his WORD, the Holy Bible! (p. 133)

This formula will produce an endless frustration for the would-be convert. That person will find themselves always falling short when it comes to keeping the law, and this in turn will be perceived as a lack of faith in Jesus Christ. The end result for HWA are people totally dependent upon him because of their self-perceived inability to measure up to this impossible standard instead of being dependent upon Jesus Christ and having our righteousness through Him.

Instead of producing Christians who are happy and fulfilled in Christ, they are miserable and constantly in fear of falling short; not qualifying for salvation. HWA went so far as to proclaim to "the church" years ago that only half of those in "the church" would be saved if Christ were to return at that time. One's salvation was totally and completely dependent upon one's performance in keeping the law. Somehow, through this formula, some would be saved, even though it was also taught no one, even with God's Spirit, could keep the law perfectly. So we see things taught that essentially are diametrically opposed to each other:

1. God's Spirit enables a Christian to keep the law.
2. Even with God's Spirit, one cannot keep the law perfectly, even though the requirement was to keep it perfectly.
3. Christ came to fill the law to the full, adding the spirit of the law to the letter, yet;
4. The law is somehow "dumbed down" for Christians for the sake of salvation, seeing as it cannot be kept perfectly, and;
5. Christians are never quite sure what level or degree he or she has to keep the law in order to "make it into the kingdom."

The result is unhappy Christians, never sure if they are pleasing to their "husband" Jesus Christ. (Rom. 7:4) There is no joy, only a constant dread of falling short. How would you like to be bound to a mate who you didn't know from day to day if he or she was mad at you, or displeased with your actions, and you always felt like you were never good enough? How long would that marriage last?

On page 133, HWA reiterates that salvation was not available until the crucifixion of Christ, therefore someone like Abel or Seth, even though they might have repented, could not have received the Spirit of God. Yet previous to this HWA commented that there were exceptions, such as the prophets. This is another case of preaching two different things in order to keep people off balance spiritually and dependent on him.

Chapter 3 summation:

The Mystery of Man was claimed to be that man is not or has not an immortal soul, and man's destiny is to be born into the God "family."

What was actually covered was the same theme found in the first two chapters; the kingdom of God being the government and law of God. Jesus Christ as king of the kingdom was given some lip service, but was still relegated to a minor role in this regard.

Footnotes for Chapter Three:

1 There are certain foundational doctrines (or teachings) of the Christian faith which have always been associated with Jesus Christ's church, such as: the Word becoming flesh through the incarnation, Jesus' virgin birth, His miracles and His bodily resurrection from the dead, which many liberal churches today deny, but this does mean they are to be emphasized by a lack of love.

2 Nowhere does the Bible say the Holy Spirit is "injected" into believers. Instead, it "is given" (Lk. 11:14; I Rom. 5:5; Thes. 4:8); "is received" (Jn. 7:39; Jn. 20:22; Acts 8:15, 17), "seals" (Eph. 1:13; 4:30); "fills" (Acts 2:4; Acts 13:9; Acts 13:52); "falls" (Acts 10:44; Acts 11:15); "comes" (Acts 19:6); "sent" (I Pet. 1:12) and many other verses. Read: *Is the Holy Spirit Only the Power of God?*

3 See ESN article: *How Do I Receive Eternal Life?*

4 The word "accept" also has the meaning of "to receive willingly"; "to recognize as true"; or to "believe." Therefore to say "I accept Christ" is not in error.

5 "Life begins at the moment a person accepts the Savior. Whosoever lives and believes in Jesus will never die because Jesus has already died for him. That is, he will never die a penal death for his sins. He will never be separated from God." (Thru the Bible With J. Vernon McGee, John 11:26, Vol. 4, p. 439)

Chapter Four - Mystery of Civilization

Chapter 4 purports to reveal the mystery of civilization. Again, as in previous chapters, there is no mystery. What we read are personal opinions and suppositions regarding civilizations made by the author, some of them utterly preposterous.

The author begins (again) by offering up his view of an advanced civilization unable to cope with or solve man's basic problems. If the reader is familiar with the movie, "The Music Man" you should get an idea of what is going on here. If you want to motivate people to some action, then you can do this by convincing them there is some problem that must needs be solved. In the movie, the main character, a band instrument salesman, convinces a small community they have a problem with their youth, and that the problem can be solved by starting a band for the kids, so as to occupy their time and liberate them from the evils that were just then taking hold of them, personified by a pool table.

HWA offers up his solution to all of man's woes: join his church and become a part of the solution, otherwise you remain a part of the problem, and God is going to wipe out the remnants of the problem at His return, that is to say, all those who manage to survive the Great Tribulation, which will include those who "knew the truth, but did not respond to it."

One of the most sure ways to believe false doctrines and concepts is to accept assumptions: Beliefs stated that sound reasonable and logical, but are still groundless, lacking spiritual support.

As earlier, HWA repeats statements he has made so as to drum them into the head of the reader. It has been said that if you repeat a lie often enough, people will believe it.

Here then are some of the claims HWA reiterates at the beginning of chapter 4:

God is reproducing Himself.

Man was placed on the earth to restore the government of God on earth.

(The implications of restoring law follows closely.)

Angels, and then man, were to "finish" the creation of the earth.

God gave the angels his government (and law) for this purpose (finish the earth). (pp.137,138)

Following this are blanket statements that are not entirely true.

Man has made ugly, polluted, defiled, profaned everything his hands have touched. He has polluted the air, befouled the water in the rivers, lakes and seas. He has deteriorated the land, denuded the forests, thus altering rainfall and causing the expansion of deserts. He has worn out the soil by neglecting to give it its sabbaths of rest every seven years. Man has built cities and allowed them to deteriorate into slums, filth and squalor. (p.139)

To those unfamiliar with cult tactics, this is commonly referred to as "black and white thinking" where everything is handled with absolutes; there are no shades of gray and everything has simplistic solutions (in this case, the author's solutions).

Man not only has ruined the earth he should have developed and improved, he has destroyed his own health by wrong living, and degraded and perverted his own spiritual character. (p.139)

People today (at least in the "developed" countries) are expected to live twice as long as their ancestors just 200 years ago. As far as any spiritual character, it could be argued that those who do not have God's Spirit have no spiritual character.

Those devoid of God's Spirit try to develop in themselves (and others) a moral sense of behavior that is often

hypocritical in nature ("do as I say, not as I do"). HWA was guilty of this. There is ample evidence that he had a 10 year incestuous relationship during his early ministry with his daughter Dorothy.

In these last days, according to biblical prophecy, knowledge, spiritual as well as material, was to be increased. The true church of God was to be set back on track, restoring the glorious knowledge of the faith once delivered to the saints in the days of the original apostles. (pp. 139-140)

Knowledge was prophesied to increase (Daniel 12:4). Whether this includes spiritual knowledge is debatable. What is definitely debatable is the claim that "the church" was going to be put back on the right path of faith as originally delivered to the saints that was extant during the apostolic era.

This view ignores much. First, there was quite a bit of misunderstanding even during the times of the apostles. A number of zealous Jews were going around after Paul telling Gentile converts they had to be circumcised and keep the law of Moses in order to be saved. Acts 15 concludes that Gentiles were not required to be circumcised or keep the law of Moses in order to be saved. This "minor" fact was lost on HWA, who insisted that the faith once delivered was a Judaistic Christianity bound in the Law.

Beginning on page 140, HWA asks what would have happened if Adam had taken of the tree of life, then claims the course of mankind would have been—"entirely different. Peace, happiness, joy, health and abundance would have spread over the earth."

HWA appears to be blind to the real story being related to us in Genesis. We are led to believe God didn't know that Adam would choose wrong. HWA does not understand that God knew ahead of time that Adam would choose the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and that His purpose and plan for mankind would come to fruition. (1 Peter 1:20; Matt. 25:34; Rev. 13:8)

Adam took to himself the knowledge of good as well as evil. But it was only human good, no higher than the carnal human level of the human spirit within him. He rejected reliance on God and relied on himself for knowledge, ability and power—all limited to the fleshly human plane, deceived and led by the perverted Satan. (p.141)

"And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." – Genesis 3:22-24

Adam, in taking of this tree¹, was now like God in respect to knowing good and evil. HWA claims "it was only human good..."

Thus the first created human disbelieved God, disobeyed God, chose to go HIS OWN WAY, do his own thing. Adam did it willingly, but not apparently willfully or with malicious intent. (p.141)

The reader needs to be reminded that it was God who made the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and placed it in the garden. It was God who allowed Satan to "interfere" and influence them to eat of that tree. Adam hardly went his own way, rather he chose another way, wherein he would learn a very valuable lesson; separation from God leads to a miserable life.²

Page 141 finishes up with a reiteration of HWA propaganda concerning man and Satan, and man choosing the way of "get" instead of God's way of "give." It was pointed out earlier, but bears repeating. God's way is not the way of "give" it is the way of love. Even evil people know how to "give" good gifts, for example.

"If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?" – Matthew 7:11

HWA used the same argument the detractors of Paul used; "if there is no law, then there is no sin, and we can do as we desire, for there is no penalty." In other words, "let us sin so that grace may abound."

But still, none could ever be born of God until God's holy and perfect spiritual character had been instilled within, by individual choice and proof by performance. (p.143)

HWA does not attempt here in the book to qualify what this "proof by performance" is. He has already done so, and will again, but at this point, he allows the reader to stew on this alone.

The Christian, under this scenario, chooses to repent (of breaking the law) and the proof of performance is in keeping the law. It is all so well packaged that it is easy for the unwary to accept as true. It sounds all too reasonable and logical. If breaking the law brought about condemnation and a penalty, then keeping the law must result in reward for doing so. But Scripture does not teach this. Scripture teaches that all the law could do was condemn the one who was trying to live by it. There is no reward for keeping it. There never was. Refraining from doing evil did not make one "good." Any righteousness found in the law is self-righteousness, and does not result in salvation. The law was designed to expose the nature of the man and his heart of stone.

"And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:" – Philippians 3:9

"I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain." – Galatians 2:21

"Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law." – Galatians 3:21

And so a world—a civilization—developed from the original Adam and Eve. When God shut off the tree of life, that act marked the foundation of the world. It was founded on rejection of God, on disobedience to God's law, which defines God's way of life. And all the evils, sorrows, pain and suffering in 6,000 years of civilization have resulted. (p.144)

With boring regularity, HWA continues to hammer on it being a violation of the law wherein man's condemnation results. God and the law are related as one. In the theology of HWA, the law actually takes on the personification of God. HWA insisted the law was eternal; yet it is only God who is eternal. He says people are to cease from sin and turn to the law as well as turn to God. Yet God is a "jealous God" and will not allow man to have any other gods "besides" Him, and HWA places the law beside God. This condition is spiritual idolatry, and what the apostle Paul brings out in Romans chapter 7 is that it is also spiritual adultery. You can only be bound to one; the law or Jesus Christ, and not both.

God had designed a 7,000-year master plan for accomplishing his tremendous purpose. (p.144)

Many of the claims made by HWA that he had personal revelations from God are nothing more than a collection of eclectic teachings of his contemporaries and those fringe groups that preceded him. For a more in-depth coverage of where HWA came up with many of his teachings of this nature, read Kelly's critical review of Mystery of the Ages located on this website. [Note: Refer to chapter three, pt. 2 and chapter six of Kelly's review (search for the word "Watchtower") and chapter two of the same review (search for the words "Latter Day Saints").]

The first 6,000 years were allotted to allow Satan to remain on earth's throne, and for humanity to learn the bitter lesson, through experience, that Satan's way of self-centeredness in opposition to God's law leads only to pain, suffering, anguish and death. (p.144)

Mankind was not shut off from the law, leading to pain, suffering, etc. Mankind was shut off from God. Mankind was driven away from the garden of Eden so as to remove him from the presence of the tree of life. The lesson learned is one of being separated from God.

There was no law then. The law, embodied in the Ten Commandments, did not come about until the children of Israel left Egypt, led by Moses, who was the mediator of that law. The law does not precede the mediator or those who were a party to the covenant containing the law. It is only through constant repetition that HWA tries to establish the law as having existed from the beginning.

The world, from its foundation, was cut off from God the Father. Jesus came to reconcile

repentant believers to the Father (Rom. 5:10). (p.145)

"For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." – Romans 5:10

There is no mention here of repentance being part of the equation. The other item that needs to be pointed out is that mankind was cut off from God; not God the Father without the Son.³ These may seem like minor points, but the consequences are far reaching. Repentant believers are not believers who repented of breaking the law. Their repentance is a result of belief and turning to God, thereby abandoning a lifestyle devoid of God; not turning to the law. Secondly, Jesus IS God and not some other entity separate from God. As is common in all cults, Jesus is diminished to some degree. Most all cults agree that it is Jesus who is the Savior, but that, somehow, He accomplishes this without being fully God.⁴ If the reader is well acquainted with the teachings of HWA, you may recall that HWA refers to Jesus as "merely" the messenger of the gospel, and that the gospel was not about HIM. If you believe this, I suggest you read the accounts of the gospel being preached by the apostles, notably Paul.

Even though by the closing off of the tree of life they were cut off from God the Father, the "Word" (the "Lord" or the "Eternal" in English) spoke to Cain and warned him. (p.145)

Mankind was indeed cut off from God, but not in the way or totality that HWA insists. So when he comes to a place where God is talking to Cain, and why would He, seeing as man was "cut off" from God, instead of altering his understanding regarding what it meant to be removed from God's salvation, he resorts to separating "God" from the "Word" in order to keep his appearance of being "infallible" in his theology.

Toward the end of page 145, HWA makes a reiteration of his teaching that humanity rejected God. This statement and so many like it, are made so matter-of-factly that they are easy to overlook. Did Adam and Eve truly believe or know that by partaking of that tree, they were rejecting God? Did they believe they were causing all of humanity that was to follow to be rejecting God also? The claim is far-fetched, and would be difficult to defend, so HWA doesn't even try to defend it, he just states it in passing in the hopes that no one will dwell on it long enough to see it for what it is: a claim without support. No matter though, for he knows that once people agree with his assumptions concerning repentance being related to the law, people's critical thinking skills are reduced to the point they will not critically examine such statements made in such a subtle manner as this. On the next page, he makes another "innocent" comment that:

Mankind was making progress in material development, even though growing further from God spiritually. (p. 146)

This implies there are degrees of spirituality. If one can grow further from God spiritually, then one can grow closer to God spiritually, and how do you suppose HWA claims one can do this, and yet still not be saved? In keeping the law. He taught if you don't keep the law well enough—and it is never qualified as to how much is enough—you would have grown closer spiritually, yet still insufficiently.

There was a population explosion, but humanity had turned to evil continually. (p.146)

At first glance, the reader has no problem with this statement, but watch how it plays out further on. (Hint: there is a real problem with the above statement)

On page 147, HWA makes the case that Noah was "perfect" in his generations because of his heredity! In other words, he was "unblemished" genetically.⁵

The subject matter of the chapter [Genesis 6] is the generations ancestry of Noah. (p.147)

The claim here is laughable. One need only read Genesis chapter 6, and pay attention to the context.

Instead of quoting HWA here on pages 147 and 148, it will be easier to summate. HWA claims that their evil was associated with "eating, drinking, and marrying—the evil was *in the manner*, and *in the extent* of eating, drinking and marrying."

The reader is being set up to accept HWA's artificial standards regarding these things. How much is too much eating? How much is too much drinking? And marriage? The reader, once he accepts this premise, will next find himself being told what is acceptable and what is not on this constantly sliding scale of acceptable human behavior

from the pulpit. It is but another tool used by HWA to control and manipulate people.

Marriage, under this scenario, can be a sticky proposition, but HWA manages. He claims the problem was one of interracial marriages.

It is amply evident that by the time of Noah there were at least the three primary or major racial strains on earth, the white, yellow and black, although interracial marriage produced many racial mixtures.

God does not reveal in the Bible the precise origin of the different races. It is evident that Adam and Eve were created white. (p.148)

There are a great many hurdles to be overcome in order to accept all of this. Notice though HWA again, when on shaky ground, resorts to emphatic statements: "It is amply evident..."

There is only one place these different races could have originated: with Adam and Eve. Careful though, for to go here is to avail one's self of critical thinking, and that is the one thing HWA cannot afford to have his readers resort to.

If the races came from Adam and Eve, then we are all one race with varying characteristics, some of which are color.

If there were at the time of Noah white, yellow, and black "races" and only Noah and his family were saved from the flood, then these other races would have been eliminated. No problem though, for HWA just goes ahead with another emphatic statement without any proof. He claims that the sons of Noah had interracial marriages! (p.149)

If the reader of this critique is familiar with cognitive dissonance, you will see that it is now overflowing.

If mankind was being destroyed because of interracial marriages, along with other indulgences, then why would God have allowed the sons of Noah and their wives to survive, seeing as they were part of the problem?

One last observation on this subject. How is it HWA knows it is "evident" Adam and Eve were white? How does he know Noah was of the "original" white strain? Why is it "evident" that Japheth married an oriental woman, or Ham a black woman? What evidence do we have that mankind had separated widely enough to create these variations prior to the flood? The insult to the injury here is HWA's remark on all this on page 149:

We know little more than stated above about civilized development prior to the Flood.

In other words, what HWA wrote was true, and we don't know much more of that time prior to the flood. Good thing for him, for it conveniently closes the door on looking for evidence to the contrary to his claims. It is as though he is saying, "You can't prove me wrong." But the burden of proof of a claim lies with the one making the claim, and not those who question it.

HWA closes the thought on this line of reasoning by declaring that we live in times now similar to those just prior to the flood, only this time God will intervene in the destruction of all mankind for the sake of the elect. Care to be part of the elect? Simple. Become a member of "God's true Church."

Do you remember that I mentioned at the beginning of this section that there was a problem with the statement made by HWA? He declared the reason for the destruction had to do with excesses of eating and drinking and interracial marriages. Even though he quoted the Scripture that states the problem was about mankind's thoughts and intents being evil continuously, he sidesteps it and focuses in on these other matters that, if they were abuses, they were because of the evil thoughts and intentions, and not the actions that followed. In the theology of HWA, it is a matter of avoiding sin by keeping the law. Even if one does comply with the law, it is no guarantee the person's thoughts and intentions are not evil. Those of us who have had the Armstrong experience have seen the results of this. Abusive and hateful people who were within the group that thought all they had to do was jump through the right hoops and they would have salvation as a result of keeping the law; proving their "performance" as HWA cited it. The heart of a man is not addressed.

On page 150, HWA cites C. Paul Meredith as an authority to back up his claims concerning the beginnings of city-states. What HWA fails to notify us of is who exactly C. Paul Meredith was. He was an HWA "yes man" who was

responsible for putting together much of the Ambassador College Bible Correspondence Course that was instrumental in getting many a person to join HWA's church. If C. Paul Meredith were of some other persuasion, we might well give him some credibility. Rather, he parrots the beliefs and teachings of HWA with his own embellishments, devoid of historical backing beyond speculation.

This thesis insists Nimrod gathered people together into cities, and organized them for the purpose of fighting "wild ferocious beasts." If we were to bother with critically evaluating this claim, one would wonder if there was another reason that he was called "a mighty hunter."⁶

The tower of Babylon then is seen as the people attempting to build said tower tall enough so as to remain above the flood waters should God decide to do a repeat of the flood, seeing as these people had no desire to obey God.

Did these people honestly believe they could build a tower higher than the mountains? Did they believe that all the people could assemble at the top in case of a flood? This is all fanciful speculation.

Seeing as the scenario of the people being one people with one language shortly after the flood would put a damper on HWA's teaching that the wives of Noah's sons were of other races, HWA just makes another declaration to the contrary:

These people were not only of one language, they were of three races or families—white, yellow and black. (p.151)

God intended to prevent racial intermarriages. But man has always wanted to violate God's laws, intentions and ways. (p.151)

Where is the command in Scripture that people are not to have "racial intermarriages?" But HWA covers himself here by using the term, "intentions." It was God's intent. When we start building our beliefs based upon intentions and assumptions, you can be sure error and heresy follow closely behind.

On page 154, HWA claims the "so-called Christian observances as Christmas, New Year's and Easter emerged from the false religious system she [Semiramis] developed."

Busy girl, this Semiramis. So because pagan religious festivals preceded these "Christian" observances, they are invalidated. The birth of Christ is historically unimportant, especially because we don't know the actual date. Easter is invalidated because the Bible does not command any observance of Christ's death and resurrection, even though it is an important event. Faith means nothing in this regard.

Yet there is a bit of hypocrisy here, for if we are going to avoid these celebrations because of their supposed pagan roots, then we should avoid all celebrations that have their supposed origination in pagan religious practices.

Parades using floats were a part of pagan religious practices in ancient Mesopotamia. So why did "the church" and Ambassador college participate in the Rose Bowl parade every year? The reason is quite simple: \$. Why then would HWA not want his followers to participate in the aforementioned practices? The same reason: \$. But then, the \$ wasn't coming in to HWA.

But no man really walked with God until Abraham. To Abraham, God made all the promises on which ultimate human salvation depends, as well as the material and economic prosperity that has come to the United States and the British. (pp.155-6)

The promises made to Abraham, because of his faith and not through law (Rom. 4:13,16) were materialistic in nature, and were to encompass all nations.

"Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?" – Genesis 18:18

"And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. " – Galatians 3:8

Chapter 4 closes with HWA proclaiming that all mankind would be destroyed unless God intervenes on behalf of His Church. He does not use the term "elect" as found in Scripture. (Rom. 8:33; I Peter 1:2, etc.) This is psychological

warfare HWA wages against the unwary and idealistic reader.

Footnotes for Chapter Four:

1 When the first Adam was tempted in the garden, he yielded and fell. When Christ, the last Adam, was tempted (through his humanity) in the wilderness, he was triumph and gained the victory over Satan.

2 God revealed the doctrine of redemption when he clothed Adam and Eve with the skins of animals. This pictured: "(1) Man must have adequate covering to approach God. You cannot come to God on the basis of your good works. You must come just as you are--a sinner. (2) Fig leaves are unacceptable; they are homemade. God does not take a homemade garment. (3) God must provide the covering. (4) The covering is only obtained through the death of the Lord Jesus." (Thru the Bible With J. Vernon McGee, Vol. 1, p. 27-28)

3 The Scriptures affirm that Jesus, in His incarnation, was God. This is thoroughly expounded on in the book Jesus Christ IS God! by Robert L. Sumner.

4 HWA (and the Worldwide Church of God) taught that Jesus "could have sinned" because he was only human like us, but since he kept close to God, He didn't sin. This is an outright denial of Jesus' deity and being the God-Man in His virgin birth. "Ancient Jewish Rabbis in their mystic writings, as well as the Prophets in the Old Testament, believed that Messiah, the Redeemer of Israel, is none other but God." (The Evangelical Christian, Toronto, Canada, December, 1950; "The Pre-Existent Christ is God" by M. Ziedman; pp. 578-579.)

5 HWA shows his racism at this point in the book. The Scripture cited has nothing to do with hereditary or genes. "[Noah] was righteous in his moral relations to God; blameless in his character and conduct. His righteousness and integrity were manifested in his walking with God." (Unger's Bible Dictionary, p. 797)

6 Many Bible commentators and scholars agree that the Scripture referring to Nimrod being a mighty hunter (Gen. 10:8-9) does not refer to his hunting abilities; i. e., "...he was a violent invader of his neighbours' rights and properties, and a persecutor of innocent men, carrying all before him, and endeavouring to make all his own by force and violence"; (Matthew Henry's Commentary) "He was a hunter of men's souls--that is the thought in this passage." (J. Vernon McGee, Vol. 1, p. 51).

Chapter Five - Mystery of Israel

Chapter 5 is purported to reveal the mystery of Israel. HWA begins by making an interesting claim with consequences that are going to be difficult for him to overcome. Difficult, but not "impossible."

Did it ever occur to you that the Holy Bible is the book of and concerning only that one people Israel? (p.159)

If this were true, then how does he manage to declare that the law given to Israel through covenant applies to all mankind for all time—mankind who were never a party to that covenant?

The "shocker" and revelation HWA then claims to reveal, "not recorded or understood by historians" and "totally unrealized today by Christianity—even Judaism" is that Israel (the northern kingdom) are not Jews; not Jewish. Someone needs to inform Christianity and Judaism about this; this which is plainly stated in scripture. But HWA is not interested really in what they know and don't know, all he is interested here is in maintaining in the minds of his readers that he is the source of spiritual knowledge and no one else.

HWA brings up Abraham, and claims it was a matter of obedience that Abraham was called and worked with. This is true, but the problem is in how we define "obedience." What we need to keep in mind is that God said to Abraham, "do this, and I will do thus and such for you." Abraham "obeyed" because he believed God.

HWA then goes on to quote from his booklet, The United States and Britain in Prophecy concerning Abraham, and that Abraham didn't stop and try to argue and reason with God over what was commanded of him. The analogy here is obvious; anyone who would dare argue and question HWA is obviously faithless, and by extension arguing with God. To question what is commanded is to question God. Yet Christians are supposed to prove all things. So the reader now will try to psychologically accommodate this by proving HWA is right.

On page 163 there is a carrot dangled before the reader:

They know that God gave the spiritual promise to Abraham of Christ to be born as Abraham's descendant—and that salvation comes to us through Christ. But—and this will sound unbelievable, yet it is true—almost no one knows what that salvation is; what are the promises of salvation we may receive through Christ; how we may receive them, or when—incredible though that sounds! but that truth belongs in another chapter.

Chapter subjects didn't stop HWA from covering subjects not related to those chapters earlier or even later in this book, so why does he not do so now? Is he trying to perk up one's interest here? He's setting up the reader to question what they presently believe concerning salvation so as to better sell them on his version of salvation. What you might have believed is now put in question.

On pages 164-165 HWA claims that the promises to Abraham were "conditional upon Abraham's obedience and perfect living." This is drawn from the statement by God that Abraham was to "walk before me, and be thou perfect."

Earlier, HWA stated that Noah was "perfect" in his generation(s) because he was of pure stock genetically. Now we are to believe Abraham was perfect in obedience and living. If this were true, then wouldn't it stand to reason that any infraction of obedience; any infraction of his being "perfect," and these promises would be voided? Both the books of Romans and Galatians show that the promises made to Abraham had nothing to do with obedience to law; it was a matter of faith.¹ This needs to be kept in mind when one reads through this book further.

The other interesting thing developing here is that HWA now contrasts "race" and "grace." The promises to Abraham's physical offspring is a promise of race. The promises of those not of Abraham's offspring are equated with grace. It is a tragic use of the word grace, and has dire consequences to the unwary reader.

On page 166, HWA jumps ahead to the children of Israel, captive in Egypt, and the calling of Moses. HWA claims Moses was called because of his training and experience having been reared a prince of Egypt. In other words, God could not have called just anybody, and in like manner HWA sets himself up as having been chosen by God because of his background and training. It is but an application of what he claims as the duality of scripture, but in

actuality it is just HWA trying to equate himself in like manner to Biblical characters. He also equates himself as being like the apostle Paul.

One point to notice here. The probability is that these people [Israel] were all—or nearly all—of the white racial strain, unchanged since creation. (p.166)

Any thinking person should be able to discern for themselves what is going on. HWA tries to make a case for Abraham and his progeny remaining racially pure, and ignores examples contrary to this concept that come up occasionally. For example, Joseph's son's mother was Egyptian. (Genesis 41:45)

Through Moses, God put to them his proposition. If they would obey his laws of HIS GOVERNMENT, he would prosper them, and make them the wealthiest and most powerful of nations. (p.168)

There is a bit of exaggeration here. This is not what God promised. God never identifies this law as the laws of His government. It is a law given to Israel in order to govern them as a people, and a carnal people at that. What we see here is HWA slowly playing up the law so he can convince the reader he is required to live by this law also. If this view of the author were indeed correct, Israel would not have had a choice in the matter. There would have been no "proposition."

HWA now makes several "theocratic decrees" without any substantiation. This method is common with him when there is no real Biblical support. When several ideas are so lumped together, it is easy to overlook them and accept them at face value.

Up to that time, mankind had been denied spiritual knowledge and fulfillment from God. God now decided to give them [ancient Israel] knowledge of his law—his kind of government—*his way of life!* (p.169)

Without missing a beat, HWA then continues on and declares the opposite of this statement in the same paragraph.

He was going to prove to the world that without his Holy Spirit their minds were incapable of receiving and utilizing such knowledge of the TRUE WAYS OF LIFE. He was going to demonstrate to them that the mind of MAN, with its one spirit, and without the addition of God's Holy Spirit, could not have spiritual discernment—could not cure the evils that were besetting humanity. The nation Israel would be his guinea pig to demonstrate that fact.

Unless the reader has already experienced life under HWA, it is unlikely one would see where this is leading. The logic flow HWA uses is pretty convincing given the information so far, assuming the reader of HWA's book has no real background in the Scriptures.

However convincing the above statement sounds, it is flawed because it begins with a false premise, and the premise is cleverly disguised. The premise is that the law of God cannot be kept without having first the Spirit of God. Other premises are also given as fact, yet they too are false premises, such as this law being that which governs the kingdom of God.

So God entered into a covenant with them, making them HIS NATION. It also represented a MARRIAGE covenant, with Israel the wife, promising obedience to her husband—GOD. It was the physical type of the yet-to-come spiritual NEW COVENANT. (p.169)

In HWA's booklet, Which Day is the Christian Sabbath he makes this statement:

The Old Covenant between God and the children of Israel made at Mt. Sinai imposed upon the people certain terms and conditions to be performed: the obedience to the Ten Commandments. It promised the reward of making Israel a nation "above all people." The promises were purely national, and material, for this world. The New Covenant is founded on better promises (Heb. 8:6), which consist of "eternal inheritance" (Heb. 9:15).

Once a covenant is signed, sealed, or ratified—confirmed—it cannot be added to (Gal. 3:15). Anything appearing beneath the signature is not legally any part of the covenant. You read of the actual making of the Old Covenant, and sealing it with blood, in Exodus 24:6-8. And

notice (verse 8), it concludes with the words "the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you." It was then already made—completed.

By his own admission, once a covenant has been put in force, it cannot be altered. But through theological sleight of hand, he tries to add Christians to this covenant. It is legally impossible, but most people today do not understand the law when it comes to covenants as contracts.

HWA also points out that this covenant is a marriage covenant between God and Israel. What is never addressed by HWA is that God, in the personage of Jesus Christ died, thus ending this marriage covenant. You cannot be bound to one who has died. In this regard and how it relates to the law, read Romans chapter 7.

Here was a people of almost clear racial strain, and the God believing heredity of Abraham, Isaac and Israel. (p.169)

First off, can we make this claim of the children of Israel, that they were believing? Not according to Hebrews chapters 3 and 4. So what does heredity really have to do with it? And what of the implication that those who are not of this strain? Are they therefore by nature unbelieving?

So again HWA makes the claim that the children of Israel were superior because of their heredity. But what does God say?

"The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: But because the LORD loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the LORD brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt." – Deuteronomy 7:7-8

On page 171, HWA goes into a diatribe against those who, as he terms it, "profess to receive Christ" and are utterly deceived. They have "accepted a false conversion."

A few things to consider here then: HWA insists this is part of the "born again" movement, which creates a red-herring argument, and—

HWA does not inform his readers what a "genuine" conversion is. Having been previously ensconced in the teachings of HWA, I know how easily one can concur with HWA's logic here, but it is terribly flawed. What I and many others failed to do was to put such statements above to the test. HWA connects belief / faith in Jesus with being born again. The "born again" concept becomes the straw-man here that he knocks down in order to discredit salvation being a matter of faith in Jesus Christ, worded here as "accepting Jesus." HWA never really attempts to define "born again" and "accepting Jesus." Rather, he lets inference take the lead. So allow me to fill in the gaps.

If baptism represents a "burial" with Christ— Romans 6:3: "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?"

Then what is coming up out of the water but a new birth, spiritual in nature?

"Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." – Romans 6:4

But HWA would argue that one is not raised a spirit being, therefore there is no true "born again" condition. The reader needs to be reminded that HWA is not the authority for determining the meaning of "born again."² He claimed that one was not born again until the return of Jesus Christ and the resurrection associated with it. What he did not admit to is how one being in receipt of God's Spirit has eternal life now. This concept would only hurt his system of control.

Another relevant scripture:

"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." – John 1:12-13:

In HWA's preoccupation with race, he makes a statement about the lineage of Jesus that is untrue:

Jesus Christ was born of the tribe of Judah, and it was necessary that HE be of the original pure racial strain, even as Noah was. (p.173)

This overlooks Ruth, who was a Moabite, being part of Jesus' ancestry. (Ruth 1:4)

An interesting declaration by HWA:

But—nevertheless, the Old Covenant with Israel at Sinai was a type and forerunner of the NEW COVENANT. It will be made with the New Testament CHURCH, which is the spiritual Israel and Judah (Jer. 31:31; Heb. 8:6, 10). (pp. 173-4)

This is a good example of how it pays to read the context of scriptures quoted by HWA. Verse 32 of Jeremiah chapter 31 informs the reader that the New Covenant would not be like the old covenant. Verse 9 of Hebrews chapter 8 makes the same declaration which HWA also does not cite. These two references totally disagree with his conclusion that the old covenant is a "forerunner" of the New.

There is one more little item here, easily overlooked. HWA tells us the N.T. Church is "spiritual Israel and Judah." This is failing to separate Israel from the Church.

He declares in the next paragraph that the prophets of the Old Testament are a part of the foundation of the church, and seeing as they were under the administration of the Old, and now the foundation of the Church, it must be the same covenant the church is bound to. No wonder the author of an exposé on HWA refers to his teachings as "a tangled web." (David Robinson)

To Israel God gave his statutes and judgments, as well as his spiritual law. But these perfect laws did not, without God's Holy Spirit, solve the nation's problems! (p. 175)

Again, HWA claims the law given to Israel was a spiritual law, and that they were perfect laws.

"For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second." – Hebrews 8:7

HWA tried to claim that the fault lay with the people, and not the covenant, by citing the next verse that has other possible renderings than the one he insists on. But the statement here is plain; the first covenant was not without fault. For instance, much of what Jesus states in Matthew 5 through 7 shows how the law was limited, and Jesus' comments on divorce found in Matthew 19 show that the easy divorce was a concession in the law made by Moses because they were "hard hearted"; i.e., carnal.

Love is the fulfilling of the law, but not human love. It requires the "love of GOD... shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy [Spirit]" (Rom. 5:5). (p.175)

Scripture does state that the love that fulfills the law is the love of God shed in men's hearts. If you truly love someone, you are not going to do anything to harm that person. What is really being said here, and HWA has been working up to so far, is that it is the Spirit of God in man that enables him to keep the law Israel was unable to keep. He hasn't come out and said it just yet. First he has to build his argument and rationale carefully and slowly, sneaking up on the person's natural defenses that otherwise would more carefully examine his claim. What is being redefined here is what it means to fulfill the law. To HWA, keeping the law is what fulfills it through this law that he will redefine as the Mosaic law. But keeping the law and fulfilling the law are two very different things.

For instance, he quoted in this line of reasoning Romans 2:13 which states that not the hearers of the law are justified but the doers of the law. If one were not careful, they would accept this at face value, ignoring the context and the many other scriptures that plainly say no man will be justified by the works of the law (i.e., Gal. 2:16, Gal. 3:24, Rom. 3:28, Rom. 5:1, etc.3). Paul points out, following his statement, that there are none who are doers of the law, ergo none will in turn be so justified as a result.

HWA further builds his rationale at the end of page 175:

God revealed his law to the nation Israel. One of the purposes of this nation was to prove by human experience that man without the Spirit of God within him cannot be righteous.

There are two ways this can be viewed: Either God's righteousness is imputed to the one He gives His Spirit to, or righteousness comes about by keeping the law perfectly because of the aid of God's Spirit. Seeing as he begins his statement with the law, that is the one he will concentrate on.

On page 176, HWA quotes from his booklet, *The United States and Britain in Prophecy*⁴ and makes this claim:

In this central prophecy, God reaffirmed the birthright promise—but with conditions—for those of Moses' day!

The "birthright" promise was just that; a promise. There were no conditions to that promise. Those promises that were made to Abraham were not contingent upon Abraham's offspring meeting any conditions. HWA again resorts to making a statement or claim in an almost innocent manner, but again offers no proof of his claim, he just makes the statement as though it were a self-evident truth. Unfortunately, all too often his followers do not question what he says, even though they were led to believe they were proving all things and properly questioning all things.

The conditions for the children of Israel had to do with remaining in the land and being blessed in the land. If they were to later be expelled from the land, it did not necessarily void the promises God made to Abraham, which promises were not based on law and had nothing to do with law, but were unconditional.⁵

"For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect: Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression. Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all." – Romans 4:13-16

*Notice carefully that two of the Ten Commandments are mentioned for emphasis. These were the main *test commandments!* they were the test of obedience, and of faith in and loyalty to God. (p.176)*

HWA then quotes Leviticus 26:1-2, where the prohibition against making or having idols is made, followed by the statement by God, "Ye shall keep my sabbaths..." where HWA does not finish the passage of verse two which states "...and reverence my sanctuary: I am the LORD."

So there are really three "commandments" here, and not two. But the third is counter-productive to what HWA is trying to accomplish. He wants to emphasize the sabbath observance with obedience and faith and loyalty... to God? If it is all about faith and obedience and loyalty, then shouldn't "we" (seeing as HWA makes the case that if commandments were good enough for Israel, they are good enough for us) be reverencing God's sanctuary?

But this observation might get the reader to start thinking critically about the point HWA is trying to convey. Maybe these commandments were just for Israel! For how else is one going to reverence God's sanctuary?

Page 180:

He [Jeroboam] changed the holy festivals of the seventh month to the eighth month. There is strong indication that he also changed the seventh day Sabbath to Sunday, the first day of the week.

In his booklet, *Which day is the Christian Sabbath*, HWA says matter-of-factly Jeroboam made this change. Now, years later, he tempers the claim, but still insists it being highly likely. However, there is absolutely no proof or indication of this. It is wishful thinking, and it is typical of those who insist on maintaining their pet beliefs, reading them into scripture. (Read ESN article: *Did Jeroboam Change the Sabbath to Sunday?*)

Another little known fact I should point out here is that at this time in the history of Israel, there was no day called "Sunday." This whole line of reasoning ignores the calendar in use by Israel and how it worked, where the week was reset every new moon. Part of HWA's theology rests heavily upon the assumption that the Sabbath has been kept as a multiple of 7 days since the time of Creation Week.

From the booklet, *Which Day is the Christian Sabbath*:

So immediately Jeroboam set up two great idols for his people to worship. He ordered the fall Festivals (including the annual Sabbaths) to be observed in the eighth month, at a place in the north of his choosing— instead of in the seventh month, and at Jerusalem as God ordered (I Kings 12:28-32). Through the rule of 19 kings and nine successive dynasties, the ten-tribed house of Israel continued in the basic twin sins of Jeroboam— idolatry and Sabbath-breaking. Several of the kings added other evil and sinful practices.

HWA makes the case that the promises to Israel were withheld for 2520 years, until circa 1800, at which time the United States and England came to the foreground of world dominance. He sees this as a proof that the U.S. and England are Israel, yet Scripture says Israel was to be dispersed among the nations:

"For, lo, I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth." – Amos 9:9

What needs to be considered is the prophesy that all nations were to be blessed through Abraham, and Abraham is the father of the faithful (Rom. 4:16; Gal. 3:9), not the faithless, and Israel was faithless.

HWA uses backward logic in order to conclude England and the U.S. are Israel. These two countries are/were more powerful and wealthy than any nation before, therefore they must be Israel. A few simple questions dispels this notion: Is everyone in America and England of the same ethnic origination? No. Are we to believe Israel, in being scattered throughout the nations, never intermarried with other peoples; that they remained "racially pure" in the process?

HWA then spends much verbiage to persuade the reader that America and the UK are Israel⁵, and like Israel, are destined for a great fall due to their continued disobedience. It is an easy thing to prophesy doom and gloom. In the early 1960's, HWA was claiming that the world then was plunging into a time of famine. Today, the population is easily double what it was in the early 1960's, and more people are better fed than ever before.

All this doom and gloom is to come on the British and American peoples because of their lawlessness.

God has a financial law for our nations. He says 10 percent of the increase, or gross income of each one of us, belongs to God for his purposes and his work. (p.190)

No where in all of Scripture are people commanded to give a tithe of their gross income, or any of their income for that matter. Tithes were levied on agricultural products and livestock; never wages. Furthermore, these tithes were for the Levites. Only through deceit does HWA claim a tithe is required for God's purposes and God's work. It would seem therefore God is unable to accomplish anything without proper funding. But, did you notice something odd here in what he wrote? "Ten percent of the "increase" or gross..." The gross does not reflect the increase. The increase is what is left after costs are subtracted. The "increase" is the net gain. Greedy little man....

After the year 1800 we prospered because of Abraham's obedience and God's unbreakable promises to him. But now having received such individual and national prosperity, we sin by stealing from God. That has brought our nations under a curse. We have won our last war. Nothing but troubles now lie ahead until we repent. (p.191)

It seems strange that God would fulfill the promises made to Abraham only to remove them a short time later for the same reason they were withheld to begin with. And note if you will, the false prophesy regarding having won our last war...

There is no shortage of prophets of doom, and all civilizations eventually have their downfall. Question is, will the downfall of the U.S. and the U.K. be a result of people not keeping the Sabbath and not tithing, or might there be other reasons? And what of other countries? Are they to remain unscathed through all this, or do they too partake of these disasters destined for Israel?

"Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience:" – Colossians 3:5-6

Nothing here about violating the Sabbath or neglecting to send your tithes to HWA.

Footnotes for Chapter Six:

1 The covenant God made with Abraham was an unconditional covenant.

2 "The Greek word for 'again' is anothēn which means 'from above.' ... One today is born from above by the use of water, which is the Word of God, and the Spirit, the Holy Spirit, making it real to the heart." (Thru the Bible With J. Vernon McGee, Vol. 4, pp. 383, 384)

3 A brief explanation of James 2:14-28 is covered in our article on the law and salvation.

4 HWA taught British-Israelism. See ESN article: British-Israelism--True or False?

5 "While any particular generation of Israel could enjoy its provisions only if they were obedient and could, for instance, be led off into captivity if they were disobedient, the ultimate purpose of God to bless Israel, to reveal Himself through Israel, to provide redemption through Israel, and to bring Israel into the Promised Land is absolutely certain because it depends upon God's sovereign power and will rather than man's." (Lewis Sperry Chafer, Major Bible Themes, p. 143)

Chapter Six - Mystery of the Church

This is the longest chapter in the book and, not surprisingly, it is but another venue for putting forth HWA's false gospel of the "Government of God" and being ruled through the law. This government¹ is to be administered by those who are called now and are presently a part of the church. The unspoken implication is obvious: Become a member of "the church," and you, too, can be one of the top rulers in this government. Refuse this calling, and you will have your part in the Great Tribulation and probably end up in the lake of fire.

Without coming right out and saying it, HWA plays into people's desire to be someone special. He dangles a carrot under the nose, convincing people that God is calling them now to be a part of His "government." "God is not calling the bulk of mankind now, therefore it is a special honor to be called now." The human ego finds it difficult to refuse this special offer, seeing as it is a rare event (a pearl of great price), by its very nature. Any suspicion an individual might have regarding HWA and his teaching is overcome by the person's desire to benefit from what he teaches. How can he be deceiving people when he is just trying to help them get into God's Kingdom? The one reading HWA's literature believes he/she is being careful and checking out what he says, but by not being well versed in the Scriptures, it is easy to be misled, despite one's attempts to the contrary. People want to believe God is calling them, and subconsciously do not want to risk losing out on this opportunity. It's hard to turn down God.

Chapter 6 is highly convoluted. So much is thrown at the reader now, that it becomes difficult to keep up with it all. The average person is not going to check up on every little detail; they will usually say to themselves that what they don't understand now they will deal with later. But once convinced HWA is right, these issues are put on the back burner... the way back burner. The initiate believes the answers will come later when they better understand.

It is going to be difficult to deal with every issue as they are brought up by HWA in this chapter. To do so would require a book twice as large as the one being critiqued. It is therefore necessary to leave some minor issues unaddressed in order to focus on the more flagrant abuses of Scripture. All too often, the adherents of HWA will also focus on the relatively minor issues that are critiqued, and believing they have found the critic in error on some minor point, feel justified to ignore the greater issues. Such is the mindset, as I have been there and done that when reading material critical of HWA myself in the past.

On page 198, HWA claims the true gospel (his gospel) has not been preached "to the world" since about A.D. 50 until 1953, when he began preaching his gospel worldwide via radio and TV.

This would have to mean that the apostles who lived beyond A.D. 50 "dropped the ball" and quit preaching the gospel, as well as those who were taught the gospel by the apostles. Does his claim sound reasonable?

What we need to do here is compare HWA's gospel with what we find written in the N.T. Scriptures.

In trying to decipher what HWA claims is a false gospel he says this on page 200:

Few may realize it, but Jesus made no attempt to gain converts or to invite people to "give their hearts to him" or to "accept him as their personal savior."

Can we afford to "reject" Jesus as personal savior? What we see here is typical of HWA's methodology. He tries to define what others believe and teach in order to serve his own purpose while knocking down the straw-man arguments he creates.

Apparently HWA never read Matthew the 11th chapter, where Jesus was talking to a multitude of people (verse 7) and declares in verses 28-30:

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

Or how about this?

"In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, 'If any man thirst,

let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.' (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)" (John 7:37-39)

Then there is the matter of what the apostles preached to the masses after the resurrection. All the reader need do is read the narratives where they preach the gospel, and see whether they speak of believing Jesus is the Savior, or whether they preached the kingdom of God being the government of God. References are made to the kingdom of God, but not in specifics. The focus is always concerning the king of the kingdom.

Those within HWA's group were taught to reject the "give your heart to the Lord" concept. The human heart was defined as being "desperately wicked" (Jeremiah 17:9) and why then would Jesus want it? What is really important here is the understanding that the human heart *is* desperately wicked, and as such people need to come to the realization that there is absolutely nothing the individual can do to change it. Only God can give us a new heart.

"And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh:" – Ezekiel 11:19

HWA taught people must keep the law; prove their dedication through "performancy," as he worded it. It is man trying to change his "heart" through his own efforts. The lesson that is supposed to be learned by the example of Israel, was that they were given the law, and were never able to live up to it. HWA tried to convince people that with God's Spirit; with a changed heart, people would then be able to keep this law as God intended. But the problem was never one of the law; it was always a problem with the heart—a heart of unbelief; a heart full of sin.

If it were about the law and keeping the law, enabled by God's Spirit, then let the one with God's Spirit who keeps the law perfectly come forward and make himself or herself known.

The problem is sin, not the law that helps define sin, or makes sin "utterly sinful." (Romans 7:13) There was sin before there was that law.

"(For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law." – Romans 5:13

"Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound:" – Romans 5:20

[On the contrary, he "called out"—drafted—twelve disciples. \(p. 200\)](#)

This follows immediately after the quote above where he says Jesus "made no attempt to gain converts." HWA claims the disciples were "drafted" by Jesus. One who is drafted has no choice in the matter. In like manner HWA infers that those who are reading what he has written are being drafted. You don't have a say in the matter. If you reject your draft call, you are AWOL from God and will suffer the consequences of your rejection of Him.

Those recovering from their involvement within the WCG and its offshoots usually have a desire to understand how it was they were duped into joining his group. There are resources on this website to help people understand how this process occurred. To sum it up simply, they were exposed to some of the slickest advertising and persuasion techniques known. Who doesn't want to live forever? Who doesn't want to feel important? Who wouldn't want to believe they are being specially called (drafted) by God at a time they are led to believe the vast majority of mankind is not? Who would want to refuse such a special honor or incur the wrath of God for rejecting such a calling?

[These twelve were students being taught by Jesus the true gospel of the kingdom of God. \(p. 200\)](#)

The twelve were called to learn from Jesus, and be witnesses to the things that transpired concerning Jesus' life, death and resurrection. When Jesus preached the gospel of the kingdom of God to the masses, He did so in parables in order to obscure the meaning.² Even Jesus' disciples did not understand the parables, couched in the terminology of the kingdom of God. By sticking with that which obscured the gospel, HWA was able to manipulate it into the kingdom of God being the government of God, with the law an integral part of that government.

If this is indeed the true gospel, then where are the examples in Scripture stating it as such? They are not there. We

are led to believe the writers of the New Testament events and epistles neglected somehow to mention the "true" gospel. "It is "hid" from those who are lost..."

At this point in the book, HWA again recaps his main points in order to drum them into the head of the reader.

1. God is Creator and Supreme Ruler.
2. Lucifer was placed on earth's throne to administer the government of God.
3. God's government is based upon God's law.
4. Lucifer rebelled against this law.
5. Adam was created to replace Satan.
6. Adam rebelled against this law.
7. Satan still rules today.
8. Jesus Christ was to conquer and replace Satan on earth's throne.
9. Jesus Christ conquered Satan, but has not replaced him yet.
10. Jesus came to ransom mankind, kidnapped by Satan.

Nowhere in Scripture do we find Lucifer was put here to administer the "government" of God. The earth is referred to as God's (Exodus 9:29; Psalm 24:1), and the demon's first habitation. Point three is an assumption necessary for building the theology of legalism. Again, there is no evidence to support the claim that Lucifer rebelled against God's law. He rebelled against God; he attempted to overthrow God. (Isaiah 14:13-14)

According to HWA, God creates a vastly inferior and naïve being known as Adam to replace a crafty evil being who can pluck Adam like a grape. Adam rejects the "government" and "way" of God, and loses out on this opportunity to replace Satan. Jesus comes in the flesh and resists Satan. He fulfills those prophecies concerning His life, death, and resurrection, but for some unexplained reason, does not replace Satan, even though "qualified" now. A logical question would be, what qualified Lucifer to head the earth in the first place then? Jesus demonstrates His love for his creation by dying for those who will believe that through Him one has eternal life (I John 5:13). His church has been redeemed (I Peter 1:18), but not necessarily in the manner implied by HWA.

HWA then asks, "[Now, why the Church?](#)" (p. 201), then sidesteps the question, and brings up the seven annual festivals, claiming they were ordained forever. He says they picture God's plan of redemption. But do they really?

Passover points to Jesus and His sacrifice for all mankind.

Unleavened bread points to the sincerity and truth found in Jesus.

The Day of Pentecost points to the Holy Spirit baptizing believers into the body of Christ.

The Feast of Trumpets heralds Jesus return to the earth.

The Day of Atonement; Jesus' reconciliation of mankind to himself.

The Feast of Tabernacles; the paradise of Jesus ruling over the earth.

The Last Great Day³; Jesus spoke of the Holy Spirit to be given to those that thirst, come to Him and believe on Him.

One notices that HWA doesn't consider Firstfruits (Leviticus 23:9-14) as the third feast day since he tells us the day of Pentecost was "originally called Feast of Firstfruits."⁴ Where in the Bible does it say Pentecost was "originally" called Feast of Firstfruits? More than picturing God's plan of redemption, these feast days all point to one person, Jesus, the Savior of mankind. Remember that HWA was fond of saying Jesus was merely the "messenger of the gospel" and that the gospel was not about Jesus. HWA could not have been more wrong. All the law and prophets pointed to him. All the sacrifices, even the Sabbaths, pointed to Him. He is the reality and all these things were the

shadows of that reality.

"Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me."
--John 5:39:

The facts of the Church's origin and its purpose are revealed in that book of mystery—the Holy Bible. To make clear that mystery may well require more pages in this book than any other subject. (p. 203)

Which would take longer to "prove," a false teaching or a true one? Truth tends to be simple and easy to understand. If one is trying to explain a teaching that is not true, it is going to take a lot more effort!

On page 208, HWA begins to build up slowly to his theology concerning the church by stating innocently enough through a paraphrase of Jesus as saying, "I will call out of Satan's world disciples, to grow into the altogether new and different world, which will be God's kingdom." This is extrapolated from Matthew 16:18: "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock⁵ I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Is this what this passage says? No. Do the followers of HWA take him to task for this misrepresentation of Scripture? No. Why? Because his followers bought into his claim that he has been given special revelations from God, hence his interpretations are true.

Almost no one has understood that the gospel could not be proclaimed to the world, nor could God's called congregation of people have the Holy Spirit UNTIL Jesus a) had qualified by overcoming Satan, and b) had been glorified after ascension to heaven (John 7:37-39). (pp. 208-209)

John 7:37-39 makes no mention of Jesus overcoming Satan or qualifying to rule the world: "In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)"

Prior to Jesus coming to the world in the flesh, the prophets were given God's Spirit. (II Peter 1:21) So these conditions of HWA are artificial and unbiblical. For instance, Scripture says Christians have overcome the wicked one (Satan). (I John 2:13-14) This would mean that every Christian has qualified to "rule the earth," if we buy into HWA's reasoning.

Does HWA really answer the logical question here though? Why could the gospel not be preached "to the world" prior to his ascension? Ancient Israel had the gospel preached to them, and Jesus preached the gospel from the beginning of his ministry.

"The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them." – Matthew 11:5

"For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it." – Hebrews 4:2

As far as the rest of the world, it is but an assumption that the gospel could not be preached or known to the Gentile nations.

At the outset of this chapter we are primarily concerned with four basic questions that constitute a mystery that needs to be revealed with understanding:

1. Who and what is Christ? Why did he appear on earth?
2. What is and why was the Church brought into existence?
3. What is the gospel the Church is commissioned to proclaim?
4. What is the history of the Church? Why is Christianity so different today than at its inception in the first century? (p. 206)

The mystery of the Church now gets broken down into 4 "sub-mysteries." (Actually, 8, but who's counting?)

So this we know. Whatever the Church is, it belongs to GOD and its name is the CHURCH OF GOD. Jesus Christ is its founder, and he its living HEAD. (p. 208)

There is a bit of backward thinking going on here. For instance, suppose the church of God were called in Scripture, the Church of the Eternal. Would HWA have called His organization, "Worldwide Church of the Eternal" or something else? It should also be pointed out that HWA defines the church as the "ekklesia," the "called out" of God, but then insists that this ecclesia is his group, and no other group is the ekklesia. One is not an "ekklesia" unless a part of the group. It is double-talk. If one were to critically evaluate these concepts, they are incompatible. Jesus the Christ places those who believe the gospel within his "church," because they now possess the Holy Spirit. They are positionally along side of Jesus. They collectively are the bride of Christ. The organization they happen to attend, or not attend, is irrelevant to this context. What we really see here is the creation of more cognitive dissonance that tends to make one abandon critical thinking when you might expect critical thinking would be triggered instead.

HWA also makes the point that the church is called "Church of God" twelve times in Scripture, as though to set this up as proof that "his church" is the same Church of God. What is overlooked are those Scriptures that state something else:

"Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church:" – Colossians 1:24:

The church is the body of Christ; Christ's body; Christ's church.

"So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another." – Romans 12:5:

"Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular." – 1 Corinthians 12:27

And actually, his gospel—the message sent by him from God—was the good news of the kingdom of God. And the kingdom of God, as we shall see, is to be the restoration of the government of God over the earth and the ousting of Satan from that throne. (p. 209)

As pointed out before, if this indeed is the gospel, we should find it espoused by the apostles in their writings and in the book of Acts. Good luck. What we find being preached by the apostles is not a gospel of the kingdom being the government of God administered through the law, but rather about Jesus and faith in Him, to which HWA declared no one was going to be saved by just believing in Jesus.

HWA says "we shall see" that this is the gospel. It has yet to be "proven," but he has stated it over and over that this is the gospel, and he will continue to do so without showing any solid Biblical evidence.

Next, what nearly all "Christians," including theologians, did not realize: Jesus was born to become a KING! (p. 209)

Was Jesus born to "become" a King? No. Jesus was born a King; the King of Kings:

"Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him." – Matthew 2:1-2

Why would HWA want people to believe Jesus was born to *become* a king instead of having been born a king? Because he wants to make the case that Jesus first had to qualify, even as he insists we have to qualify to become born sons of God. The language he uses here is worthy of a false prophet for all its subtlety and deceit.

As he hung on the cross, helpless, a soldier stabbed him with a spear, he screamed in pain (Matt. 27:50, Moffatt) and then died. He did this because you and I have transgressed the law of God. (pp. 212-213)

Matthew 27:50 does not say Jesus was stabbed with a spear and screamed in pain as a result. It says "Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost" which means he dismissed His spirit. Luke 23:46 also says, "And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, 'Father, into thy hands I commend

my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost [spirit]."

Jesus was stabbed with a spear after his death, where water and blood came forth, proving He was indeed dead.

Neither did Jesus suffer death because of people having specifically transgressed the law. Sin was in the world before the law. (Romans 5:13) Jesus was paying that penalty of sin for all mankind, including those not under the law.

HWA tried to make the case that this law of God is eternal and has existed from the beginning. It's not possible, despite what rationale is used to declare otherwise.

Jesus' gospel was not only good news—it was an announcement or good news proclamation of the coming kingdom of God. What a tragedy that a "traditional Christianity" has forsaken and lost that vital and glorious gospel message and substituted their own gospel about the person of Christ. (p. 213)

Down through the centuries many Christians have believed that Jesus is to return and set up His kingdom. What Christian has not read and repeated the sample prayer that states, "Thy kingdom come?"

Allow me to rephrase the statement of HWA above from another perspective:

What a tragedy that men come along, agreeing that Jesus is indeed the Christ, then lead men away from Christ to another gospel; a gospel in which there is no salvation. No one is going to be saved through believing God is going to set up a government of God on earth. Salvation comes through Christ Jesus. Salvation comes through faith in Him, and not faith in a kingdom or government. Salvation is through the King of this kingdom, and no one enters by any other way save through Jesus the Christ.

HWA goes on to make his case for the gospel being the government of God, with those called out now qualifying for positions within that government. And how do these people qualify? Through keeping the law. It's a nice, neat package deal, and up front it sounds all so logical and flawless. I would remind the reader of the words of Jesus Himself wherein He said that if it were possible, even the elect would be deceived. (Matthew 24:24; Mark 13:22) The false gospel(s) would be that good and that convincing.

But it isn't all about government. It's about family. Christians are the bride of Christ and not the subjects of Christ. The "covenant" Christians today are a part of is a marriage covenant, and not a governmental-contractual covenant, such as the old covenant. Christians are "bound" to Christ; not "bound" to the law and Christ.

"Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God."
– Romans 7:4:

HWA would argue that to do away with the law in this case is to do away with sin, thereby allowing people to do whatever they wish with impunity. Anarchy would result. People would be killing one another with abandon. But let's put this thought into its proper perspective and take the thought out to its logical conclusion.

We are talking about those whom God has given the Holy Spirit. They are now led by His Spirit, and not their own lusts and desires. So are we to conclude, as HWA insists, that Christians would now go about creating mayhem? But this is the implication HWA would have us believe. Christians, with the very Spirit of God within them, are going to run amuck without the law. They cannot be trusted to live and act without the restraints of the law. Their faith and love for God and fellow man count as nothing in this scenario. Under this scenario, love does not fulfill the law. (Romans 13:10)

Following this, HWA insists the Holy Spirit has been withheld from mankind since the sin of Adam. Then he declares that the prophets and the Church being given God's Spirit is an "exception."

There are no "exceptions" when it comes to the truth. If one believes they have found an exception, what they have really found is something that disproves the belief.

Now because HWA perceives that God is "no respecter of persons" when it comes to salvation (p.215), he concludes God is not calling people at this time "merely" for salvation. But what does Scripture say?

"As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion." – Romans 9:13-15

Continuing:

"Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?" – Romans 9:18-24

Satan has blinded the minds of the unbelieving world and the professing traditional "Christianity" to this fact" (II Cor. 4:4) (p. 216)

This "fact" being those called now are to be trained under persecution in order to aid Christ in the conversion of all mankind later. It sounds so noble. But what, exactly, does II Cor. 4:4 say? "In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."

Believe not what? That God is going to set up a government ruled through law, or a gospel of Christ? And who is Christ? The image of God. And what shines on them? The knowledge of a government ruled through law, or Christ?

HWA then finishes the thought by once again discrediting Christians and their scholarly theologians as to the "purposes for which Jesus Christ came."

He begins anew, making claims without backing them up.

Jesus did not come to save Satan's world while Satan sits on the throne deceiving them. (p. 216)

What is the undeclared implication? Jesus cannot call people now? He can only call a chosen few? Didn't Jesus overcome Satan? Didn't Jesus say he overcame the world?

Following this, HWA again reiterates what he insists is what is the unfolding of the plan of God. I will refrain from reiterating his reiteration.

But first, it was imperative that he QUALIFY to replace Satan and set up the KINGDOM OF GOD, by overcoming the devil. (p. 217)

I have lost count of how many times HWA has declared this. I'll ask this question for the reader to muse over. Did HWA read Adolph Hitler's Mein Kampf? Yes, he did. [Read: HWA studied Hitler's book Mein Kampf] What did Hitler teach? Repeat a lie often enough, and people will begin to believe it.

The reader might question why HWA constantly hammers on this theme that Jesus had to qualify to replace Satan. To put it simply, he uses every venue he can think of to justify law keeping. Jesus had to "qualify," and therefore we have to "qualify," and this qualifying does not end until the day one dies. It's all work and no rest in Christ.

On page 220, HWA uses the analogy of a wealthy person paying a large debt for a friend so that his friend does not end up in prison. He correctly points out that the friend is freed from the debt and its penalty. But HWA does not follow this analogy when it comes to Christ paying the debt for mankind. He insists people are still obligated to continue to pay the debt themselves by keeping the law, thereby placing themselves back in debt to that law, which would require Christ to pay the debt again and again.

Before Jesus (the "WORD"), now the Son of God, could found his CHURCH, those called out of the world into that CHURCH must be freed from the supreme DEATH PENALTY, so that they might inherit ETERNAL LIFE!

Notice the subtle declaration, "might" inherit eternal life. Why "might?" Those who are of the ekklesia are promised eternal life. Can God lie? Is HWA here misrepresenting God? Absolutely.

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." – John 10:27-28

"And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life." – 1 John 2:25

"And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." --1 John 5:11

"These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God." – 1 John 5:13

Qualifying for rulership and eternal life, along with Jesus qualifying by overcoming Satan, etc. is a major theme in this chapter. For instance, HWA references Jesus qualifying to replace Satan eight times in this chapter, and that people qualify to rule with Christ six times. One interesting statement of qualifying is that he claims Jesus had to even qualify to become our Savior!

It should be reiterated that Christians do not qualify or overcome by keeping the law. Christians overcome through Christ by faith.

"For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." – 1 John 5:4

The surname Peter had for centuries been a surname or TITLE, designating a religious LEADER, HEAD or HEADQUARTERS. Peter was the first or chief apostle. (p. 221)

No proof is offered for this conclusion that the name Peter stood for these things. But HWA is trying now to establish in the reader's mind that God works through one man, or one head man. If this were true, then Jesus would not have called twelve to be apostles.

The assumption that Peter was the head or chief apostle is refuted in Acts 15 where the events of the conference show James to be of equal or more influence than Peter.

These Jewish rulers and their chief priests completely MISunderstood Jesus' gospel message. They knew he proclaimed a government that would take over and rule ALL NATIONS of the earth. What they MISunderstood was the TIME and NATURE of that kingdom of God. (p. 223)

Seeing as Jesus talked to them in parables, couched in the terminology of the kingdom of God, no wonder they misunderstood. They had certain expectations of the Messiah, and this Jesus did not fit the bill. They wanted a government all right, where the Romans would be overthrown and Israel to be pre-eminent among the nations. They "embraced" the kingdom and rejected the king, even as HWA embraces the kingdom, insisting it's all about government and rulership, but then diminishes the king, whom he calls merely the "messenger of the gospel" and that the gospel is not about the king.

Traditional Christianity has really never understood this basic reason for Pharisaical opposition and persecution of Jesus. (p. 223)

That which "traditional Christianity" understands is rejected out-of-hand by HWA. The Pharisees were big on the law, and thought their salvation was in keeping it, and not faith in Jesus without the law. The law became their god, thus they rejected Jesus.

"Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." – John 5:39

Even the Pharisees understood the Scriptures that said one was to love God with their whole being and their neighbor as themselves, but they hated Jesus. Those who were the most fervent in keeping the law were the worst transgressors of it.

Nicodemus said, "Rabbi, we know [we Pharisees know] that thou art a teacher come from

God."

The Pharisees KNEW JESUS WAS THE MESSIAH! They were familiar with Isaiah 7:14, Isaiah 9:6-7, Isaiah 53. The Pharisees KNEW Jesus was the prophesied Messiah. (p. 224)

"But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory." – I Corinthians 2:7-8

HWA claims they knew Jesus was the Messiah, and the apostle Paul says they did not. Who were these princes who had Jesus crucified? The Pharisees; the religious leaders of the day. They refused to "know" Jesus was the Messiah. They rejected Jesus in favor of the law, which they administered with brutal intolerance.

Jesus answered immediately, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of god."

But Nicodemus did not understand this. He knew that being born was an actual BIRTH—parturition from the womb of the mother. Today's theologians do not know even that! They deny a real second birth as a spirit being. They spiritualize away the real truth by assuming that merely saying that one accepts Christ as his Savior constitutes being born again. In this, Satan has deceived them and in turn they have deceived millions of others. (p. 224)

"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." – Romans 10:9-10

This confession is what is important, and not an argument over semantics as to how one is to understand being "born again." Just as Nicodemus could not see past the physical, so it is with HWA. He insists the spiritual be exactly like the physical in this regard. If a Christian is referred to as a new creation, and the old man as having been crucified with Him (Romans 6:6), then there is a new birth; a new beginning with God's Spirit indwelling the individual.

"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." – Galatians 2:20

On page 225, HWA continues this theme, and quotes the words of Jesus wherein he declares that, that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit. HWA insists on a hyper-literal understanding and interpretation here. One wonders then whether he would apply the same reasoning and rationale to the words of Jesus in John chapter 6 where Jesus refers to his body being food indeed and his blood being drink indeed.

Christians are born of the Spirit, even as they were formerly born of the flesh. All that remains is a change of form. HWA insists the caterpillar and the butterfly are two different births.

It [the kingdom] is NOT composed of mortal flesh-and-blood persons who have "accepted Christ" and joined a church of their choice! Yet millions of church members are deceived about that today. (p. 226)

The pattern of disparaging others and their beliefs continues unabated as HWA makes emphatic statements in the hope people will believe him. The focus here is taken off of those who are in Christ, and the kingdom is again given center stage as though all things revolve around the kingdom and not the King. Here is a simple question based partly on HWA's perspective. He teaches that Jesus will return and set up the kingdom. So, does Jesus resurrect people first, then set up this kingdom, or does He set up the kingdom, then resurrect people as spirit beings? Can the reader comprehend the distinction? Flesh and blood indeed cannot "inherit" the kingdom; be an integral part of it, yet the kingdom is to be set up on earth where flesh and blood people continue to exist. If Christ puts down all other rule, and the kingdoms of this earth become the kingdom of God, then whose subjects are these people who are flesh and blood? It's not as black and white as HWA would have you believe.

In order for Christ to RESTORE God's government over the earth, he would need with and under him a qualified and organized personnel of GOD BEINGS—all having rejected

Satan's false way and having proved their loyalty to the government and righteous ways of God! (p. 227)

As pointed out before, those in Christ are seen as having overcome Satan. There is no need to constantly "prove" their loyalty to God. There is no faith in this form.

What is of interest here though is the psychology behind a narcissist. One must always be proving themselves to this person, and their efforts are never sufficient. HWA was such a person.

Therefore, once again, let it be emphasized that the purpose of the Church is not merely to give salvation to those called into the Church, but to teach and train those predestined and called into the Church as instruments God shall use in bringing the world to salvation. (p. 228)

If this truly is the function of the Church (his church) then HWA did a miserable job of it. For over 50 years his gospel went out to the world, and now it has splintered and fragmented⁶ just as you would expect a work would that was built on sand. The reader must also understand that the "Church" or a "Church" cannot "give" salvation to anyone. A Church is not the venue for salvation, Christ is.

That is why in the New Testament, the Church is called the firstfruits of God's salvation. (p. 228)

Please note that HWA gave no Scriptural source for this claim. Perhaps it is because no such statement exists?

Anyone who "joins the church of his choice" has not come into God's true Church. One cannot just "join" the TRUE Church of God. One is first selected and drawn by God the Father through his Spirit, brought to a complete heartrending repentance, and changed in his total life-style, and has also not only believed in and accepted Jesus Christ as personal Savior, but also has believed Christ. (p. 229)

First off, the distinction in meaning of what the "church" is becomes blurred, as the church Christ built, and continues to build, is not confined to a specific group run by a self-appointed apostle/prophet.

Second, HWA almost preaches the true gospel, but not quite. Close doesn't count here. The gospel can be falsified by either addition or omission. HWA says one must also believe what Christ said and taught, and here is where HWA misrepresents Jesus the Christ. HWA has taught that which Jesus and the apostles did not teach, and what Jesus and the apostles taught, HWA does not teach. This is a common denominator of all false religious groups or cults. HWA reserved to himself the "interpretation" of Scripture, and anyone within the group who disagreed, no matter how sincerely, found themselves without the group. I have found it to be an effective method of getting people who believed HWA was right to realize he was wrong simply by asking them some questions based upon what Jesus said and taught along with the apostles. If you don't know what Jesus and the apostles said and taught, you must conclude, if you are honest with yourself, that HWA was wrong in his theology.

So, once again, WHAT and WHY is the CHURCH? The Church is the called out (from the world) begotten children of God. It is the Body of Christ (I Cor. 12-27; Eph. 1:23). It is the spiritual organism that shall be the "Bride of Christ" —after its resurrection to immortality, then it shall be married to Christ! (p. 230)

That which is described in Scripture as the bride of Christ is the New Jerusalem that comes down from heaven:

"And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." – Revelation 21:2

"...Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God," – Revelation 21:9-10

HWA needs people to believe that the church does not become this bride of Christ until He returns. Scripture indeed describes (in the parables) a marriage feast, and again HWA insists the spiritual follow the pattern of the physical. So what are the implications if the church, or Christians were now "married" to Jesus Christ? The concept of

proving one's loyalty and being required to participate in a covenant opposite Jesus Christ falls to the ground dead, rotten and forgotten. A husband and wife are legally the same entity. The implications are enormous.

"Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God."
– Romans 7:4

This is anathema to HWA's theology. Christians are now married to Christ.⁷ Now they share in a marriage covenant, and not a covenant as a second party. They are now a party of the first part, with Jesus Christ!

What, then, is the necessary prerequisite to receiving UNDERSTANDING? "A good understanding have all they that do his commandments" (Ps. 111:10). (p. 231)

The hook is now being set on the unsuspecting reader. HWA means to bring the reader under the law, and in wielding this law, he has ultimate power and control over the individual. But the reader would be well advised to examine the passage cited, and note that "his commandments" is not a part of the passage; it is inferred. Does a person need to keep the commandments in order to "understand" Jesus is the Savior of mankind, and that only in Him one has salvation? No. But let's argue this point a bit further. If love fulfills the law, and the commandments are a part of that law, and God sheds His love upon us, so that we live by that love, then this is sufficient, and we understand. We cannot fulfill the righteous requirements of the law on our own effort—only God working in us is righteousness accomplished, and it is not the righteousness found in the law.

"And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:" – Philippians 3:9

But the Eternal began laying the actual foundation of that ultimate GOD FAMILY through the patriarch Abraham. Isaac, Jacob and Joseph formed part of that prefoundation. (p. 231)

Ever so subtly, HWA tries to build a foundation UNDER Jesus Christ. By doing this, he tries to strengthen his case for insisting people keep the law. But there is no "prefoundation."

"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." – 1 Corinthians 3:11

Jesus Christ is the foundation, and not the patriarchs, and not the law.

"And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone" – Ephesians 2:20

HWA would have you believe that the prophets are intrinsically tied to the law, but the law of the letter is never equated with this foundation of Christ.

However, the CHURCH is the BEGOTTEN (not yet born) children of God. (p. 232)

When this "corruption" puts on "incorruption" it is not put forth as a birth, but a change in form. When a caterpillar becomes a butterfly, is it a birth? Does the butterfly come into being, or did a change take place? Likewise with those who are born of God. They are a new creation (II Corinthians 5:17). Later, they are raised with an imperishable body, not born.

This whole issue over begotten versus being born is for the purpose of instilling fear within the individual HWA has control over. If you are merely begotten, you stand the chance of being aborted; not coming to full term and losing out on salvation. It has already been pointed out that those who are Christ's have eternal life now, guaranteed. This birth of the spiritual has already occurred. All that remains is a change of form.

Jesus Christ is described as being begotten by the Father in His human life, and Christians are referred to as being begotten through the gospel. So was Jesus born or was He some sort of embryonic Son?

Through the years from Abraham until Christ, God had called out of Satan's world begotten and prepared PROPHETS, as the preliminary co-foundation of God's CHURCH! Jesus himself is the main foundation. (p. 232)

Jesus is not the "main" foundation, and there is no preliminary co-foundation. There is only one foundation, and that

foundation is Christ. (I Corinthians 3:11) Like other concepts of HWA's that are unbiblical, he hammers on them until he is sure people believe him. He sets himself up as his own authority.

Following the above statement, HWA again tries to establish other foundations by claiming the apostles are a second co-foundation. Christ is being diluted and diminished in order to now bring the law to the foreground.

On page 234, HWA states that the Church is the firstfruits of Pentecost, "the very first portion of God's spiritual harvest" then claims the exact opposite in saying those in the Church are not yet born of God! This is another example of generating cognitive dissonance in order to make the individual more reliant upon HWA. The individual awaits HWA to give him the understanding to cope with the cognitive dissonance, which will never happen. It will never be resolved.

Now before proceeding further, UNDERSTAND WHY only the minute FEW have so far been called to salvation—WHY the world as a whole has been CUT OFF from God—WHY the world has not been yet judged—WHY neither "saved" nor "lost"! (p. 234)

All this is based upon assumptions. No "thus saith the Lord" is produced as proof. Can we afford to base our beliefs on inference and speculation? John 3:18: "He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." Unless God calls and man answers through faith, man is lost. He is condemned already. He is still the offspring of Adam.

One does not receive the Holy Spirit until he has first of all repented. God grants repentance (Acts 11:18). The second condition to receiving the Holy Spirit is faith. That means not only believing in God and in Christ, but since Christ is the Word or Spokesman of the God family, it means believing what he says. (p. 238)

HWA begins this statement with contradiction and a falsehood. God does grant repentance, and repentance is a turning away from the former life and what it entailed. It is not repenting of sin per se, sin being defined as "breaking the law." Neither is this the first step. Belief / faith is the first step. An examination of the conversion of Cornelius and his household proves this. Cornelius believed what he was told concerning Jesus Christ. God granted unto him repentance unto **life**. God "granted" repentance unto the gentiles; something that surprised the Jewish Christians in Acts 11. Here is what Acts 11:18 says:

"When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life."

HWA does not elaborate on what this belief in Christ entails other than believing what he says. Jesus declared that it was through Him people have eternal life. HWA demonstrated his lack of faith by not believing Christ and concluded that people had to keep the law also in order to maintain their salvation status, or in other words, to "qualify" for salvation, it being an open issue for a Christian until death.

Nothing you can do can make up for past guilt. The blood of Christ has paid the price of past guilt. (p. 238)

What of present and future guilt? Do we then sacrifice Christ anew? No. Jesus' sacrifice was complete and total. Those sanctified by Him are now a new creation, and these things that previously condemned us can no longer do so. Christians are dead to sin; sin no longer has power over a Christian (see Romans, chapter 6). This whole concept of being dead to sin and dead to the law is lost on HWA. His control over people would be lost if those who follow him were to understand this aspect of being a Christian.

The "salvation" in what is called traditional Christianity does not actually change one into a new and different person. (p. 238)

Salvation is a part of the Christian status. A Christian is one who has God's Spirit, and those who have God's Spirit are now saved. Again, it is HWA trying to chop it all up to his own advantage so as to control people.

From this point in the book, HWA reiterates again his theology he has repeated many times prior... Jesus and man qualifying by resisting and overcoming Satan. It is incessant repetition. 8

The 37th chapter of Ezekiel reveals how those of ancient Israel will receive the Spirit of God, if willing, in the Great White Throne Judgment. (p. 239)

If the reader were to examine Ezekiel chapter 37, you would be hard pressed to conclude this happens in the Great White throne Judgment. Israel has returned to the land. They dwell there, and David is restored as king.

On page 242, HWA begins his explanation of church government being hierarchical (just like the Catholic church). He informs us that all other church organizations are inspired by men and not God. He then repeats that there is but one church, which he now interprets as one church administration, with true Christians a part of this organization. The true definition of ekklesia has long since been dropped.

Notice especially, there is only the ONE CHURCH. Not MANY churches. The CHURCH is not divided. There is only one Church. Not a parent church and many little daughter churches that have split off in disagreement. Divisions splintering OFF are NOT STILL IN THE CHURCH. It is the CHURCH that is to marry Christ in the resurrection at his coming—not disagreeing churches—not groups who have broken off! Not a parent church and apostate daughters. That will become more obvious as we continue. (p. 243)

This whole paragraph cannot possibly sit well with Gerald Flurry who broke away from the "church" HWA ruled, claiming that organization was the "one and only church of God." No matter, for Gerald Flurry now owns the copyright to this book, and he has already started altering it to suit his needs.9

An apostle is "one sent forth" with Christ's gospel message, including the supervision of proclaiming that message to the world by means and persons other than himself. Also an apostle was given supervision over all the local congregations or churches (I Cor. 16:1).

The apostle Paul had oversight over the churches of the Gentile world (II Cor. 11:28). (p. 244) An apostle was one trained personally by Jesus Christ. False apostles are those who claim to be an apostle and who preach a false gospel; a gospel not preached by the true apostles, instructed by the very Christ. We have their teachings with us to this day. All too often, false apostles arise and through the misuse of Scripture, lead many astray.

The prophets set in the foundation of the Church are those of the Old Testament, whose writings were used to form a considerable part of New Testament and gospel teaching and functioning. **No prophets are mentioned as having either administrative, executive or preaching functions in the New Testament Church.** (pp. 244-245)

The words bolded above did not set well with Gerald Flurry who claims to be "That Prophet" and so he has since edited them. (Read: April 13, 2004 letter) It is somewhat reminiscent of the story that the history books in Russia were all loose-leaf binders.

Earlier, HWA claimed the gospel could not be proclaimed until Jesus met two conditions. Here now he claims the gospel teachings are located in the Old Testament, now incorporated into the new.

Notice how thoroughly organized [the church is]: "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God." Notice the Church is a FAMILY, even as GOD is a divine FAMILY—"the household of God." (p. 245)

HWA constantly repeated that the gospel is all about the "Government of God," and that government rules in "the church." What we need to ask here is if the concept of the church being ruled by the "Government of God" is consistent with this family concept.

"And when they were come to Capernaum, they that received tribute money came to Peter, and said, Doth not your master pay tribute? He saith, Yes. And when he was come into the house, Jesus prevented him, saying, What thinkest thou, Simon? of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers? Peter saith unto him, Of strangers. Jesus saith unto him, Then are the children free." – Matthew 17:24-26

This tribute was a temple tax. If then those within the church are the children of God, they are not to be treated as those who are subjects of a civil power.

The 40th chapter of Ezekiel, however, describes the building of a temple after the return of Christ. (p. 246)

There is nothing in this chapter to indicate this is a temple to be built after the return of Christ.

HWA continues to describe government in the church as being hierarchical, with all to be speaking the same thing (i.e., no dissent) and that God sets even the lay members within the church. The reader should ask themselves a question here: What form of rulership would a false apostle desire? A "dictatorship" that is the opposite of freedom. And those who would dare challenge or question him are easily dealt with by putting them out of "the church," where the rest of the members would shun them. If it is perceived that it is God who puts them in the church, then it is perceived as God putting them out.

In the example of the conference of Acts 15, it appears everyone was free to have a say in what was happening and in the decision process. Not so in the church led by HWA.

One wanted complete universal world dominion, and called itself "Catholic," which means "universal." What is the name of the Church Jesus founded? (p. 247)

A certain man decided to change the name of "his church" to "Worldwide." Does this not say the same thing?

At the bottom of page 247, HWA says the name of the church is in the name of the Father and is thus stated twelve times in the New Testament. He already covered this back on page 207. One of the reasons this chapter is so long is due to all the repetition in it. One wonders if it is intentional, or he forgot from one day to the next what he wrote.

But what about all the many organized churches labeled under the category "Christianity"—some with millions of members? They are all described in Revelation 17:5: "Mystery, Babylon the great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth." (p. 249)

An individual's faith is of no consequence to HWA here. If one is a member of one of these other churches, which includes all other churches, they are under Satan's sway and control.

On page 251, HWA puts forth those things that these "deceived" churches do not know or teach. As he words it, they "run afoul on pivotal truths." What are these pivotal truths? The proper name of the church (remember the definition of ekklesia?), what the gospel is (in this case, the kingdom of God being "the government and law of God"), and government in the church is based upon his model; "they do not know what salvation is," and they do not understand God's purpose or plan.

How much of the "plan of God" does one need to understand when affirming Jesus is the Son of God who lived, died, and was resurrected for our redemption? Are these truly "pivotal truths?" Are they essential for salvation?

One original Church, much persecuted and opposed, but still in existence, has these evidences proving it to be the original true Church. (p. 251)

Can one find in Scripture where these "pivotal truths" are evidence of the true church, or is this a case of trying to prove a church as true based upon their own criteria?

Continuing with the same paragraph:

And even this Church, until after the year of 1933, had lost many of these vital truths. At least 18 basic and essential truths have been restored to the true Church since that year. (p. 251)

If it is a matter of these "pivotal truths" being the proofs of the true Church, and these truths were lost to this particular Church prior to 1933, then how, using his own logic, can it be the true Church? It is all circular reasoning.

People naturally and normally think only of and about physical and material things. People do not realize it, but they have been CUT OFF from God! The human mind, unless and until it receives the Holy Spirit of GOD cannot think spiritually—cannot know spiritual knowledge—cannot understand human problems, troubles, evils or purposes of human existence. (pp. 251-252)

One could ask here then why HWA insisted on keeping the physical requirements of the law, that were commanded of a physically oriented people, Israel. What of the spirit of the law? It is ignored, for HWA was guilty of his own accusation.

Let it be clearly understood that the time has not yet come when God has opened the tree of life to Satan's world. (p. 253)

By now it should be obvious that whenever HWA tries to make an emphatic statement, he does so because he knows he has no solid proof for his statement. He does this because he is trying to build a belief system for his followers built on shaky ground to begin with.

If Jesus is that tree of life, He has now made Himself available. The veil has been rent, and the way is clear to the Holy of Holies.

At the end of page 254, and through to page 255, HWA gives his interpretation on the Parable of the Pounds, and equates the "pound" as the Holy Spirit, and that through works, people increase or grow spiritually. Those who do nothing with it, have God's Spirit taken away from them. They lose out on salvation. He then declares that the parable of the talents "emphasizes the same truth."

These are parables, put forth in order to obscure the meaning of which Jesus was talking about. As such, they can therefore easily be misinterpreted, even to one's advantage.

The parable does not relate that this man lost out on salvation, it is inferred. What it does point out is that the man was motivated by fear and not love for his master, and he made in essence an accusation against his lord, and he was judged accordingly. The same exists in the talents parable. The true servants of Jesus Christ are motivated by love, and not fear. If anything, the one demonstrates he is a tare, and not wheat; a false Christian and not a true one.

To his disciples, called out of the world to a special commission, Jesus replied, "It is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given." Here is another example showing God is not now calling the world to understanding and salvation. (p. 254)

This ignores that things changed after the resurrection, and their commission to go into the world and teach.

In HWA's dissertations of these parables, the church is substituted for the Christian. Christians are called out, not a church. By using this language, the individual is subconsciously led to believe that he or she is actually not complete without being a part of this physical body of HWA's "true church." The individual surrenders individuality. He must become a part of the whole, and in the process he will lose his own identity in favor of the group identity. He will then become a pliable, unthinking, unquestioning minion within the group.

The CHURCH, as initially called in this life, is NOT YET capable of RULING the earth—of sitting with Christ in the THRONE where God originally placed Lucifer—of administering THE GOVERNMENT OF GOD. (p. 256)

Notice again the use of the word church where an individual is implied. He then goes on to claim the purpose of this calling is all about rulership and administering the government of God. No mention of salvation, which actually is given a back seat to rulership. In other words, salvation isn't enough. We are to be judged as to whether we have qualified to rule, and if found lacking, both rulership and salvation are not achieved; they are lost.

It is not a matter of having "made it into the kingdom" upon being baptized, but a matter of spiritual growth and development in knowledge and in righteous character. (p. 356)

In other words, it is a matter of being compliant and obeying the rules in order to qualify to be a ruler yourself. This sounds more like communist Russia than the kingdom of God.¹⁰

Following this, HWA makes an accusation that those who have left "God's church" are dissidents, "resentful and bitter over God's government."¹¹ No other possibilities are entertained.

HWA then goes on a diatribe against traditional Christianity, accusing them of perceiving of Jesus "only as Savior," and not as coming King to set up His government. It is a false accusation.

The connection between salvation and qualifying for rulership is again made:

They teach that one is already saved on "receiving" (GETTING) CHRIST!

I repeat, the individual whom God calls and adds to his Church is not, at initial conversion, remotely capable of being given POWER of rule over nations! (p. 257)

Notice the use of the word in parenthesis "GETTING." HWA taught that the way of God was the way of "give" and the way of carnal man was "get." So what do we conclude regarding those who believe they are saved when God gives them His Holy Spirit? They are practicing the way of get; they are doing this for selfish motives. They must then prove themselves and qualify for rulership through effort and work! They must prove to God they aren't just in it for themselves.

The proof that those who receive God's Spirit ARE saved has already been covered. The reader can do a simple word search of the Scriptures with "saved," "salvation," "eternal life," etc. in order to check the veracity of this.

He is called a "babe in Christ." He has, if repentant and really converted in this preliminary human state, actually received a portion of the Holy Spirit of God. (p. 257)

There is the big word, "if" above. "IF" repentant and "IF" converted at this point, and then he only receives a *portion* of God's Spirit. The implications are many. There exists in the person's mind the constant nagging doubt as to his conversion. And others, such as HWA, are seen as having much more of God's Spirit than they do, so they better "keep their place."

Receiving a "portion" of God's Spirit is like saying a woman can be half-pregnant.

But we need to grow spiritually before we are qualified to rule over cities and nations and teach those being converted. (p. 257)

In other words, we need to be properly indoctrinated to preach a gospel of law and government in order to convert people to this gospel, and not the gospel of Christ. Even one new in the faith can preach the true gospel.

On pages 257 through 261, HWA insists that spiritual birth is exactly like human gestation. The Christian is but a begotten and not yet born Son of God. The possibility of spontaneous abortion exists. As mentioned before, this concept is necessary in the HWA theology in order to keep the members off balance and constantly concerned with their salvation status. It provides a method of control over the member. Fear is generated in the individual, as he constantly is unsure over his spiritual condition. The new Christian is seen as having very little of God's Spirit, and is a babe in Christ.

To help people see through this ruse, understand that the Spirit of God did not come upon the disciples of Jesus until after the ascension of Jesus on that particular day of Pentecost. Now Peter and the rest must "administer" the church, being babes in Christ, as it were. I can imagine the response being that God must have given them more of His Spirit. If God can give more of His Spirit to one or a small group, He can give it more abundantly to all also.

This observation no doubt would be lost on those who still hold to the teachings of HWA, so another simple observation posed as a question will show the falsehood of this line of reasoning: At what point is a Christian developed enough so that God will grant them eternal life? This is a question no follower of HWA can answer. One might cop-out and say only God knows, which implies God is capricious and arbitrary in this determination. There are plenty more rationales for getting around the obvious, but we will let it go at this for now.

A summary of this whole concept is given on page 263:

It is the function of the CHURCH —as the spiritual MOTHER of Christians in it—to develop holy, righteous and perfect godly CHARACTER in those God has called—those God has added to the Church.

This all sounds good up front, what with the church being there to nurture Christians through their spiritual growth.

But what do you suppose happened to the eunuch of great authority under Candace who returned to Ethiopia after being baptized by Philip? (Acts 8:27-39) He obviously shriveled up and spiritually died, seeing as there was no church to nurture him.

At Jacob's well in Samaria Jesus spoke to a woman about the Holy Spirit in terms of "living water."

The woman said to Jesus, "Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not."

Here was a direct request from an unconverted woman for salvation and the gift of the Holy Spirit. BUT JESUS ONLY TOLD HER OF HER SINS—OF WHAT SHE HAD TO REPENT OF! He did NOT say, "Come to me, just as you are, in your sins." (p. 264)

HWA was just making the case, again, that God is not out trying to save people in Satan's world with a "come as you are" approach. He quotes this example of Jesus with the Samaritan woman as proof.

Do we see here in this example that this Samaritan woman understood she was asking for salvation? NO! She thought Jesus was talking about some literal water that if she drank it, she would never need to draw water from that well again.

"But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw." – John 4:14-15

Now then, was Jesus telling her about her sins; that she had to repent of them?

"Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." – John 4:10

Either Jesus is a liar, or HWA is. Jesus didn't offer salvation based upon her "requirement" to see her sins and repent of them, rather Jesus says this has to do with being a gift from God. He mentions she has had five husbands and that the one she is living with now is not her husband, not in order to point out her sins, but to serve as evidence as to who He really is, the Savior and Messiah. (John 4:26)

If the reader insists on HWA's interpretation, He said nothing condemning or demanding regarding any sin of hers. He asked her to return with her husband, and when she says she has none, he tells her something that only the Christ could know.

A few verses later Jesus makes a statement that does not fare well with HWA's take on the matter:

"But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him." – John 4:23

The time had come then, and not later; not when "Satan is removed, etc." that people are to be worshiping God in spirit and in truth. That time had not existed prior to that.

So, how did people of Israel worship God prior to this time? Through the law.

"The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it." – Luke 16:16

Sin must first be repented of—turned from! It is much more than remorse for guilt. It is a matter of being sufficiently SORRY to TURN FROM the sin, overcome the sin. This reconciles one to God on faith in Christ. (p. 264)

Here we see one of the Great Lies of HWA plainly stated. Often, he is extremely subtle and careful in how he words deceptive teachings.

HWA would have you believe here that you have to overcome your sin via this worked-up repentance, and this reconciles you to God "on faith in Christ." And what is that supposed to mean?

First, we need to understand what reconciles us to God.

"For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." – Romans 5:10

Reconciliation occurred by the death of Jesus, and not some worked-up repentance on our part.

"And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouvable in his sight: If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister" – Colossians 1:20-23

This all has to do with faith in the truth of the gospel, and not being shaken from that faith by those who would tell you that it is through your own efforts in overcoming your sin you are reconciled to God. God knows that you, on your own, cannot ever overcome your sins; your sinful nature. He gives us a way through the death of Jesus Christ; through faith in Him.

Next, HWA claims that the "church" has a dual function to perform: First, to preach the gospel of the kingdom (and we know what that means to HWA) and second, to feed the flock— the members of the church. He gives this second requirement mere lip service, and wastes no time in informing the reader that the role of these who are supposed to be "fed" are in turn to "fund" (i.e. feed) the ministry so that they can perform the first function. This merry-go-round never stops.

The individual lay member HAS HIS VITAL PART in proclaiming the GOOD NEWS (gospel) to the world. HOW? Not by going out and himself proclaiming Christ's message to the neighborhood or to the world. (p. 266)

"Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word." – Acts 8:4

These were the lay-members who did this. The apostles stayed in Jerusalem.

In some respects, the member is relieved that he or she does not have to "witness" to others. To word it another way, they have been conditioned to believe everyone on the outside is swayed by Satan, and ready to pounce on the one who would dare speak words of God. So the member is relieved and is told he fulfills his responsibility by funding HWA to do that through radio and television along with the publishing endeavors of "the church." The member is relieved of his Christian personal duty to truly be a light, and in so doing, could he be denying Christ? Not in his mind, for to him, he paid his tithes and fulfilled his responsibility. He has done his duty. He funded that which he could not do on his own, and was even told not to try.

Neither can the individual lay member develop and build within him God's holy, righteous and perfect CHARACTER without the operations of the apostles, evangelists, pastors and elders. (p. 267)

Care to find where this is related in scripture? Why would HWA make such a claim? It should be obvious. The member needs to be dependent upon the group and especially the leadership of the group.

The "loner"—the "individual Christian," who wants to climb up into the kingdom some other way than by CHRIST and HIS WAY through his CHURCH—is not being trained in CHRIST'S MANNER OF TRAINING, to rule and reign with Christ in his kingdom! (p. 270)

HWA now gives the church the status of God in regards to salvation. Salvation is not dependent upon Christ only in this scenario.

Only those so trained in the Church will be kings and priests in the kingdom of God.

The person who says "I will get my salvation alone, outside of the Church" is totally deceived. This is not the time when salvation is opened to those in Satan's world. (p.270)

Neither will God let one INTO his family at the resurrection who refused to be part of it now—in the CHURCH—in the spiritual "training season." (p. 271)

According to HWA, a Christian "outside of the church" is actually a non-Christian. He is a part of Satan's world. This, too, is a common teaching in religious cults; existence is dependent upon the group. Leave the group, and you are doomed.

"I am the vine, ye are the branches." Those not joined with others of the branches, all joined to the main vine, were NO PART OF THE CHURCH,¹² and God the Father will cast them away as DEAD branches. (p. 271)

This quote is from John 15:5: "I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing."

HWA insists on inserting himself and his church between Christ and the Christian. It is unfortunate that so many fall for this ruse; believing salvation has all these additions.

In the book of Revelation, the TRUE Church is pictured in the 12th chapter as the persecuted "little flock," many martyred—put to death for their faith—having to FLEE for safety from persecution, torture and death. (p. 272)

No where in Revelation 12 is the church referred to as a "little flock." The little flock concept is important to HWA's belief system, for he can't afford the concept of a large flock. One might be tempted to believe the church is referred elsewhere as a little flock, but the church is never referred to as such. Those referred to as a little flock were the disciples of Christ.

Note carefully what HWA has done here though... he has added "little flock" to a book that prescribes a severe curse upon those who would dare to add to, or take away from, the words of this book.

HWA goes on to equate those who believe themselves born again with the Babylonian mystery religion. He never seems to pass on an opportunity to discredit any beliefs contrary to his own.

But doctrinally, remember what the Church is called to help restore—the kingdom, government and character of God. What was taken away? God's law, the foundation of his government and the very essence of God's character and divine life.

In other words, the pivotal point is the SIN question. Sin is the transgression of God's spiritual law (I John 3:4). (p. 273-4)

This is the issue that HWA claimed was the gospel, and that he was going to prove it... later. In the meantime, it gets repeated constantly. You would think that the proof would come first.

This is perhaps an example of the most effective bait and hook in HWA's tackle box. First, I would like to point out that HWA claims the law was taken away. When? At what point prior to the coming of Jesus in the flesh did this happen? HWA insists the law has been in force since creation. Secondly, is sin truly the transgression of God's "spiritual" law? HWA quotes I John 3:4 in order to prove this, and to one not well versed in Scripture, they can't help but agree.

There are several things here to consider. The passage rendered, "sin is the transgression of the law" in italics is translated from the one Greek word, "anomia" usually translated iniquity or lawlessness. The hyper-literal translation of the word means, "against-law." (a- against nomia- law). It is interesting that in Hebrew, there are separate words for lawlessness and iniquity, but not in the Greek. Proper hermeneutics require one examine the etymology of words and how they were used at the time and place in question. This was the Greek manner of conveying the understanding of iniquity. A Greek, speaking Greek, did not envision iniquity as the transgression of the Hebrew law.

The apostle Paul points out that there was sin in the world prior to the law. When confronted with statements like this, HWA and his followers are quick to chop up the law and make distinctions that do not exist in Scripture. He isn't the only one. A number of legalistic cults practice the same thing, claiming there are divisions in the law such as moral, civil, ceremonial, etc., and the unwitting follower doesn't realize he has allowed these self-professed teachers of the law to not only interpret which laws are moral, for example, but dictate to him how they are to apply in their lives.

If one looks at I John 3:4 in the light of being rendered as sin being iniquity, it works much better in context. If one is having problems with this rendering, other scriptures concerning sin in relation to Christians need to be examined. Romans chapters six and seven relate that Christians are dead to sin and the law.

There are more resources available on this website that deal with the issue of the law and sin in relation to Christians.

[The expression used by Protestants "nailing the law to his cross" can mean only one thing. This is Satan's teaching that by being nailed to the cross, Christ abolished the law, making it possible for humans to sin with impunity. \(p. 274\)](#)

The irony of the statement above is that the detractors of Paul said essentially the same thing. "Well, let us sin so that grace may abound." (Romans 6:1) Paul stated that those who claimed such had a condemnation that was just: "And not rather, (as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say,) Let us do evil, that good may come? whose damnation is just." (Romans 3:8)

The implication of HWA's claim (accusation) that Christians would be free to sin with impunity means that HWA believed Christians could not be trusted with the freedom found in Christ. He insults the Holy Spirit, seeing that the Holy Spirit is perceived as an insufficient guide in the Christian's life. HWA also makes an accusation, and tries to pawn it off as a truth. He is saying that if the law were done away, Christians who have God's Spirit would be going about committing adultery, murder, and other acts against the law, lumping Christians with the rest of mankind. He therefore insists the law; what he calls the spiritual law, and even eternal law, is binding on Christians. The law is actually raised to the level of being a savior besides Christ. HWA makes the same mistake as the religious leaders of Jesus' time. The law is elevated to the status of a god. Faith and grace become little more than ethereal concepts without substance. Without the law, Christians would be running amuck. Instead of using scriptural proof of what he claims, he resorts to accusations instead of proofs to make his case. Is this how a servant of God acts?

One last observation on this issue. It was sin that was man's problem, and not the law. Law helped define and teach what was sin, but did not ultimately define sin. (see: Romans 5:13; Romans 5:20; Romans 7:7) What HWA refused to know is that it wasn't so much the law that was "done away" with as it was sin in relation to Christians.

Finally, what are Christians, in possession of the Holy Spirit? Are they "good trees" or "bad/evil trees"? Jesus declared evil trees only produce evil fruit. Good trees produce only good fruit. The law dealt with bad trees/people, devoid of God's Spirit. The works of a Christian are said to be wrought in God. Can that which is wrought in God be bad fruit? Christians are called to good works/fruits. We see the fruit of the Spirit listed in Galatians 5:22. Are these the attributes of a Christian, led by the Spirit, or not? A true Christian has no need of a law designed for, and given to a stiff-necked, faithless people Jesus said were the children of the devil, who do the works of the devil.

"For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:" – Romans 8:3

If sin is condemned, then what use is in the law; the letter of the law? The end result is that someone like HWA becomes powerless to control others if this is understood.

"O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." – I Corinthians 15:55-57

What does a Christian have the victory over? Through the Lord Jesus Christ he has the victory over sin, death, and the law.

[The very basic teaching, belief AND DOCTRINE OF God's true Church therefore is based on the righteousness of and obedience to the law of God. \(p. 274\)](#)

This basic teaching; this basic doctrine, is missing in the doctrines listed in Hebrews chapter 6. If this were so basic, wouldn't you think it would be mentioned?

As concerning the righteousness of the law:

"But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the

prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe:" – Romans 3:21-22

The teachings of God's true Church are simply those of "living by every word" of the Holy Bible. (p. 274)

The false premise here is that every word of the Bible is applicable to all men of all time. So why did not the conference of Acts 15 conclude Gentiles be circumcised?

Today's customary gospel about Christ believes that simply "believing on Christ," which is professing Christ as personal Savior, means that one is already saved. Yet Mark 7:7-9 shows that many even go so far as to worship Christ, and all in vain because they do not obey God's commandments—especially the Sabbath—but follow the traditions of men by which Satan has deceived the whole world. (p.277)

Was Jesus talking in Mark, chapter 7, about false Christians, or the people of his day who had the law, and found all kinds of ways to circumvent it? Today, we find those who would circumvent grace and the gospel in favor of the law!

What is of interest in this passage though is how those of Jesus' time circumvented the commandment that required one to honor their parents. Yet HWA taught that people had to abandon their parents in order to follow him and the "truth." Any support a parent was in need of was to be given to the "church" in the form of third tithe, which ended up being robbed by HWA to support himself and the ministry.

In John 8:30-44 the Jews who "believed on Christ" but who did not believe Christ or keep his commandments were called, by Jesus, the children of their father the devil. In I John 2:4 it shows that he who claims to know Christ as Savior, but does not keep his commandments is a liar and the truth is not in him. (p. 277)

In John 8:30-44 no reference is made to keeping Christ's commandments.

Those who believed "on" Him, did they continue to do so? No.

"Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. – John 8:31-32

The sleight of theological hand in I John 2:4 is the premise that Jesus' commandments are the Ten Commandments, or the entire law. Jesus indeed had commandments for his followers, and nowhere are they presented as commandments of the law.

At the first the Church was almost wholly Jewish. The unconverted Jews fought to retain the physical rituals and animal sacrifices of the law of Moses. (p. 278)

At the first, the church was completely Jewish.

It is an interesting statement by HWA that it was the "unconverted" Jewish members who "fought to retain the physical rituals and animal sacrifices of the law." When Paul returned to Jerusalem for the last time, he was asked by the leaders of the church to take other men with him to the temple, and perform a purification ritual that would have ended with a sacrifice. (See Acts 21:24-26) The issue was never one of whether Jewish Christians were required to keep the law, but Gentile Christians, as addressed here in verse 25.

Soon a violent controversy arose over whether the gospel to be proclaimed was the gospel of Christ (which was Jesus' gospel or good news about the kingdom of God) or whether they should preach a gospel ABOUT Christ, merely preaching the acceptance of Christ as Savior. As apostasy from Christ's truth gained momentum, much of the Church was turning to a different and counterfeit gospel, proclaiming Christ as Savior, but omitting entirely that sin is the transgression of God's spiritual law, and the good news of the kingdom of God, removal of Satan, and restoration of the government of God over the earth and the final opening of salvation to all of humanity, who, when judged, would repent, believe and receive eternal life as sons of God—as actual God beings. (pp. 278-279)

I hope the reader has not forgotten that HWA has yet to produce evidence as to this being the true gospel. He now discredits any gospel that relates to Jesus personally, though, and claims this was a "violent" controversy.

HWA then continues to cite II Corinthians 11:3 and those who would preach "another Christ." If the true gospel is not about Christ, then how can a false gospel be about preaching another Christ?

Then we turn next to Galatians 1:6-7. Paul wrote: "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you [you had to be called to become a member of the Church—no one can come to Christ, except those that are called] into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ." The gospel of Christ was the message about the coming kingdom of God. They were already turning to a different gospel. (p. 279)

This gospel that people were turning from was a gospel concerning the grace of Christ. If one could but read the rest of the narrative of Galatians one would see that this false gospel had to do with law. Law and grace are opposite and incompatible. A "gospel that is not another" is a message of salvation that is NOT good news. It is in fact bad news, and salvation through the law or in partnership with the law creates a heavy burden; a "yoke." Paul warns the reader not to be entangled (again) with that yoke of bondage, the law, in Galatians 5:1. Further, Jesus stated His yoke was light. It was a comparative statement in relation to the law.

"For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." – John 1:17

"Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all," – Romans 4:16

"Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound:" – Romans 5:20

"For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace." – Romans 6:14:

"I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain." – Galatians 2:21:

"Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace." – Galatians 5:4

HWA would argue that Christians are not justified by law, but then insists one had to keep the law in order to maintain one's justification. It is circular reasoning based upon his insistence one had to keep the law to avoid sinning.

The gospel of Christ was being diluted as false ministers with their teaching, heavily influenced by the beliefs of Babylon and Persia, steadily infiltrated the congregations. (pp. 281-282)

Paul brings out in Galatians that the apostle Peter was not acting in accordance with the gospel. Paul also had to deal with Jewish members who were going behind his back, insisting Gentile converts be circumcised and keep the law. Why does HWA insist the infiltration came from "pagan" influences, and not Judaism? Because HWA was doing the same thing the Judaizers were doing, trying to bring Gentiles under the bondage of the law; attempting to add the law to the gospel of grace through Jesus Christ.

From here in the book, HWA talks about the churches in Asia Minor that are addressed in the book of Revelation. From these churches, HWA creates the idea that seven church eras¹³ are being discussed, and conveniently identifies his church with the Philadelphia church; the one with few problems in comparison to the others. Those who hold to similar beliefs, but are not a part of HWA's "church" are assigned as either being Sardis; the church era preceding his, or Laodicea; following his.¹⁴

It was essentially the Babylonian Mystery religion, now being called Christian, accepting the doctrine of grace but turning it into license. In other words, it was the old pagan Babylonian

Mystery religion wearing a new cloak: "Christianity." (p. 284)

Does this church known today as the Roman Catholic Church truly take the "doctrine" of grace and turn it into license? If anything, this church has created its own brand of legalism not unlike that of Judaism. HWA took grace and tried to marry it to law.

In about A.D. 365 the Catholic Council of Laodicea wrote in one of its most famous canons: "Christians must not judaize by resting on the Sabbath, but must work on that day, rather, honouring the Lord's Day. But if any shall be found to be judaizers, let them be anathema from Christ." (p. 284)

HWA left out a few words.¹⁵ This says: "CHRISTIANS must not judaize by resting on the Sabbath, but must work on that day, rather honouring the Lord's Day; and, **if they can**, resting then as Christians. But if any shall be found to be judaizers, let them be anathema from Christ." (Nicene and Post Nicene Fathers, Vol. XIV, p. 184)

Christians were not being forced to observe a day of rest. They would if they could. If they could not, no foul. Regardless, the "Lord's Day, aka the first day of the week, was primarily used for the sake of corporate worship. The argument, which is in fact a "Straw-man argument" claims they were competing days, and that the Sabbath "wins by default" by claiming there is no biblical command to keep "Sunday" (before it was even referred to as such). But this day is not a Sabbath substitute. It was about communal worship and prayer. The Sabbath was strictly about rest. Worship was restricted to the Temple and on certain days. Rest is not worship, and worship is not rest. Sabbatarians such as HWA sought to obfuscate the facts in order to bolster the Sabbath. Using deceptive methods to "prove" your position is a poor way to support your beliefs.

From here, HWA attempts to produce a brief history of the "true" church coming down through time to the present.¹⁶ It is nothing more than a construct, and many religious cults have done the same thing; trying to prove they are the direct descendants of the true church down through time. For HWA, this lineage is traced through those who popped up now and then keeping the Sabbath. The Sabbath becomes the defining point of true Christianity, and not faith; not grace.

A new spiritual vitality was infused into it. The time had come for Jesus' prophecy of Matthew 24:14 to be fulfilled—"this gospel of the kingdom shall be [proclaimed] in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." (p.289)

HWA is talking about his church, beginning in 1934. There is an interesting problem with his declaration.

"First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world." – Romans 1:8

"But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world." – Romans 10:18

"For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel; Which is come unto you, as it is in all the world; and bringeth forth fruit, as it doth also in you, since the day ye heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth:" – Colossians 1:5-6

The gospel, according to Paul, was preached to the world then.

To the end of this chapter, HWA claims to be the Elijah who would come and restore all things; those things being the true gospel not preached for 1900 years, along with knowledge of the Sabbath and holy days, etc. He uses the theory of church ages to prove this conclusion.

It should be pointed out that the Elijah to come was to turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to the fathers. This HWA did not do, rather the opposite occurred under HWA's rule.

Footnotes for Chapter Six:

1 See: Why do members emphasize the government of God? from our Q&A (also applies to why HWA/WCG emphasized the same).

2 Certain Bible scholars have stated that Jesus resorted to parables toward the end of His ministry because his enemies rejected His teaching. Notice: "The reason that Jesus resorted to parables from this point [Mark 4:10-12] to the end of His ministry is arresting. His enemies rejected His teachings, and the multitudes had become indifferent to spiritual truths. They were actively interested in His miracles but not in the spiritual application. He now resorts to the use of parables to enlist their interest. The antagonistic attitude of His enemies and the lethargy, indifference and incomprehension of the multitudes necessitated a change to the use of parables so that those who hungered and thirsted after righteousness would be filled and those who wanted spiritual truth could have their eyes opened." (Thru the Bible With J. Vernon McGee, Vol. 4, Mark 4:10-12, p. 176).

3 HWA came up with the "Last Great Day" by putting together the words: "...on the eighth day" from Leviticus 23:36,39, and "the last day" plus "great day of the feast" from John 7:37. However, most Christian Bible commentaries do not consider any feast day named "the Last Great Day."

4 While Pentecost was "related" to Firstfruits, they were each distinct days. Bible scholars include Feast of Firstfruits, along with Pentecost, as one of the feast days Israel observed. Firstfruits pictures the resurrection of Christ from the dead. "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept." "...Christ the firstfruits" (1 Cor. 15:20, 23)

5 In this verse the word "rock" in the Greek is *petra*. The church is built upon the Rock, which is Christ. I Peter 2:4: "To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious,"

6 There are hundreds of splinter groups from the WCG today.

7 Christians are also sons of God and adopted sons. "The meaning of first century Greek was one of placing for privileges, not relationship. Those who by faith have been born into the family of God through a second birth are also placed in a position ... entitling them to be heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ." (Robert L. Sumner, Jesus Christ IS God! 1983, p. 251.)

8 Repetition is amply used by those whose goal is to control and exploit others. Be sure and read: How Mind Manipulation is Used For Influence and Control. Repetition is amply used by those whose goal is to control and exploit others. Be sure and read: How Mind Manipulation is Used For Influence and Control.

9 April 13, 2004 and April 17, 2004 letters to ESN tells about the changes in MOA that Gerald Flurry has made.

10 Herbert Armstrong stated in a November 24, 1967 Co-Worker letter that he had studied Communism in the 1930's and 1940's and he also made mention of the book, Witness by Whittaker Chambers. (Witness is an autobiographical memoir, written just after Chambers confessed to his earlier affiliation with the Communist Party and testified against his former friend and comrade, Alger Hiss.) For more info on this and to understand how HWA lured people, read: Communism; Fascism; Socialism; Totalitarianism; or Armstrongism from OIU 5, Pt. 3.

11 Likewise, those who leave Gerald Flurry's Philadelphia Church of God, are said to have a "government problem."

12 HWA correlated the Vine to his "true church." The Scriptures teach that the true Vine is Christ, whom we are identified with, not a certain church.

13 Gerald Flurry considers the Worldwide Church of God (founded by Herbert Armstrong) as now being the Laodocian church and his as the Philadelphia Church (or Philadelphia era).

14 Herman Hoeh, evangelist in Worldwide Church of God, was the one who began teaching the 7 church eras to members in 1958 (with WCG supposedly being the Philadelphia era).

15 Read: Did Herbert Armstrong Distort Historical Church Documents?

16 WCG's fabricated beginnings and false doctrines are detailed in chapter 9 and chapter 10 of Daughter of Babylon, The True History of the Worldwide Church of God by Bruce Renehan. (Note: Please be aware that this book is now posted on an agnostic/atheist site.)

Chapter Seven - Mystery of the Kingdom of God

In chapter 7, HWA wastes no time in stating the Kingdom of God is a mystery, misunderstood and unknown not only to biblical scholars, but to all the world. This repetitious claim now sounds like a broken record.

Then comes an astounding statement to this reader: This "mystery" is associated with another mystery "of the gospel of Jesus Christ."

Actually that mystery is connected with its associated mystery, the gospel of Jesus Christ. Why do the churches disagree on what actually is "the gospel of Jesus Christ"? During the first twenty or thirty years after the founding of the Church in A.D.31 a violent controversy arose over the very question of what is "the gospel of Jesus Christ." (p.293)

Churches do not generally disagree on what the gospel is. They generally disagree on other things such as doctrines.

What sets up a red flag here though is HWA's usage of the term "violent controversy" which he has used before in this book, and also in his "Which Day is the Christian Sabbath" booklet. [Read my critique of this booklet.] The reason it raises a red flag is because it is a big fat lie, and whenever HWA tells a lie, he tends to make it a whopper. People are more apt to believe a big lie than a little one, so HWA embellishes his lies.

This period of time HWA quotes is within the time period when much of the New Testament writings occurred. There is no evidence of any "violent controversy." There were essentially two major conflicts extant: Gnosticism and Judaizers (the latter were trying to enjoin the law on Gentile converts). Those who insisted Gentiles should be made to keep the law were dealt with at the counsel in Jerusalem recorded in Acts chapter 15. Only by claiming there was this "violent controversy" is HWA able to revive this apostate belief; arguably the first heresy of the early church.

There ensued a hundred years in which all history of the New Testament Church was destroyed. It has been called "the lost century of Church history." When the curtain lifted, about the middle of the second century, there appeared an entirely different type of church calling itself Christian, but in the main preaching its own gospel ABOUT Christ, not the gospel OF Christ. (p.293)

More lies. "All" church history was not lost. There are writings from those who knew the apostles personally during this time. But in order to make his case for legalism, HWA must first get rid of the evidence that contradicts his teachings that could be found during this time frame. He sweeps the footprints off the beach as it were, so that he can reconstruct history to suit his needs. [Be sure and read the article on this site: [Faith Once Delivered \(Proof Herbert Armstrong Lied About the "Lost" Church Century!\)](#)]

Like all religious "cult" leaders, he must diminish Christ in some way so as to make something of greater importance in the minds of his followers. In HWA's case, it is a matter of diminishing Christ in order to magnify the law. Jesus is then presented to us as the "messenger of the gospel," and that the gospel is not about Him, it is all about the law in the guise of the Kingdom of God being the government of God, ruled through this law of God.

Jesus was a Messenger sent from God with a message, and that message was THE KINGDOM OF GOD. (p.294)

I mentioned earlier in a previous chapter critique that Jesus did use the terminology of the Kingdom of God, and with it spoke in parables for the purpose of disguising the gospel. The fullness of the gospel was preached by the apostles. No where do we read that the "Kingdom of God" is the emphasis of the gospel. No where do we read that the gospel is about the government of God administered through the law. It is a total fabrication of HWA in order to gain a following after himself and to use the administration of the law to collect tithes from people's wages, contrary to the law! But those who believed HWA regarding the Kingdom of God were not likely to examine the rest of Scripture critically and pick up on these discrepancies.

Some denominations proclaim a "gospel of grace," some what they call a "gospel of

salvation"; most a gospel about Christ; some a social gospel; some the "Science of Mind" or "Religious Science."

Not one is right! (p.294-295)

The apostle Paul refers to the gospel as being related to grace in Acts 20:24:

"But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God."

If "Not one is right" then HWA is declaring here that the apostle Paul is wrong!

HWA then lumps the "gospel of Grace" and the "Gospel about Christ" with "Science of the Mind" and "Religious Science" in order to make a guilt by association in regards to the gospel being about Christ. It is an intellectually dishonest ploy, worthy of a false prophet.

He is the King of the future Kingdom of God, and the Bible in Daniel 7 and other places uses the terms king and Kingdom interchangeably, that is, the king is, or represents, the Kingdom he rules. (pp.294-295)

Here we witness HWA's use of cognitive dissonance that actually causes the reader to rely on his teachings while abandoning critical thinking. HWA hammers over and over that the gospel is not about Christ, but about the Kingdom. Then he throws in this little tidbit. The terms king and the Kingdom are interchangeable! Critical thinking would have us realize that the gospel then IS about Jesus Christ! But knowing this does not suit HWA's purpose. He has to sell his readers and listeners on the "government" of this Kingdom, ruled through law.

The truth is not merely surprising—it is shocking—staggering! It is a Great Mystery! Yet it is truly GOOD NEWS—the most glorious GOOD NEWS ever to enter human consciousness! (p.295)

It's stupendous! It's colossal! Like a true salesman, he builds up the excitement and anticipation in the reader. He must make the reader want this; desire this above all else; get the listener or reader prepared so that he will gladly part with his money to acquire this pearl of great price.

It is necessary to believe that GOSPEL to be saved! And how can you believe it, unless you know what it is? And for 1,900 years, the world did not know. That gospel was suppressed and replaced by man's gospel about Christ. (p.295)

If it is a matter of being a "man's" gospel about Christ, then Peter and Paul were guilty of preaching a man's gospel. Examine Acts chapters 9 and 10 for starters. I might also point out a famous quote of the apostle Paul:

"For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." – 1 Corinthians 2:2

If the true gospel is the message of the Kingdom, where is the declaration by the apostles in the New Testament writings? Whenever the Kingdom of God is mentioned, it is never dwelt upon; it is never given specifics.

"And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into his lodging; to whom he expounded and testified the Kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening." – Acts 28:23

"Preaching the Kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him." – Acts 28:31

Followers of HWA would insist these are examples of Paul preaching the Kingdom of God, blinding themselves to what is really written here. Expounding and testifying the Kingdom of God had to do with persuading people "about" Jesus, and not "about" the Kingdom where Jesus is merely a messenger. The emphasis is on Jesus, and not the Kingdom.

In the next paragraph, HWA cites how Jesus preached the Kingdom of God; how he had his disciples and the

seventy preach the Kingdom of God, and how he "taught" them about the Kingdom of God in Acts 1:3. HWA then totally ignores and rejects all Scripture after that point concerning what the apostles taught and preached.

Jesus instructed them to remain in Jerusalem until Pentecost. What happened then? The Holy Spirit made His debut. And what is the function of the Holy Spirit? To guide them into all truth.

"But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:" – John 15:26

"But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." – John 14:26

The apostle Paul preached THE KINGDOM OF GOD (Acts 19:8; 20:25; 28:23, 31). And God Almighty, through Paul, pronounced a double curse on man or angel that would DARE preach any other gospel! (Gal. 1:8-9). (p.296)

Let's examine these Scriptures where Paul preached the Kingdom of God and see if they relate to the Kingdom of God being the government of God ruled by the law.

"And he went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the Kingdom of God." – Acts 19:8

And what exactly were these "things"? Verse 10: "And this continued by the space of two years; so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks."

"And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the Kingdom of God, shall see my face no more." – Acts 20:25

"And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into his lodging; to whom he expounded and testified the Kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening." – Acts 28:23

Notice that the details given here about the Kingdom of God revolve around persuading the people about Jesus from the writings of the Old Testament, and this is what was discussed "from morning till evening" and not an elaboration on the Kingdom in and of itself.

Verse 31: "Preaching the Kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him."

Again preaching the Kingdom of God is in relation to those things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ, and not the Kingdom of God being the government of God ruled through the law.

HWA constantly tries to shift the focus off of Jesus Christ and on to an extrapolation of the Kingdom of God and what that means to him.

"But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." – Galatians 1:8-9

Does HWA bother to examine what this other gospel is, or does he just quote this scripture, and infer the false gospel is a gospel "about" the person Jesus? What does the context of Galatians bring out concerning this false gospel?

"To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood:" – Galatians 1:16

Paul preached Jesus among the "heathen." If preaching about Jesus is the false gospel, why is Paul preaching about Christ?

Verse 23: "But they had heard only, That he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed."

Is this preaching of "the faith" faith in the Kingdom of God or faith in Jesus Christ?

"But neither Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised: And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage: To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you." – Galatians 2:3-5

Paul begins to expose this false gospel. It has to do with false brethren who spy out Christian liberty. These false brethren desire to bring Christians into bondage with a false gospel. Part of this false gospel had to do with compelling Gentiles (Greeks) to be circumcised. Where do we find the requirement of circumcision? In the old covenant. Is the old covenant ever described as bondage? Yes. It is found in Galatians 4:22-5:1, just a few chapters hence:

"For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband. Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now. Nevertheless what saith the Scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman. So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free. Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage."

Could the false gospel be related to teaching people they have to keep the law; the old covenant? Let's continue in Galatians:

"But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision. And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation. But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?" – Galatians 2:11-14

Peter was not acting in accord with the gospel. How? Because he followed the dictate of the law not to associate with Gentiles. Peter was "keeping the law" and in doing so, was not following the truth of the gospel.

"For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God." – Galatians 2:18-19

What did Paul "destroy" that could be built again? The law and its influence.

"O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" – Galatians 3:1-3

This false gospel that was being taught by those who wanted to spy out Christian liberty and bring Christians under bondage were teaching the law. Paul calls these Galatians foolish, for they began with the spirit and faith, and that was sufficient. Then came those who taught the law; which law dealt with the flesh. They were convinced by these false teachers of their false gospel that attempted to add the law to the gospel, believing it was necessary for achieving "perfection."

"He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" – Galatians 3:5

Faith and the law are contrasted here by Paul, and continues to be.

It should be obvious (but is not to those who believed HWA) that the false gospel that this double curse of Paul is in relation to is to those who insisted people keep the law. For those who believe HWA, it is a hard, bitter pill to swallow, for it seemed so right to keep the law. The arguments put forth in favor of the law by HWA were so convincing. No wonder Jesus states that, if it were possible, even the elect would be deceived. The deception; the false gospel would be that good—that convincing. Just try to convince a follower of HWA they are not required to keep the law and that doing so and teaching others to do so is a false gospel.

The good news of THE KINGDOM OF GOD is something you must understand, and BELIEVE, in order to be saved! Jesus Christ said so! You had better be finding out what it is! (p.296)

Pay close attention to the claim of HWA here: You must understand and believe the Kingdom of God in order to be saved. It is not faith in Jesus as the Christ; it is in understanding this gospel of the Kingdom of God. HWA will now begin to make his case for the gospel being the Kingdom and not faith in Christ. The Scriptures that show it is faith in Jesus Christ that results in our salvation are plain enough that I will not quote them here. This is easily verified to anyone who wishes to do so.

Also note that HWA does not cite any scriptural references for this most important announcement! He is writing about people's salvation, and says "Jesus Christ said so," yet doesn't tell us where! How odd!

Because they rejected Christ's gospel 1,900 years ago, the world had to supplant something else in its place. They had to invent a counterfeit! So we have heard the Kingdom of God spoken of as merely a pretty platitude—a nice sentiment in human hearts—reducing it to an ethereal, unreal NOTHING! (p.296)

Again, HWA has set up a red-herring, insisting on defining the opposing viewpoint, making an accusation in the process.

I would like to point out that Paul in three passages of his letters claims love fulfills the law, and James does so once. HWA claimed that saying love fulfills the law was "but a Protestant way to ignore the law." Like many other topics, HWA would play it both ways, creating more cognitive dissonance. To HWA, love fulfilling the law is seen as a pretty platitude also, having some ethereal non-application. Then he would say that the first four commandments demonstrated "love toward God" and the last six, "love toward fellow man." In any event, to him, the way to properly fulfill the law was to keep the law, abide by the law; live by the law. In essence, love was not enough by itself; one had to demonstrate love through keeping the law.

Those who live by the law will die by the law, as the law could only condemn. Paul called it, "The ministration of death and condemnation" in 2 Corinthians 3:7.

The prophet Daniel, who lived 600 years before Christ, knew that the Kingdom of God was a real Kingdom—a government ruling over literal PEOPLE on the earth. (p.297)

HWA continues the slow build up of his gospel. He carefully sets the stage here by claiming Daniel knew about the Kingdom of God being a government. HWA just makes a small step here; nearly imperceptible. It is an easy step to go from Kingdom of God to government of God—it seems like a natural progression. But does Daniel relate that there is a government of God to be set up, administered through the old covenant law? No. Nowhere in the Book of Daniel does Daniel elaborate on the Kingdom of God being a government.

The whole purpose of the DREAM was to reveal GOD'S GOVERNMENT—the fact that God RULES—the truth of THE KINGDOM OF GOD—the very thing that is the one and only true GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST! And, secondly, to reveal—preserved in writing for us TODAY—what is to happen "in the latter days"—actually within the next two decades—THIS LAST HALF OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY! (p.298)

If the whole purpose of this dream was to reveal God's government, then Daniel's interpretation would have reflected that. But it is not so specific, even in this minor regard.

What is really interesting here is HWA's "prophesy." This event: God's Kingdom being set up on earth, occurring in the "last half of the twentieth century."

"When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him." – Deuteronomy 18:22

One should not believe him either.

This is THE TRUE GOSPEL! It is the very gospel Christ preached! It is intended for you and me TODAY! It is vital that you UNDERSTAND! (p.298)

The reader needs to realize that the Jews of Jesus' time, including the religious leaders, understood God was going to set up a Kingdom: God's Kingdom. Did this impart salvation to them? No.

Do you suppose they would have condemned Christ and killed him for preaching thus? No. They knew about the Kingdom of God. They, however, rejected the King. Those who accept the King will be in this Kingdom. Those who reject Him will not be in His Kingdom. Knowing there is to be such a Kingdom does not result in salvation. Accepting the King does.

"Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the Scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes?" – Matthew 21:42

What did a stone represent in the dream of Nebuchadnezzar that HWA is writing about here? The government of God? That is HWA's interpretation. Page 300:

Notice! This is speaking of KINGDOMS. It is referring to Kingdoms *that bear rule over the people on earth.* It is speaking of GOVERNMENTS!

This is right after HWA declared on page 299:

This, then, is GOD'S interpretation. It is decidedly *not* Herbert W. Armstrong's interpretation.

It is Jesus Christ who takes over the Kingdoms of this world. It is Jesus Christ who rules; who governs, and not law. He is the government. He is the King.

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." – Isaiah 9:6

No doubt followers of HWA will still try to claim Jesus will rule through the law not unlike how Israel was supposed to be ruled by God. This overlooks, though, the prophecies concerning the New Covenant with the children of Israel, which will not be like the covenant made with them when they left Egypt. See Jeremiah chapter 31. A law, the law of Christ, will be put in their hearts. They will not be ruled through a law written in stone.

Now here we have described FOUR universal world empires—the only four that ever existed! (p.301) [speaking of the Kingdoms described by the image in Daniel]

What's the United States of America? Chopped liver? The U.S.A. is the greatest, most powerful "Kingdom" that has ever existed, making the Kingdoms of the past pale in comparison.

She [the false great church] posed as the Church of God—which Scripture says (Eph. 5:23; Rev. 19:7; Matt. 25:1-10; etc.) is the affianced "bride" of CHRIST, to be spiritually MARRIED to him at his Second COMING. (p.302)

"For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body." – Ephesians 5:23

Does this passage say the church (Christians) are "affianced" to Christ? No.

"Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife

hath made herself ready." – Revelation 19:7

Trying to use Scriptures in Revelation to prove a belief is dangerous, seeing as most of the language used in this book is allegorical; figurative. For instance, in Rev. 21, the bride of Christ is the new Jerusalem. In any event, the marriage of the Lamb here in Revelation already refers to the other as already being a wife, and not just affianced.

"Then shall the Kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out. But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut." – Matthew 25:1-10

Just as it is theologically irresponsible to try and prove a belief with the writings of Revelation, so also from the parables. This does not prove that Christians are considered now only affianced.

Notice also that HWA, in citing these references, includes "etc." as to infer there are more proof texts, but he is not going to bother to cite them, as though this truth were self-evident.

Allow me to supply some of the "etc." Scriptures:

"Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God." – Romans 7:4

Does this say Christians are "married" to Christ at His return, or presently? Do Christians produce fruit unto God now, or later?

Why does HWA not cite this passage? Because it says two things he does not want people to know or understand. 1. Christians are dead to the law, so that, 2. they can be married to Christ... now.

"But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit." – 1 Corinthians 6:17

"For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." – 2 Corinthians 11:2

In the next several paragraphs, HWA hammers into the heads of his readers that a Kingdom and a government are the same: interchangeable. Once this concept is established, he will move forward to the next step in his false gospel.

[Why do the churches of this world never mention any of these Scriptures? Millions have attended churches all their lives and never heard any of these Scriptures about Christ becoming a king or about the coming Kingdom of God. \(p.304\)](#)

HWA, with boring regularity, continues to bring up false accusations against other churches. Does the reader really believe the bulk of other churches never ever mentioned Christ was born to be King of Kings?

[He ascended to the Throne of God. Headquarters of the Government of the Universe \(Acts 1:9-11; Heb. 1:3; 8:1; 10:12; Rev. 3:21\). \(p.305\)](#)

"And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." – Acts 1:9-11

Anything here declaring heaven is headquarters of the government of the universe? No.

"Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by

the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;" – Hebrews 1:3

"Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens;" – Hebrews 8:1

Still no mention of "headquarters of the government of the universe." (Please note how HWA capitalized the words in his declaration above, as though it is all an established title.)

"But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God;" – Hebrews 10:12

"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." – Revelation 3:21

I would like to remind the reader of what HWA claimed earlier in this book, and was fond of saying: "[The Bible interprets itself... it is not Herbert Armstrong's interpretation.](#)" Yet here we see HWA "interpreting" by drawing conclusions from Scriptures that do not support his assumptions.

[He is the "nobleman" of the parable, who went to the Throne of God—the "far country"—to be coronated as King of kings over all nations, and then to return to earth \(Luke 19:12-27\). \(p.305\)](#)

The referenced Scripture does not say Jesus was coronated, then returned. And again, HWA is trying to prove something through a parable.

Jesus was born a king. There was never a time He was not the King.

"Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him." – Matthew 2:2

"Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass." – Matthew 21:5

"And Pilate asked him, Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answering said unto him, Thou sayest it." – Mark 15:2:

"Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel." – John 1:49

Why would HWA desire to have his readers believe Jesus was to later be made a king? Could it be part of the plot to diminish Jesus so as to make Him, while He was walking the earth, just the "mere" messenger of the gospel? In all religious cults that claim to be Christian, Jesus as the Christ, the Messiah, is diminished in some fashion. In the case of HWA, the Kingdom/government ruled through law becomes more important than Jesus Christ. HWA has already declared salvation is dependent upon understanding and knowing his gospel of the Kingdom. I would also point out that he also declared that the church's function is to bring about salvation also:

[The function of the Church is not merely to convert the "firstfruits"—not merely to bring about salvation to those specially called out of the world and into the Church, but to prepare and train them for these positions of leadership in the Kingdom when salvation will be opened to all the living. \(p.332\)](#)

In all of this, HWA has made not only his gospel a co-savior with Christ, but his church as well. However, there is only one God; one Savior, and He is a jealous God who will not tolerate anyone or anything else being "beside" Him. HWA is guilty of setting up not one, but two false gods.

[Again, he is in heaven until the "times of restitution of all things" \(Acts 3:19-21\). Restitution means restoring to a former state or condition. In this case, the restoring of God's government on earth, and thus, the restoring of world peace, and utopian conditions. \(p.305\)](#)

Everything is seen in the context of the "government of God." Do we find in Genesis an account of Adam and Eve

transgressing the government of God, or disobeying God personally? And what exactly was their sin, and what does it mean in this context to restore all things? Was not their sin an act of faithlessness? Could it be that it is faith that shall be restored? Faith and trust in Him? I would think that another chapter to this book should be entitled, "The Mystery of Faith" for HWA never touches on the subject except superficially, if at all, and yet who wouldn't agree faith is of utmost importance?

And what really is HWA inferring here? That somehow, God lost control of His "government" and law because Adam sinned? What of Satan's sin? Would that sin not also qualify for usurping the "government of God"? So poor God lost control over His creation, and it has taken Him now nearly 6000 years to correct the situation.

At its very climax when delay would result in blasting all life from off this planet, Jesus Christ will return. This time he is coming as divine God. (p.305)

One of the teachings of HWA was that Jesus was not "God" when He came the first time. ¹ According to HWA, Jesus "could have sinned" and not "qualified" as Savior, as though Jesus had the Adamic nature.

What a demonstration of the divine power with which the glorified Christ will rule all nations. Rebellion against God's law and God's rule must, and speedily will be put down. (p.308)

Can you realize that every unhappiness, every evil that has come to humanity, has been the result of transgressing God's law? (p.308)

This is part of the progression of HWA's to foster his false gospel. First, he claimed Christ will return and set up a Kingdom. This Kingdom is a government. This government is to set up the "law of God." In order to overcome any possible resistance to this progression and declaration, he makes the statement above: all evils are a result of transgressing God's law. It sounds reasonable, but it is not true. This is important for him to establish, yet he cites no Scriptures in support. For the most part at this point in the book, he doesn't have to. If people have bought into what he has written before this, by now they have unknowingly abandoned their critical thinking skills. Never mind the fact that the law has not existed since the beginning of humanity. HWA claimed it did, and gives other rationalizations for this belief, and they have already been addressed earlier in this critique. As stated earlier, in the HWA theology, everything is perceived from the perspective of the law. Everything else is excluded.

If no one ever had any other god before the true God; if all children were reared to honor, respect and obey their parents, and all parents reared their children in God's ways; if no one ever allowed the spirit of murder to enter his heart, if there were no wars, no killing of humans by humans; if all marriages were kept happy and there were no transgressions of chastity before or after marriage; if all had so much concern for the good and welfare of others that no one would steal—and we could throw away all locks, keys and safes; if everyone told the truth—everyone's word were good—everyone were honest; if no one ever coveted what was not rightfully his, but had so much outgoing concern for the welfare of others that he really believed it is more blessed to give than to receive—what a happy world we would have! (p.308)

If all these things were so, there would be no need for the law! And, wouldn't a Christian, a true Christian, with God's Holy Spirit, be doing these things as a result of his or her new godly imparted nature?

"Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine; According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust." – 1 Timothy 1:9-11

HWA implies that it is the law that defines what is righteousness as well as what is sin. Without the law, in his view, people would do evil, as though the law was responsible. Yet laws come about as a result of people doing evil in the first place. For instance, if no one ever killed another in anger, there would be no need to have a law making it a sin to do so. HWA puts the cart before the horse in this regard.

But, further, God has set in motion physical laws that operate in our bodies and minds, as

well as the spiritual law. (p.309)

Stop and think carefully about what HWA has just declared here. The "spiritual law" operates in our bodies just like the physical laws (laws of physics). In other writings of HWA, he has made this same declaration, equating the law as having control over us just as the law of gravity.

No longer will Satan be able to broadcast through the air into the spirit in man. No longer shall he be able to inject into unsuspecting humans his satanic nature—which we have been misled into calling "human nature." (p.310)

This ignores that the ultimate problem of mankind is not Satan, but man's heritage², being of Adam. Romans 5:14: "Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come."

"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." – 1 Corinthians 15:22

Unless one is born from above; born of God, that one, born after the pattern of Adam, will perish.

HWA taught obedience to the law, claiming that obedience to the law was obedience to God. Jesus never referred to the law as "God's law," but rather, in conversation with the Jews of his time, referred to it as "their" law (John 15:25; John 8:17; John 10:34), the "law of Moses" (Luke 24:44; John 7:23), or "your" law (John 8:17, John 10:34); even stating it was Moses who gave them the law (John 7:19), never "God's law."

Where people have been misled more than perhaps any other deception, is in believing the law must be observed; must be kept. People were taught to be servants of the law; slaves of the law, for, as Paul declared in the above quote, you are the servant of the one you obey, and if you live to obey the law, you are the servant of the law, and all the law could ever do was condemn to death the one who broke it. No wonder Paul declared in Romans 7:6 that Christians die to the law in order to be bound to Christ. A Christian cannot serve two masters.

From the time of Christ's supernatural takeover, and Satan's banishment, God's law and the word of the Eternal shall go forth from Zion, spreading over the whole earth. (Isa. 2:3). (p. 311)

"And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem." – Isaiah 2:3

It is easy to misunderstand and misinterpret prophecies. The religious Jews of Jesus' time felt no prophet could come out of Galilee, and the Messiah was to come out of Bethlehem. They didn't bother to think the Messiah could move.

In Jeremiah 31:31, the New Covenant prophesied for when Christ has returned and set up his Kingdom is described as not being like the old covenant (law) but is a New Covenant, written on the heart and not written on stone like the old one. But HWA doesn't bother to make the connection between the two similar prophecies.

The 6,000 *sentence* God placed on Adam's world, of being cut off from God, will be ended. (p. 311)

If there were such a "sentence" it was lifted by Christ after his sacrifice; not 2000 years later.

What glory! A new day shall have dawned. Peace shall soon come. Men shall turn from the way of "get" to the way of "give"—God's way of love. (p. 311)

HWA tends to redefine everything in relation to God and the "truth." HWA here defines God's way of love as being the way of give as contrasted to the way of get. This is wrong, but it serves HWA's purpose of getting people to give... to him.

This is not to say the way of love is not the way of give; that is just a small part of the overall picture. The way of God is indeed love. As Paul wrote, the only thing that matters is faith expressing itself through love, and here we see the dimension missing from HWA's formula. Faith.

But with Christ's coming shall begin the process of re-education—of opening deceived minds—of un-deceiving minds, and bringing them to a voluntary repentance. (p.311)

"And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest." – Hebrews 8:11

What HWA cannot understand is that it is God who will change the hearts of people, and not people changing their own hearts through some process of Orwellian re-education. It is not completely a matter of "bringing them to a voluntary repentance" but rather God "granting them repentance."

"When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life." – Acts 11:18

"In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;" – 2 Timothy 2:25

HWA taught that repentance was a process of self-flagellation, as it were. One had to "work up" an attitude of "I'm bad" in order to please God, as though it was some process of purging not unlike what was seen under the Chinese communist regime in times past when one of their top people were perceived to "slip" from the strait and narrow.

There are other resources on this website that cover this in greater detail. In the meantime, rest assured HWA will continue to pound into the minds of his followers and readers that the law, given only to Israel by covenant, is the law that somehow applies to all men at all times in all places, contrary to the law! No one can become a party to a covenant who was not originally a party to it once it has been ratified (put in force). Even HWA declared this in his "Which Day is the Christian Sabbath" booklet, then went on to include Christians into that covenant! [Read my critique of the booklet.]

Once a covenant is signed, sealed, or ratified—confirmed—it cannot be added to (Gal. 3:15). Anything appearing beneath the signature is not legally any part of the covenant. You read of the actual making of the old covenant, and sealing it with blood, in Exodus 24:6-8. And notice (verse 8), it concludes with the words "the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you." (Which Day is the Christian Sabbath)

Seeing as people's critical thinking skills have been suppressed through the indoctrination techniques and mind control techniques after that, the faithful follower will never even think to question HWA was wrong or could be wrong. The answers to problems must lie elsewhere, and convenient scapegoats are easy to find.

Notice what God promised his people: "...if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day...all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God. (p.319)

The assumption HWA wishes his followers and readers here to make is that they are now God's promised people; not Israel. But God is addressing ancient Israel. It is an assumption to believe this, or any of what God directed toward Israel and required of them, applies to modern day Christians. If it did, there would be plain Scriptures to support this conclusion. The "truth" would be "plain" but instead we see no such evidence. All we see are assumptions and rationalizations—a dangerous way to base one's beliefs. What better way to fall into error? Yet HWA did this time after time.

He follows by describing what would happen to Israel, and what will happen, then makes a heading of how God will deal with other "nations"—and this is important to see: God is talking about nations and not individuals, regardless of nationality, later known as Christians.

Once the returning Christ conquers this earth, he will usher in an era of total literacy, total education—and give the world one new, pure language. This subject by itself needs a book to describe. The whole literary processes of the whole earth changed. Today, all languages are corrupt. They are literally filled with pagan, heathen terms—superstition—misnomers—exceptions to rules—peculiar idioms.

God says: "For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent" (Zeph. 3:9). (p.230)

It seems everything has to be defined as corrupt and defiled. HWA's followers are conditioned to revile anything outside the group. If language is defiled and corrupt, then so would be the thinking process of those in the world! This is but part of the process of rejecting anything or anyone outside the group that might produce evidence counter to their now excepted beliefs.

Never again will any person become rich from investing in the labors and creative ability of another person. No more stock markets, world banks, financing centers, insurance companies, mortgage companies, loan agencies, or time payments.

In God's abundant government people will buy only what they need, when they can afford it, when they have the cash to pay for it. No more interest. And no more taxes. (p.322)

Just before this declaration of HWA's, he stated that Jerusalem would become the financial center of the earth! More cognitive dissonance.

Also, all these things are pictured in a negative light. Why? One must think a bit to make the connections.

Before doing so, it should be pointed out that HWA became rich off the "labors and creative abilities" of others by demanding tithes from their incomes; their wages.

Why would, for instance, insurance companies be painted in such a negative light? They serve a valuable service in that one could provide for their family in the event of their untimely death. After all, only an "infidel" doesn't take care of his own family. But insurance requires the payment of a premium; money spent on an "intangible" that HWA sees as better "spent" on him, therefore this negative regard for insurance companies. To word this another way, HWA didn't mind robbing widows and orphans.

Time payments are useful for acquiring things you need but do not have the funds for when you need them. But again, money is being spent by the member or perspective member that might have gone to him.

Then taxes are cast in this evil light. The bane of mankind. No problem though, for HWA has a "better" idea—tithing, and this is where he goes next in this chapter that is dealing with the "gospel of the Kingdom" where the burdens of the old covenant are required of Christians today, and in the "World Tomorrow."

But the tithing system will be universal. (p.322)

No Scriptural references; nothing to back up this matter-of-fact statement of his. Let the reader read on to see how HWA goes about justifying this teaching without a "thus saith the Lord."

"Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? [And God answers] In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it" (Mal. 3:8-10). That's a prophecy for now.

And what a blessing that will be. None of the financial burdens that curse most peoples today. (pp. 322-333)

What's wrong with this picture? Several things.

1. This is addressed to Israel and not the whole world.
2. Tithes are based upon produce and livestock. One does not put money in a "storehouse."
3. This prophecy is for now only because HWA declares it so. Again, he offers no proof of his conclusions.

In short, under the New Covenant, which Christ is coming to usher in, what we shall see on earth is happiness, peace, abundance and justice for all. Did you ever read just what this

New Covenant will consist of? Did you suppose it will do away with God's laws? Exactly the opposite. "For this is the covenant [that Christ is coming to establish, you'll read in Hebrews 8:10]...I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts...." (pp. 326-327)

Notice if you will that this New Covenant is ushered in at the return of Christ; and not before. Also, HWA neglects to point out a few other pertinent facts: This covenant is directed toward Israel and Judah, just as the Old was, and this covenant is not to be like that previous covenant (verse 9), ergo that previous law.

This New Covenant was already instituted by Christ, by His spilled blood. God poured out His Spirit on those assembled in Jerusalem on Pentecost.

"Saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you." – Hebrews 9:20

Not something to happen in the future; it happened then.

"And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." – Matthew 26:26-28

God gave seven annual Festivals and Holy Days he commanded to be observed. They contained great and important meaning. They pictured God's master plan for working out his purpose for humanity. They were established forever. Jesus observed them, setting us an example. The apostles observed them (Acts 18:21; 20:6, 16; I Cor. 5:8; 16:8). The true, original Church—including gentile converts—kept them. (pp. 327-328)

This should be getting old by now; but God commanded these Festivals to be observed by Israel, and no one else.

They did not so much picture some master plan as much as they pointed to Christ and His redemption of mankind.

They were not established forever, and HWA does not bother to "prove" this.

That Jesus observed them is not a reason to conclude He was setting us some example. He was Jewish, born under the law (Gal. 4:4) and was obligated to observe them. He also observed the Festival of Lights, which is not commanded. Passover, one of these commanded Festivals, had to be observed within the confines of Israel.

That the apostles would have kept them is also no proof that Gentile Christians were to keep them. Gentile converts were envisioned as "grafted in" to those who were of Israel and were in receipt of the promises made to Abraham, justified by faith only.

From here, HWA goes into a discussion as to how the nations of the world will be keeping the Feast of Tabernacles during the reign of Jesus Christ. What is left unanswered and unaddressed is that they are not required today. He makes the reader assume that, if they were required before of Israel, and all other people had fallen into paganism, and if all nations future are to keep them, they must be kept today. It is another rationalization—another assumption. And as I have stated so many times prior, assumptions and rationalizations are no way to go about basing your beliefs.

Then he brings up another sophistic argument concerning the Holy Days, commanded of Israel to keep, insisting that Christianity today "hates" those days, and that this is a proof they are to be kept, through the rationalization he uses. But Christianity does not "hate" the Holy Days. They are, if anything, indifferent about them. They are seen for what they are; days commanded of Israel, and no one else. To assume they are required of all is to make a very large assumption.

In contrast to these Holy Days, HWA insists that the days kept by Christianity are "pagan" days: Christmas, New Year's, Easter, and others, claiming God hates these days. So, let's put on our critical thinking caps and ask the logical question, "What makes these days "pagan"? Their originations? Then wouldn't it make sense if people were observing Christmas only if they were observing the birth of some pagan deity? But the "rationalization" to brand it pagan was in relation to the time of year (near the winter solstice) and the fact that there is no command to observe the birth of Christ. In other words, if there is no command to observe it, it is the same as a command to not keep it.

Therefore, by this rationalization, it is wrong to try and honor God and His Son by having some observance that acknowledges the birth of the Savior of mankind; arguably an important event! So what if we don't know the exact day? What if we did? But then we get into other rationalizations made concerning birthdays in general, in order to discredit an observation of the birth of Jesus the Christ.

If we applied the teachings found in the writings of the apostles, we would understand that we are not to judge others for their observance of a "day" when we personally have a problem with it. We are not to force our views or opinions on others over disputable matters. But the temptation is too great for those self-righteous ones who feel they must tell others what they can and can't do; what days to observe and not observe, building their whole belief system one assumption upon another; one rationalization upon another.

Yet HWA rationalizes that God does not accept this kind of "observance" or "worship." To word this another way, God does not take into consideration one's faith. Your faith is subordinated to things physical, such as the observance of days. HWA here is removing people's faith and replacing it with physical things, yet God declared those who worship Him must do so in faith and in truth, and the truth here is that Jesus was born and did die for sinners so that they could have everlasting life. This truth and faith are what are being done away with in true hypocritical fashion, replacing faith and truth with the observance of the "proper" days which were not commanded of Christians in the first place! Those that would seek to deceive will do everything they can to ruin faith and get people's focus and attention off of Christ and on to something else, in this case the observance of Holy Days, insisting they are required of Christians.

Another critical thinking exercise then: What happens, according to HWA, if one does not keep the Holy Days? What happens to one who does not keep the Sabbath? HWA declares they are not Christians. They are the deceived. Their faith in Jesus as their Christ is counted as nothing; faith is counted as nothing. Observance of days is what defines a Christian to HWA. The Sabbath is the "sign" of a true Christian. Critical thinking would have us ask, "can a false Christian keep the Sabbath?" If so, then how can it possibly be the sign of a true Christian? If it were, then all false Christians would be true Christians based upon their observance of the Sabbath! You may try to rationalize around this, claiming the false Christian doesn't really keep the Sabbath, but then I would have to ask you, "do you always keep the Sabbath perfectly?" Then what's the difference between you and the "false" Christian? Nothing. Remember, the law required perfect obedience. If you are going to make the law the yardstick whereby Christians are judged, then you condemn yourself, and you have neglected faith.

HWA now reiterates the coming Kingdom and government of God. (p. 330) Rarely does he mention it is Jesus who rules this Kingdom, and is King of this Kingdom. The main focus is upon the Kingdom, and not the King. The wording is "Kingdom of God" and not "Kingdom of Jesus Christ." Along with this, HWA dangles the carrot out by saying that there will be converted people ruling under God in this Kingdom. Who are these converted people? Those who follow HWA. Those who "prove" their allegiance to God by keeping the law; keeping the Holy Days; keeping the Sabbath. It is a religion of works without faith.

Notice now the wording of HWA concerning this above:

**The only hope of justice—of peace—of truth—of right solutions to all this world's problems
—is the coming in power and glory of Christ to set up world government. Right government.
The government of God! (p. 331)**

What is the focus on? Jesus Christ, or this government? Which is more important? Without the King, there is no Kingdom. Salvation is not a result of believing in the Kingdom, but in Christ. Christ is the way, the truth, and the life—not the Kingdom. Jesus is the resurrection; not the Kingdom. The problems of mankind are not solved by the Kingdom and government, but by Christ.

This gospel of the Kingdom preached by HWA appears to be in line with what we read in Scripture. But how far off does a gospel need to be in order to be false? When the apostle Paul addresses the Galatians regarding the gospel, he calls them foolish for being so easily influenced by a false gospel; a gospel that is not about the "hearing of faith." They became influenced by those who insisted on teaching the law. (Gal. 3:1-3)

**In the soon-coming government of God, every official placed in authority shall have been
tried and tested, trained, experienced and qualified, by God's qualifications. (p. 332)**

But what of those ministers who claim to head the government of God on earth today, through the church? How was HWA tried and tested, trained and when did he acquire the experience to head "the" church? He claimed to have personal revelation from God. This is an easy claim to make, and who is going to prove you lied? In this, HWA was his own witness. He was not tried and tested; he was not trained.

HWA then brings up Abraham and claims that Abraham was the only man on earth of character who was meek and "submissive and obedient to God—to God's laws..." (p. 333). This lie has been emphasized over and over by HWA; everything is about God's law, being equated on par with God Himself.

The only way HWA and those who would follow him can make a case for Abraham having had the law given to Israel, and having kept that law is to use inference and assumption from one Scripture:

"Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws." – Genesis 26:5

Notice God says "my laws" and not some other law, given to Israel later. Also consider who wrote this: Moses, who was writing to his target audience, the children of Israel, who were being given a law, statutes, etc. This may well have been Moses' way of telling them that "Abraham did what all was required of him, and now you should do all that is required of you."

On page 334, HWA quotes how Gentile believers are heirs according to the promise in Abraham, yet HWA neglects to tell his readers about these promises in that they are not based upon law or obedience to the law.

"For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect: Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression. Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all," – Romans 4:13-16

[Three men—Peter, James and John, among the original twelve disciples—were privileged to see the Kingdom of God in a vision \(Matt. 17:9\) \(p. 336\)](#)

As mentioned before, everything is seen through the lens of the Kingdom. In this transfiguration, Jesus is seen in a glorified state, in the company of Moses and Elijah. There is no setting, such as a Kingdom. What is important but overlooked by HWA is what was said from on high. They hear a voice, from the Father, stating: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." (Mt. 17:5) They were instructed to hear Jesus; not Jesus AND Moses and Elijah, who represented the law and prophets. Yet HWA constantly insisted Christians were to "hear" (heed) Moses and the law.

[Actually, the gospel and religious development is merely spiritual education. \(p. 337\)](#)

The gospel is not to be so trivialized as HWA does here. The gospel is:

"...the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." (Romans 1:16)

It is not a matter of education, it is a matter of belief. It is a matter of faith. One either examines the evidence and believes it, or they do not.

HWA now goes into the realm of speculation as to which men of the Bible will be performing which functions in the Kingdom. His favorite phrase here is "It seems evident" which really means he is guessing. But his guess is as good as anyone's, so why not proffer his? After all, who can possibly prove him wrong?

Summary statements:

HWA claimed to reveal the "Mystery of the Ages." Indeed, in Scripture there are mysteries from the foundation of the world, but these mysteries of HWA's are not the mysteries of Scripture revealed.

The mysteries of the Bible, such as the mystery of the Kingdom of God, have entirely different revelations in Scripture than that of HWA's interpretations. Everything is interpreted through the law. Grace and faith were given

little more than lip service.

"And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand." – Luke 8:10

HWA rejected the revelations of the Kingdom of God given from the book of Acts forward. It is as though there was no death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

"For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in." – Romans 11:25

The law had a lot to do with the blindness that was Israel's. There was a lesson to learn from the law; that no one could keep it perfectly—all came under its condemnation who tried to live by it. To many, it became an end in itself.

"Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech: And not as Moses, which put a veil over his face, that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished: But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which veil is done away in Christ." – 2 Corinthians 3:12-14

Those hung up in the law cannot see that that which was abolished is what Moses had with him when his face shown. Those hung up in the law cannot see that this veil has to do with adhering to the Old Testament law.

"Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God." – 1 Corinthians 4:1

In the New Testament Scriptures, these mysteries are discussed and alluded to. What is of interest is whether these mysteries of HWA are the same mysteries that the true ministers of God are stewards of.

"Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself:" – Ephesians 1:9

"Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ)" – Ephesians 3:4

"And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel," – Ephesians 6:19

This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church. – Ephesians 5:32

"And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel," – Ephesians 6:19

"Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints:" – Colossians 1:26

"To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:" – Colossians 1:27

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Footnotes for Chapter Seven:

1 See Jesus' Two Natures, which show He was both God *and* man.

2 This can also be referred to as man's "fallen nature."