

**“And this Gospel ,,
shall be preached...”**
Matthew 24:14

Sermon Summaries from Ministers of the Worldwide Church of God

God's Master Plan

By Herbert W. Armstrong

I wonder if you realize why you are here? God had a purpose when He put people on the earth.

What the world does not know is that when the first man and woman rejected God, they rejected Him as the Revealer of knowledge. The first thing God did was to *begin to give them knowledge*. You've got to remember that here was a man and a woman created, and they were made mature, not little babies. They were grown, they were full size, they were mature—just suddenly created. They had never been born, never been a human being before.

God created a man and a woman, whole and complete. Can you imagine that? Did you ever think about that before? Now, they had mature minds, but their minds did not have any knowledge in them. They had ability to think, they had ability to reason, they had ability to make decisions, but they didn't have any knowledge. The first thing God did was to begin to talk to them. Those two people, Adam and Eve, had the wonderful privilege of just sitting down and talking with God Himself. Think of that! God told them why they had been created. He told them what His plan was for them.

Purpose of Creation

Why did God create those two people? Why were you born? What is the real purpose of Eternal

God? God is a Creator, but the most important thing He is trying to create is holy, righteous, perfect character in other beings that are actually separate entities from God Himself.

That is something that even God can't do Himself. *Did you know that? God cannot just put perfect character in you. It wouldn't be character, because character is the ability of one to come to the knowledge of what is right as opposed to what is wrong, to decide to do right even though he wants to do what is wrong. He has to resist himself and have the willpower to do the right, whether he wants to or not, because he knows it's right. That is what God has, that kind of character. We're put here to build that kind of character.*

Now I'll tell you one thing. The younger son in the parable who went away and wasted his whole inheritance in riotous living was not really building much character, was he, in that kind of a life?

God's Great Calling

Did you know that 40 years before Moses was called to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt, God was preparing him to do that job? God had Moses' mother put him into a little basket, and he floated in the Nile River until the princess, the daughter of the pharaoh, found him and took him home to keep him. So Moses was raised like a prince. He was given all of the education and all of

the advantages of a prince. God had put him through other experiences, and he had to flee away after a deed he did that was wrong.

Quite some time later, when he was 80 years of age, he was walking along one day and he passed a burning bush that never burned up, even though it didn't have that much wood to it. It was so unusual that Moses turned back to see what it was. Then God spoke to him out of the bush. God said, "Moses, take your shoes off your feet. You're standing on holy ground because I am here." Then God said, "Moses, I am calling you and I am going to have you lead the children of Israel over to a land I promised to Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, their forefathers." But Moses said, "No, Lord, I don't want to do it. You know I stutter. I don't speak very well, so count me out Lord. Get someone else." The Lord said, "*You will do what I tell you.* I know about your impediment of speech, and I have appointed your brother Aaron to be your spokesman."

If God calls anyone to do something, God makes him do it, whether he wants to or not.

A little bit later, God called Jeremiah to be a prophet, but Jeremiah said, "Oh no, Lord, count me out. I'm too young." God said, "*You will do what I'm calling you to do.*" Jeremiah said, "But Lord, you will have me go before kings, and I would just be overawed by their stern faces." But God said, "Don't be afraid of their faces, because I will be with you, and *you will do what I've called you to do.*"

Then God called Isaiah and Isaiah said: "Oh no, Lord, count me out, I don't want to do what you want me to do. I'm a man of unclean lips." So God had an angel take tongs and a coal of fire to his lips and his lips were cleansed." Then Isaiah said, "Well, here I am. Send me."

God called Jonah and wanted him to go and warn Nineveh. Jonah ran away and tried to get away in a boat. He tried to run away from God. God had him thrown overboard and swallowed up by a big special fish that God had created just for that purpose, a certain kind of a whale. Finally in the belly of the fish, Jonah repented and said, "I'll do what you want me to do if you'll let me out of here." It was a type of the resurrection of Christ — he had been in the belly of the whale for three days and three nights.

The apostle Paul didn't want to do what God wanted him to do. He was going along having Christians slaughtered. He was against Christianity. He was getting all the Christians he could and delivering them to be killed. Then God struck him down. God said, "Saul (Paul was originally called Saul), I am Jesus that you have been persecuting. Why are you persecuting me? Now Saul, *you will do what I tell you.*" Then his name was changed to Paul, and he became a great apostle.

There were a couple of young men who were brothers, Peter and Andrew, who wanted to be fishermen. They were in a boat fishing in the Sea of Galilee. Jesus said to them, "Follow me." Peter and Andrew forsook all and they followed Christ, which was very unusual because very few people want to do what God wants them to do. They usually want to do just the opposite.

Adam Rejected Revelation

Adam and Eve had the first chance and God talked to them. As I said, they had mature minds but had no knowledge in their minds. So God began to give them knowledge. Finally they said: "Well, God, we'll think out our own knowledge. We'll produce our own knowledge. We don't want to receive any more knowledge from you." They said, "We rebel against you and we reject you as God." (This was after Satan got to Eve.) God talked to them first and then He allowed Satan to get to them. Satan did it through Eve. Eve was deceived, but Adam went along with her and rejected God as their religious head and God, and rejected Him as their Ruler and King, and rejected Him as a Revealer of knowledge. So God threw them out of the Garden of Eden, as you will find at the end of the third chapter of Genesis. God said to them, "O.K., you have made your decision. So you go and build your own fund of knowledge."

Now what we have in high schools, the colleges and the universities of this world is the fund of knowledge that men have built without any help from God, but with an awful lot of help from Satan the devil. "You go and form your own religions," Satan said. "You create your own ideas of who you think God is and make your own gods out of wood or stone or marble. You go and form your own governments." And they have.

Now, we have the governments of this world, and

I know the heads of them. They have problems that are way over their heads, much greater than they have any ability to solve.

I talk to them about their problems, and I tell them that there are two ways of life. One of them is the give way and one is the get way. There are just two ways—you either give or you get.

Really, a better word for give is love, meaning *outgoing concern, not incoming lust*. The love way, then, is concern for others and for their good, wanting to help others, wanting to cooperate, wanting to do good, wanting to benefit others and being concerned as much for their welfare and what they have and possess as you are about your own. The get way is the way of vanity, first of all. It is the way of self. I love me and I don't care about anyone else. That is the way this world has been living all of these years.

Man Shut Off from God

God said to Adam, "You have rejected me." He drove man and woman out of the Garden of Eden—shut them off from going back and receiving His Holy Spirit, which would have given them God's knowledge. *He shut them off from God's Government.* And so what do we have? The governments that men have formed—but men have been influenced by Satan.

God did not shut Satan off. He left Satan to rule the earth for 6,000 years. The six days, which are called Creation back in the first chapter of Genesis, are only typical of the 6,000 years that God made for mankind to go its own way, *influenced, of course, by Satan.*

Look where we are. Governments are fighting against one another all of the time. Knowledge is as far away from God's truth as you can get. I'll tell you why. God said go form your own education. They have done that. That's what we have in the world. We have been going on for 6,000 years in a world like that.

Most of that 6,000 years the only means of travel was by foot or by a mule, donkey, horse or a row boat or a sailboat, and they didn't seem to modernize and get the kind of world we have today until after the printing press, about 400 years ago or so.

Then we got into the diffusion of education. But *it's the wrong education and it's this world's type of*

education. That's what the world has today.

God punishes every son that He loves. But do you know that God's punishment is never revenge? It is never a desire to hurt or to harm. God's punishment is always corrective, it is always to try to help us and it is always done in love for us. It is to help us overcome what is harming us and start doing the things that are good for us.

God wants us to have every good thing. He wants us to have fun, but going the way of riotous living instead of the way of God is not the way of real lasting pleasure or anything of the kind. If it were good for you, God would want you to do it. God only forbids those things that are harmful to you.

What I finally want to get to is this. God had set a master plan, and each of the original six days of renewing the face of the earth—as we call the days of creation back in the first chapter of Genesis—was typical of a thousand years in God's overall master plan to work out His purpose here below on earth.

God is going to soon produce a new world. Now remember, the present world has been cut off from God, absolutely cut off. God put angels so no one then could get into the Garden of Eden to receive God's Holy Spirit.

Others later have been called and received God's Holy Spirit, but it has been only a few. I showed you a while ago how God called Moses, and then how He called Isaiah, Jeremiah, and the apostle Paul. He finally called me, last of all.

We're getting down to the end of that 6,000 years. *God didn't intend this to go on forever.* God put a time limit on it.

Man is cut off from God. Jesus said, "No man can come to me except the Father who has sent me draw him." Now if any man tries to get to God any way but through Christ, he is a thief and a robber. You can't get salvation except from Christ. But you can't come to Christ unless the Father draw you. *God is now calling only a very few.*

World Not Being Judged Now

When God shut mankind off from Him, He ceased judging them. Then God wasn't judging them one way or the other. Those that God calls, God judges. God called Noah. God called Moses. He called Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Now if they had refused they were being judged when they were called.

You read in the Bible that judgment has already begun at the House of God, at God's own Church. Judgment is on us, brethren. We are those whom God has called.

God is not letting it go on forever and ever that Satan is influencing man, in this which has become Satan's world. In II Corinthians 4:4 you read that Satan is the god of this world. This world worships a god and the god it worships is Satan, and the world doesn't know that.

If I tell you that Baptists, that Methodists and Presbyterians worship the wrong God you will think that I'm wrong because you have been led to think that they are right. They all think that everyone is lost unless they get saved. And that is the most universal misconception that exists today. That is the most believed misconception and lie of any by far.

Those that are not called cannot come to Christ. No man can come to Christ except the Father draw him. But what about those the Father does not draw? Well, they just are not being judged. However, whatever they do, the record is there. It is going to come up in their judgment. Jesus Christ spoke about "the judgment"; that it will be better for Sodom and Gomorrah than for those hypocrites who were so opposed to Him. Others are not yet being judged. But whatever they did in this life is going to come up in the judgment, and then it is *going to be judged. They will be given a chance to repent of it and to be saved.* That is the Great White Throne Judgment, more than a thousand years off from now.

End of This Age Imminent

Those now called have Satan to overcome. Those that will be called in the Millennium will not have to overcome Satan. Notice the difference: Those

who are called now, if we do overcome, will sit with Christ in His throne ruling, and those saved later will not. We have Satan to overcome, but we have a greater thing waiting for us.

We must grow in grace and knowledge. We are living in the kind of a world where God cut man off and told man to go ahead and form his own governments, his own education and his own religions. Look at the religions wars have been fought over. But God did put a time limit on it, and we are very near the end of that time. The chronology may be anywhere from two to 10 or 15 years, I don't know, but I know that we are in the very last days now. It's not going to be very long now. Every sign in the world shows that we are right at the time. It's coming very, very soon now.

God has called me to get the Church ready, because when He comes, the Church is called His wife and in Revelation 19 it says that His wife has made herself ready. Christ loved the Church, and He gave Himself for it that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church not having spot or wrinkle, but that it might be a holy Church without blemish. Well this Church is not without blemish. We have got spots and wrinkles. Let's not kid ourselves.

Remember that God is going to give us everything that is good for us. God is for every kind of fun that is lasting and not harmful. He is not for *these things that are in the world. Pot, dope, all of those things that are going around today, those are all things that Satan is using.* You need to be careful to know whether it is of Satan and whether it is a deception or whether it is true and whether it is of God. The things of God are right, and we just need to realize that we are at the end of this age. It isn't going to go on this way much longer.