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PASTOR GENERAL'S REPORT

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Greetings, ministers and wives!

Being a minister of God requires that you develop the love of God. You will never do your job correctly without that love. We will never accomplish our commission to this world without that love.

Notice how Jesus Christ taught this invaluable lesson to Peter, the chief apostle.

“So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, **LOVEST** thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, **Feed my lambs**” (John 21:15). This is a deep lesson in love.

I believe Jesus Christ called him “Simon” because he was acting like Simon. He wasn’t acting like the **PETER** that Jesus Christ wanted him to be—the stone—the leader of the disciples and of the Church!

“Peter,” He asked, “do you love Me more than all these?”

Remember, Peter had said that, “Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended” (Matthew 26:33). In other words, *These other guys may reject you, but I won’t*. Christ then prophesied that Peter would deny him three times that very night. When the prophecy proved true, Peter *wept bitterly!* There is no indication in Scripture that he was even present at the crucifixion of Christ. Peter was a very depressed man, I’m sure. He didn’t live up to his own expectations of himself; he didn’t do what he knew God wanted him to do.

But Jesus Christ wasn’t finished with him. And of course, those men didn’t have God’s Holy Spirit in them.

Nevertheless, Christ’s question made Peter feel uneasy. *Peter, DO YOU LOVE ME? Do you AGAPE Me—do you have the LOVE OF GOD for me?*

In the end, Judas didn’t love Christ. Lucifer didn’t. The Laodiceans do not love Christ today. But there is a love that will endure. To withstand crises, we must have this *agape* love—a love that is not in human beings. We must love Jesus Christ through everything in order to enter the Family of God, and that means *keeping the law of God* (1 John 5:3). That is what Christ was talking to Peter about.

Jesus Christ had just set a marvelous example of lawkeeping and love for the disciples. They witnessed that, and they knew something was terribly wrong with themselves. They could contrast what their Savior had just done with the fact that they had all run away when trouble came.

So John concluded his Gospel with this lesson. He is the only one who did this. The world doesn’t recognize this, because they don’t have that love. Lacking this love, most people run when pressure comes. They don’t know anything about the sacrificial love of God. They don’t understand that you and I could lay down our lives for a friend, or for our mate, or for God simply because we have something in us called *agape*—the love of God.

Peter didn’t have that, and Christ was showing that to him. He wants us to learn this too.

At the end of John 21:15, Christ told Peter, “Feed my lambs.” I have never understood this quite this way before: When Christ talks about *lambs*, He is discussing people who are not yet sheep. They have that potential, but they are young. I believe He is referring to prospective members, co-workers, and others God sends His message to.

In other words, Christ instructed Peter to **GET HIS MESSAGE OUT TO THE WORLD!** This is God’s number-one commission for His Church.

Then there was something else Christ wanted Peter to do. “He saith unto him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, **lovest** thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, **Feed my sheep**” (verse 16).

Sheep refers to the *second part* of the Church’s two-fold commission—feeding the Spirit-begotten members of the Church.

Jesus Christ was talking about the Work of God.

FULFILLING THESE TWO COMMISSIONS REQUIRES THE LOVE OF GOD!


The only way we will fulfill the Great Commission of going to the world is if WE LOVE THE PEOPLE OF THE WORLD. Christ told Peter, *If you don't have this love in you, you're not going to love the world by getting out there and doing everything possible to feed those people! I want you to love them, and help them understand God's purpose.* God's Church is a witness to the world in that way. Even if they understand only a part of it today, that's a start.

We are also responsible for distributing God's message to His Laodicean people. That requires tremendous love! My wife referred to *Malachi's Message* as "a book of love," because it was a warning to God's precious Family. It really *is* a book of love! God rebukes and even scourges people He loves. We send this message to the Family because we love them, and we want to see them make it into the eternal Family of God! They have turned from God, but He hasn't stopped loving them.

If you love people, you distribute God's message to them—whether they are lambs or sheep. You are active in doing the Work and getting the message out. All of our pieces of literature are books of God's *agape* love. That is what we are all about!

That is what Christ is trying to get across to His disciples in the final chapter of the book of John, just before He returned to God the Father.

With love, in Christ's service,



BUSINESS OFFICE

FEAST PLANNER UPDATE: GREENVILLE

Please take note of an update to the 2006 Feast Planner. The Summer Crest hotel listed in the planner will not be available this year. The property has new management,

is now an extended stay facility and can not serve our needs as a Feast site hotel. Please choose one of the other hotels listed in Greenville to make your reservation.

ARMSTRONG COLLEGE

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT ABOUT INTERNATIONAL STUDENT VISAS

Three years ago, the United States Immigration Department very rapidly approved our application to accept international students.

Applying was a complex process and the quickness of our approval was unusual. The application process included a great deal of paperwork, a visit by a government contractor and a decision by a government official here in Oklahoma.

Recently, the government notified us that they think they may have made a mistake. They are now reviewing our ability to accept international students on F-1 visas.

Our attorneys are currently working to preserve our ability to host international students. They have stated they believe we have a strong likelihood for success. However, there is the chance that our ability to accept international students will be revoked.

We want you to know about the process and to add it to your prayer list. Please pray that God's will be done regarding this process, for the effectiveness of our attorneys and for a favorable decision from the government officials who will make the decision.

Our attorneys are asking the State of Oklahoma to issue a written statement concerning the right of Herbert W. Armstrong College to function as a school. We think Oklahoma will comply, which would greatly help

our position with the immigration service.

Please be careful of what you say about this situation; do not speculate about details you do not know.

The only thing you should tell anyone is this: *CIS was reviewing schools in their system and, when looking at HWAC, they questioned their own decision to grant us status to accept F-1 students. They are now reconsidering that decision.*

Again, please keep this situation in your prayers.

AICF

CANADIAN BRASS CONCERT

The Grammy-award winning Canadian Brass closed out the Philadelphia Foundation's 2005-2006 performing arts series April 25. Over 600 guests, mostly from the community (as opposed to PCG members), turned up for the event—the biggest turnout for the series to date.

We used this prime opportunity to tell the near sell-out crowd about next season's lineup. Grammy-winning cellist Sara Sant'Ambrogio, member of the acclaimed Eroica Trio which performed back in January for the series, will return for a solo concert October 28, followed by gold medalist in the 2005 Cleveland In-

ternational Piano Competition, Chu-Fang Huang, on November 19. Then on Jan. 30, 2007, the series will present musical comedian Peter Schickele—creator of the fictitious composer P.D.Q. Bach. The season will close April 19, 2007, with the Romeros Guitar Quartet—a family of guitarists including the renown Pepe Romero and Angel Romero who performed frequently at Ambassador Auditorium and still speak quite fondly of that experience.

Also at the Canadian Brass concert was announced the new name of the Church's humanitarian arm: Armstrong International Cultural Foundation.

REGIONAL REPORTS

WESTERN UNITED STATES

What a wonderful spring festival season we had! God our Father blessed us with powerfully inspiring, basic, yet deep, "meat-in-due-season" "meaning-of-the-day" Passover and Days of Unleavened Bread messages through the local ministry here in the region, as well as from visiting headquarters ministers Andrew Locher and Joel Hilliker. The brethren gave generous, record-breaking freewill offerings on the two high days; many congregations reported well over \$100 per-person averages.

A couple of ordinations took place on the holy days as well: On the first day of unleavened bread, Joseph Short of the Phoenix, Ariz. congregation was ordained into the office of local church elder; and Kofi Appiah of the Southern Calif. congregation was ordained into the office of deacon on the last day of unleavened bread.

Shortly before the spring festivals, 15 people were baptized into the body of Jesus Christ; 10 of them were baptized together on the weekly Sabbath prior to Passover in Southern Calif.—another memorable, record-breaking event.

The 16 field congregations (599 people in all) here in the region remain generally positive and unified, and fully supportive of headquarters and our pastor general. Ministerial contact requests continue to trickle in steadily each month. The six field ministers, including myself, continue to follow-up on these leads. We also try to "circulate among the troops" as often as possible, visiting congregations, visiting the members in their own homes, staying in contact with the shut-ins, anointing the sick, conducting counseling sessions, directing

Spokesman Club meetings, attending various Church socials and fundraisers, etc. There is never a shortage of work to be done in this latter part of the “last hour”. Probably every PCG minister and staff member worldwide can empathize.

At the beginning of the year we had a tremendously successful teenage weekend campout with 50 teens and parents in the San Jacinto Mountains of Southern California. It was such a hit that another three-day teen wilderness campout in the same location has been planned for the end of August. The local teenagers are busy working and saving up their money for the camp tuition, and as a group they plan to conduct a couple of car wash fundraisers this spring to help make it affordable for everyone to attend the campout. In addition to the teen campout, three other major church family campouts are planned for this summer: A campout in Northern Ariz. over the Memorial Day weekend; one in the Pacific Northwest near Seattle, Wash. in early July; and a campout on the Oregon Coast over the Labor Day weekend. About 100 people are expected to attend each of these unity-building social events.

On a personal note, my beloved wife, Julie, and our

two children are keeping healthy and in good spirits, despite the plentiful and sometimes arduous road trips we must embark upon as a family. My son, Reagan, nearly seven now, is thoroughly enjoying first grade at a local public school; he is making lots of new friends and acquaintances there as well as in the many PCG church areas we visit. My four-year-old daughter, Erica, is eagerly anticipating starting kindergarten in another year and a half or so from now. At present, she is learning quickly how important it is to be “mommy’s little helper” around the house. Julie has been a tremendous help to me here in the regional office, as well as in countless other ways. Mr. Armstrong often said that his wife, Loma, shared fully half the load in his ministry. The same is true in my case: Julie plays an integral role in assisting me in my job as a regional director—I can’t imagine functioning nearly as effectively without her daily continual sacrifices. (Of course, every minister of God could almost certainly say the same about his wife.)

In closing, please know that our fervent prayers are with you all. We are excitedly looking forward to spending time with our fellow covenant brothers and sisters at the minister’s conference this summer! *Eric Anderson*