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# PASTOR GENERAL'S REPORT

Greetings, ministers and wives!

We talk a lot about the falling away in 2 Thessalonians 2. That passage discusses a man of sin, who is no doubt possessed by the devil, and it talks about Satan. If we look at this in a shallow way, we could think that the man of sin is the cause of all the problems in the Church, or that Satan is. That is not the case.

“Let no man deceive you by any means: for *that day* [Christ's Second Coming] *shall not come*, except there come a falling away first, AND that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition.”

Notice that! The big problem here is the *falling away* FIRST—and then, of course, the man of sin does his work. But what could that man of sin do if you didn't have this great falling away first? He could do nothing. He'd probably never get into that office in the first place—he would be *disfellowshipped!*

*He is not the problem—the people are the problem!*

The people lost their Head; their Head is no longer leading them. So, they allowed this man of sin to be their head. They'll let a man directed by the devil be their head, or some other evil man—but they won't *submit* to their spiritual Head!

“And then shall that Wicked [the devil] be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders” (verses 8-9).

Is Satan the problem? No, he isn't. He has his part, of course, but the *people* are the problem. Notice: “And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that [are perishing]; *because THEY received not the love of the truth*, that they might be saved.”

They didn't receive the LOVE of God's truth—which, first of all, means God's government. They didn't LOVE God's government, and as a result we have this massive falling away! Of all things, they would follow a man that is so *evil* that he's called “the man of sin, the son of perdition”! That's like being called the devil!

It's not the man of sin that is the problem. It's not even the devil. After all, we've dealt with both of them, haven't we? We've fought the man of sin and overcame him, and we've overcome the devil as Christ did.

Why would the Laodiceans be so quick to follow a man of sin? That shows something is very wrong. *They are followers, not leaders!*

If you follow Jesus Christ as your Head, He's going to make you a LEADER! That's why you're here. You're going to be a king priest and you're going to teach in the World Tomorrow. You're going to lead this world!

Why do we even *have* all this truth? What good is it if we're not preparing to TEACH IT? What good is it if we don't PROPHECY AGAIN? That's what God expects. If you love God's truth, that's what you will do. That's the Work! That's the *purpose* of all of this. That's why we're here today. The Laodiceans don't understand that any more.

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Loving God's truth means loving the world and giving that truth to them. If you love the truth, you'll give that truth to the world. Isn't that what Jesus Christ did? We're not here to GET, but to GIVE. What is the point of our being here if we don't give all this truth like our Husband did, and even give our lives if we have to? If you love God's truth, you love God, and you love prophesying again.

None of the instruction you received at the ministerial conference is of any value unless you *prophesy again*. God gives instruction like that so we DO something with it! God gives His truth so we will *spread it*—to the WHOLE WORLD!

The people of this world needs that hope so badly. They don't know how to solve their problems; they muddle around, hoping that somehow it'll work out okay, and it doesn't. The only way things work out is if we submit to our Head—whether it's a marriage or a family or a Church or *anything*. If you try to do it different than what God says, it won't work!

*It's not the revelation we have that matters.* Look at all the revelation the Worldwide Church of God had—and now they have lost it all! They had more revelation than God has ever given to any Church, and they LOST it! They would rather have *things* than God's precious truth. If you don't love God's truth and don't want to get it out to this world, you're going to lose it. Satan will take it away.

*It's not winning in court that matters.* It's what we DO with what we win that matters! It's getting it out to this world. That's what matters!

*It's not Imperial College that matters.* It's getting that message out to the world. We give it to the young people and tell them that if we don't get this out to the world, we have failed!

Some people get hung up on the way something has been done at headquarters that is insignificant. What is important? What do you have your minds on? What do you think about and pray about?

What is the point of proving all things? Someone can say, *Oh, I really proved that—isn't that exciting?* Not if you don't do something with it! We must be DOERS, and we must bear fruit.

We are abnormal people in this way. We're not here just to relax and have a Church. We're here to DO A JOB! God blesses us with all these blessings because we are prophesying again. If we ever ceased to do that, you can be sure everything would go downhill in a hurry.

Love is the deepest subject in the Bible. God is love, and God is giving—God *is* prophesying again, if you look at it that way. That's what we are to become. We are to BECOME LOVE, because we are becoming God.

With love, in Christ's service,



## CHURCH ADMINISTRATION

### POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

**Question:** When is it okay for a dating couple to kiss each other? Is it permissible at all prior to marriage?

**Answer:** During engagement, a fond embrace and a kiss—if not prolonged—is not wrong. But remember,

the male is sexually aroused in five to ten seconds or less. Any such embrace or kiss ought never be prolonged sufficiently to produce arousal and desire. For further information, refer to *The Missing Dimension in Sex*, especially the section on engagement period conduct, pages 178-180.

# EDITORIAL SERVICES

We have a busy year ahead of us in Editorial. In 2005, we plan to produce 85 new English-language periodicals. That's 10 *Philadelphia Trumpets*, 10 *Philadelphia Newses*, 6 *Royal Visions*, 4 *True Educations*, 12 *Imperial College Bible Correspondence Course* lessons, and 43 *Pastor General's Reports*. In addition to those would be all foreign-language publications, new booklets, booklet reprints, *Key of David* reprint articles, and publications like the *Feast Planner* and the *2005 Imperial College Envoy*, as well as the student-produced newsletter, *The Imperial Standard*.

This week we wrapped up our February *Trumpet* issue, with the cover story about the Asian tsunami. Mr. Flurry's "From the Editor" story, "Did the Tsunami Shake Your Faith?", is essentially the same as a television program he recorded on the subject which should air soon.

This issue marked the first time that the Spanish-language *Trumpet* plans to run the cover story concurrently with the English-language version. As soon as the final corrections were inserted, the two stories related to the cover were rushed off to be translated by Carlos Heyer. Thus the February Spanish *Trumpet* will have the same cover story as the English version; the rest of the con-

tents will be from the January issue.

The new *Trumpet* website is very near completion. Next week, the Editorial Roundtable group (five of us who meet weekly to discuss current events and *Trumpet* assignments) will meet with Patrick Hogan, the Imperial College student who has been working on the website. Patrick has the new website working, as well as an interface program that makes it easy for us to add new news items and articles. He is going to teach us how to use it so we can begin inserting news content immediately.

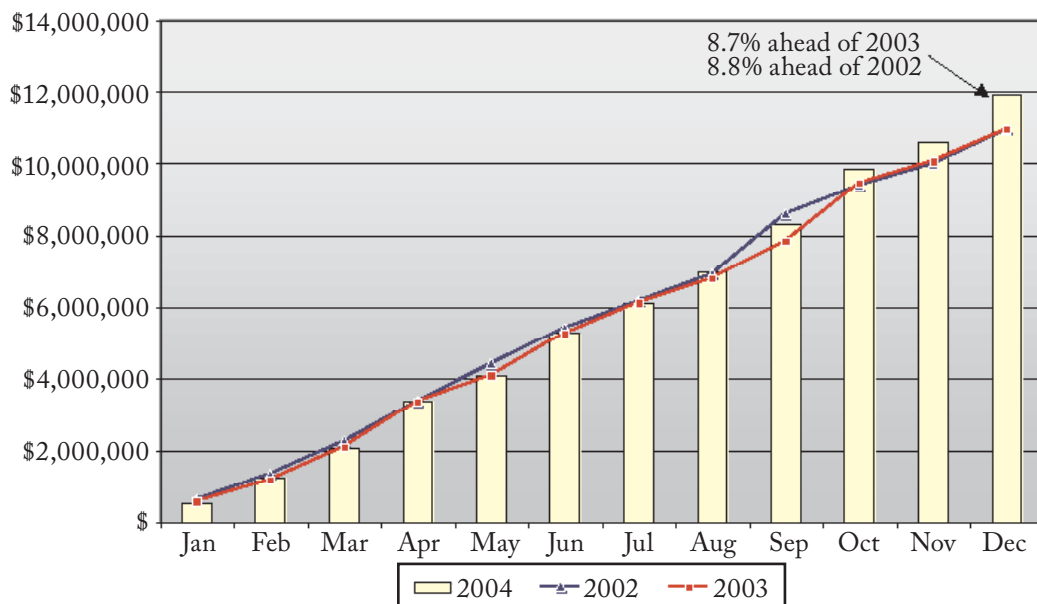
The new *Trumpet* site will have, at the start, weekly news updates—with the potential for even more regular updates. Each Monday we will post "This Week's Feature," the story of top prominence for that week. We plan to meet with Mr. Gerald Flurry each Monday morning to determine that week's top feature. Under the weekly feature will be other current headlines. A number of people from Editorial, the News Bureau, and the student work program—as well as, perhaps, some of the other ministers from headquarters—will be helping to research for content for the site.

We hope to launch the new *Trumpet* site by the end of February.

Joel Hilliker

# BUSINESS OFFICE

Philadelphia Church of God (USA)  
Cumulative Contribution Income





## REGIONAL REPORTS

### WESTERN UNITED STATES

The 14 field congregations in the Western Region of the U.S. continue to thrive, with just under 600 brethren (596 to be exact) now attending weekly Sabbath services in the states of California, Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Utah, Arizona, Nevada and Hawaii. Overall, the churches in this area are stable, unified, and headquarters-focused. Six PGC ministers, including myself, serve in this region.

In the past six months there have been 40 new contact requests in the region, mostly from Southern California. Approximately one-third of these new contacts have been invited to services. The trend appears to be that the majority (about 60 percent) are from “the highways and hedges,” while the minority (about 40 percent) are former baptized members of the WCG. Clearly it is a blessing being able to offer Mr. Armstrong’s works to those coming into the Church—especially those who are brand new and who don’t have a history with God’s end-time Elijah.

We have conducted a few baptisms lately and throughout the region there are now over two dozen prospective members, most of which are actively pursuing baptismal counseling.

Since last summer until now, five babies have been born in the region. There has also been some attrition: We had 5 deaths, 15 brethren relocated to other church areas outside the region and 12 brethren have been disfellowshipped or have left God’s Church of their own accord (i.e. self-disfellowshipped), mostly due to personal sins and weaknesses rather than doctrinal- or heretical-type problems.

The largest congregation in the region is the Southern California church, which meets in Fontana, California (formerly Chino), with 188 brethren in attendance. The “SoCal” congregation is the region’s most ethnically diverse group, with numerous African-Americans, Asians and Hispanics in attendance. In fact, so many Spanish-speaking brethren attend in SoCal that it is necessary to have a live Spanish translator and translation headsets available at services each week.

The SoCal congregation—along with the Salem, Oregon church, with 112 in attendance—truly has a similar “feel” to the headquarters church in Edmond, insofar as demographics are concerned: There is a wide cross-section of families with small children, teenagers,

singles, elderly, etc. Because of the considerable numbers in these two church areas, like headquarters, we are able to maintain children, teen and adult choirs, as well as conduct a variety of family-oriented church socials, campouts, sporting events, fundraisers, and other such activities.

Likewise, three other church areas in the region are currently sizeable enough to benefit from many of these same activities, including hearty Spokesman Club meetings: Phoenix, Arizona (63 brethren); Sacramento, California (56 brethren); and Spokane, Washington (57 brethren). Where possible, we try to offer as many of these unity-building opportunities to the smaller churches as well.

Since assuming responsibility as regional director for this region last August, one of my main goals has been to do my best to be an “extension of Mr. Flurry’s shadow” by closely adhering to his directive to show genuine love to the brethren of the region, specifically by conducting in-home visits. I found Mr. Dennis Leap’s PGR article on “How to Conduct Proper and Effective In-home Visits” (Oct. 21, 2004) especially helpful in this regard and recently gave a brief DELS lecture in SoCal based on this article. I plan to continue to emphasize the importance of “feeding the flock” by “circulating among the troops” throughout the rest of the region this year, as soon as I am able to organize and conduct further DELS meetings.

*Eric Anderson*

### AUSTRALASIA

Immediately before the 2005 Ministerial Conference, we were in top gear with the region’s PYC in Queensland. Campers came from all around Australia, New Zealand and one from Fiji. Many of the staff and campers said that this was their best camp experience. Just under half of the campers were first timers and all did very well. Because of it being summer and the weather normally very hot, brethren were asked to pray for cool weather. God answered with cool breezes up and down the valley and good cloud cover, resulting in moderate temperatures. Lectures were on *Mystery of the Ages*, *The Incredible Human Potential* and how to pray and study. Other classes included first aid and CPR, Boys’ Etiquette, Girls’ Etiquette, Sewing (girls), Speech Class (boys), Home-craft (girls), Dancing, Home Maintenance (boys and girls). Field Activities included canoeing, hiking, softball, soccer and basketball. Over the two Sabbaths, Bible Studies, sermonettes and sermons

had a common theme—to help the teenagers see their incredible future and how to face Satan’s world with increasingly heavy peer pressure. Campers left the camp spiritually, socially and mentally charged.

A family camp was held just out of Auckland for several days over the holiday period in New Zealand, while PYC was in action in Australia. This annual event led by Wally Lawton, is so much looked forward to by members in both North and South Islands.

Fundraising in New Zealand continues in full-swing as a regular family work and social activity. Last year Hamilton/Auckland N.Z. congregations raised \$5,000 by cutting and selling firewood. The Church has been provided several woodlots with good storage and a continuous supply of trees. Working bees are not only for the men, but all the families are involved together in what has become a great social and productive activity.

There are eight Spokesman Clubs and three Homemakers Clubs in N.Z. and Australia.

Youth camp in the Philippines is scheduled for May. A separate report on the Philippines will be made later.

Recently we went on two local TV stations in Perth and Adelaide which air *The Key Of David* at 11:30 a.m. on Sundays, in addition to nationwide Channel 10 at 4:30 a.m., Sundays. The responses are very encouraging from these new audiences and the costs are minimal. Likewise in the Philippines we have contracted with Studio 23 which again is providing a new and wider audience via cable. Responses there also are excellent and better than we have had before on a previous station.

A lot of interest is developing for the *Imperial College Bible Correspondence Course* and we have back orders on our database for 288, increasing constantly.

Australian Income for 2004 is up 2 percent on 2003 and 9 percent on 2002. Holy Day offerings increased by over 30 percent between the first and last holy days at the Feast of Tabernacles. Building fund contributions have tripled over the previous year. *Russell Williams*