

Gerald Flurry and the Errors of the PCG

Gerald Flurry of the Philadelphia Church of God has launched a biting, vindictive attack on yours truly, with personal insults, ridicule and mockery -- yet refusing to deal with the real issues, and deliberately distorting and twisting my views about Herbert Armstrong. Such lies and innuendos will not help him when God inscribes the names of his true servants in the Book of Life. What does the Word of God say about those who “blaspheme”? Just what is “blasphemy against the Holy Spirit”?

William F. Dankenbring

(Please note this article was written many years ago soon after the break up of the Worldwide Church of God. Even so this is a very helpful and useful historical account of the well known problems in the Worldwide Church of God and its offshoots. – Updated December 2017)

It is one thing for a man to be sincerely mistaken in his erroneous beliefs and teachings. God can forgive sincere error. But when a man begins to impugn the motives and character of another, and to deliberately falsify statements and make false accusations, when he should know better, that is bordering on the unforgivable, unpardonable sin!

Jesus Christ warned all such, "Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come. Either make the tree good, and his fruit good, or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit. O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.

"A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things. But I say unto you, that EVERY IDLE WORD that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned" (Matt.12:31-37).

The Flurry Rampage

In a recent sermon Flurry sarcastically attacked a recent article I wrote entitled "What Went Wrong with the Philadelphia Church of God?" He accused me of believing wrongly that a mighty man of God whom God used to create a vast work through faith -- George Mueller of the last century, whom Flurry mis-identified as Dwight Moody -- would be in the Kingdom of God. According to Flurry, that is impossible since Mueller did not have the knowledge of the Sabbath or annual holy days, and Flurry says, he did not understand the meaning of repentance. Flurry obviously makes harsh judgments about a man of whom he knows nothing -- not even his correct name -- and precious little about the amazing Work God did through him!

Flurry, without knowing ANYTHING at all about Mr. Mueller, whom Herbert Armstrong himself called "the apostle of FAITH," accuses him of not even knowing what conversion or repentance are, and goes on to say, tongue-in-cheek,

"Bill Dankenbring doesn't know what conversion is. I believe that. I KNOW that!"

It is obvious, of course, that Flurry hates the article in *Prophecy Flash* which I wrote about his fledgling "Philadelphia Church of God" and the enormous doctrinal errors it promulgates. But is Flurry open-minded enough to admit error, even when PROVED WRONG? Herbert Armstrong wrote, years ago,

"God says, 'PROVE all things.' That means *you* are fallible. That means all the 'great' men are fallible! ALL are human. ALL can be wrong -- and nearly all are. The *whole world* is DECEIVED (Rev.12:9). . . .The very recognition of that fact is the *beginning* of right knowledge. . . .That is the *first step* toward coming out of the fog of error and deception, starting toward truth.

"The second step, if you would know TRUTH, is to be willing

to admit being deceived or in error, and to reject it and accept truth new to you -- when proved even though unpopular . . . To find and live the TRUTH requires a HUMBLED mind" (see the January 1985 *Good News*).

Does Gerald Flurry have an open mind, a humble mind, willing to admit it when proven WRONG? His own mouth condemns him! Notice his own statement in his recent sermon:

"I don't want to read his material."

If something disagrees with Gerald Flurry, he refuses to even READ it! How does that grab you? Is such an attitude that of a truly sincere, humbled, CONVERTED mind? Flurry goes on, falsely accusing me of saying Herbert Armstrong was a "fraud." But never, in all my writing, have I ever said Herbert Armstrong was a "FRAUD"! Others may believe that. But I have written time and time again that Herbert Armstrong was a man of God, although seriously flawed, and a man who made many mistakes and committed some terrible sins. But I have never said he was a "FRAUD." God revealed much truth to him, and he faithfully taught the truth that he understood, and therefore despite his problems which were many, especially in his later years, I would never and never did call him a "fraud."

However, Flurry baldly asserts,

"That's what Billy says. . . He [HWA] wasn't the Elijah. He was a fraud. When he calls Mr. Armstrong a fraud, I know he is a tool of Satan the devil! . . . Who should I believe-- God? or Bill?"

According to Gerald Flurry, the Word of God calls Herbert Armstrong a "great man" and "Elijah to come." But I have read all through the Bible numerous times, and not once have I ever read where it says, in plain, clear words, "Herbert W. Armstrong is ELIJAH!" Have you? Of course not!

Nowhere does the Bible say in so many words that Herbert Armstrong, or any other end-time individual, is the "Elijah to come," although Gerald Flurry may interpret in his own mind certain Scriptures and CLAIM that they refer to Herbert Armstrong. The question is not, therefore, whether he will believe "God, or Bill" -- the question he ought to be willing to face up to is, WILL HE SIMPLY BELIEVE THE PLAIN WORD OF GOD?

Let's take a brief overview of this question. Was Herbert Armstrong "Elijah"? What do the

fruits show?

The Herbert Armstrong Story

There is no doubt whatsoever in my mind that God used Herbert W. Armstrong and his wife Loma to raise up a vital, end-time Work of God to publish and proclaim the true gospel of the Kingdom of God. There is also no doubt in my mind that God used him to reveal much truth in this end-time generation. I was a faithful member of the Worldwide Church of God for over

30 years, attended Ambassador College, received a Master of Arts degree in Theological Journalism, and wrote for all the Church publications from 1963 to 1974 -- over a hundred articles, booklets, and Ambassador College Correspondence Course lessons. I had PROVED the truth of most of what Herbert Armstrong wrote and taught!

However, does this fact alone "prove" that he was the Elijah to come? Not at all! Let's open our minds to the WHOLE TRUTH -- and not vainly or foolishly worship a mere man!

Just who was Herbert W. Armstrong? Let us look at the "negative" side of Herbert Armstrong for a moment. Herbert Armstrong, the record shows, was a man guilty of committing incest with his daughter for a period of ten years, from the late 30's to the late-40's and early 50's. He was also a man who lived with his second "wife" Ramona at least a year or two before he married her. He was a man who sometimes took his daughter dancing on Friday evening (the Sabbath), and who sometimes took water on the Day of Atonement, even though it was a "fast day."

He was also a strong willed and dogmatic man who sometimes made doctrinal errors. He was a man who caused incredible suffering with his early teachings on divorce and remarriage, leading to the break up of thousands of homes and marriages. Also, he was a man who was extremist and unbalanced in his early view of condemning all medical science, calling all drugs "poisons," and insisting that people have faith in God for all healing, not acknowledging that in some cases God could work with and through doctors. Because of his extreme teaching about "faith," little children sacrificed their lives, and elderly men who could have preserved their eyesight by seeing a doctor instead went blind from glaucoma! I know of personal, tragic examples, heart-rending examples.

For years Herbert Armstrong told people to trust God for divine healing in all cases, while he himself used every tool of medical science when his son Dick was dying, and who used every medication available during his own old age, although never telling the Church about it. Could such a man be the "ELIJAH" prophesied in the book of Malachi?

Do some of these allegations I have made about Herbert Armstrong's "private life" shock you? I do not mean to cause personal distress, but facts are facts. Everything I have said is true and can be proved. Each and every statement can be documented by writing for my articles, "How Are The Mighty Fallen!" and "Back to Babylon!" Many of these things can also be documented by reading back issues of *Ambassador Report* (P.O. Box 60068, Pasadena CA 91116). Others can be verified

by reading the book written by a former minister of the Worldwide Church of God, David Robinson, entitled *Herbert Armstrong's Tangled Web*. Although at times I believe Mr. Robinson gets

too negative, because of his own personal perspective and personal involvement with Herbert Armstrong "close up" through the years, his book is very valuable reading material. Like many others, once Mr. Robinson saw the personal flaws and weaknesses of a man whom he had formerly almost "worshipped," he went the complete opposite direction and rejected EVERYTHING to do with Mr. Armstrong -- including much precious TRUTH which he taught!

God says we would know them by their fruits. Herbert Armstrong made MANY mistakes and errors. Nevertheless, God did use him and his wife to raise up the Worldwide Church of God, which for years taught more Biblical truth than any other institution or Church on the face of the earth! It came the closest, in my opinion, to the original apostolic Church of God, despite its many shortcomings and errors. It had more TRUTH than any other Church I knew about -- and more dynamic preaching POWER! Therefore, I give credit where credit is due; however, Herbert Armstrong was NOT the prophesied "Elijah to come," that Gerald Flurry claims he was!

In writing these things, it is not my purpose to condemn Herbert Armstrong -- I leave his judgment in the hands of God. But I would like to point out that he should NOT be "worshipped," either! He was only a man -- and a weak, frail, and at times sinful man, at that. He admitted to his son Garner Ted Armstrong, in a conversation after Ted had learned about the incest Herbert had committed with his sister, "At times I was far from God." His totalitarian and dictatorial nature, especially in his later years, caused many problems in the Church. But God is his judge, not you or me.

Was such a man the "Elijah" to come? I don't think so. Herbert Armstrong was not a "prophet" like Elijah. If one were to look closely at his many predictions based on Bible prophecy, in the 30's, 40's, 50's, and 60's, one would have to conclude that he was dismally mistaken and wrong! During the late 30's, and early 40's, he consistently thought that World War II would lead up to Armageddon and the Second Coming of Christ!

Herbert Armstrong's Amazing Prophetic Errors

In this regard, you may want to read my article, "The Amazing Prophetic Errors of Herbert W. Armstrong," and "Herbert Armstrong's Vain Attempt to Fulfill Prophecy!" It is hard to see, when one examines the evidence closely, how one could have been more wrong and off base, than Herbert Armstrong was concerning Bible prophecy, in the 1930's, 40's and 50's -- and even into the 60's. Although he saw the "overview" and "big picture," he was consistently wrong on dates and identities of prophetic figures. He thought at one time that Mussolini would be the "beast" of Revelation! He predicted Field Marshal Rommel would defeat the British and reach Jerusalem, and that

"Armageddon" would then occur -- back in the 1940's!

Most of us are familiar with Herbert Armstrong's vivid, shocking booklet illustrated by Basil

Wolverton entitled *1975 in Prophecy!* It predicted the second coming of Christ in 1975. Herbert Armstrong continued to believe doggedly in this date at least until mid-1967, only five years before the Church was supposed to flee!

For years Herbert Armstrong taught as a prophetic fact that the Church was going to flee to a place of safety, most likely Petra, by the year 1972, and that Christ would return 3 1/2 years later -- in 1975. He continually stressed how close we were to the End, and the coming of Christ. But he was sadly mistaken. He was WRONG!

Would a modern-day "Elijah" have made such colossal blunders in Biblical prophecy?

Could a man with such a dismal "track record" in Biblical prophecy be the "Elijah" who was prophesied to come? Elijah, remember, was a great prophet of God. Herbert Armstrong himself wrote plainly, "I am not a prophet." Was he merely being honest with us? Or was he the victim of a false humility? Judging by his own record of predicting prophetic events, I must conclude the former is true.

Even in 1982, when the English fleet sailed for the Falkland Islands, Herbert Armstrong predicted in a co-worker letter that the fleet was headed into disaster. He was wrong. They won a great victory and freed the Falklands from the occupying Argentinian army.

Did Herbert Armstrong "Restore ALL Things"?

Jesus Christ told His disciples, "Elijah shall truly first come, and restore all things" (Matt.17:11). Did Herbert Armstrong do that?

Gerald Flurry claims Herbert Armstrong was used by God to "restore all things." But did he restore "all things"? He did not have the correct date for the PASSOVER, or the right manner of observance! He did not have the correct date for Pentecost, but followed the wicked custom of the pagan Samaritans and apostate Sadducees, of whom Jesus said, "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures" (Matt.22:29)! Although God did use Herbert Armstrong to restore SOME of His truth, such as the Sabbath, most of that truth he taught he received from the Church of God, Seventh Day! Nor did he restore the TRUTH about God's government! If he had, the Church would not have fallen into the clutches of the hellenizing apostate Joseph Tkach and his nefarious son, Joe, Junior!

Let's get serious! Did Herbert restore the truth of the identity of "Israel"? But the British-Israel society restored that truth, and Herbert Armstrong simply borrowed it from them without giving them due credit! Most of his booklet on "The United States and British Commonwealth in Prophecy" was actually copied, word for word, from the book *Judah's Scepter and Joseph's Birthright*, by J. H. Allen (Destiny Publishers, Merrimac, Mass. 01860, c.1917). The booklet "Was Time Lost?" which bore Herbert's name was actually written years before he became a Sabbath keeper, by a member of the

Church of God Seventh Day!

It is foolish to engage in "wars over words" with wicked men who will not open their minds to the truth of God, or even acknowledge that they "might" be mistaken on a doctrine. Such men have minds like concrete -- all mixed up and permanently set! They will not look at the truth. They pretend that they don't need to look at the evidence, since they have already concluded that I am wrong, full of error, and, in Flurry's own words, "Know not what I worship." According to Gerald Flurry, I am a servant of Satan the devil, and therefore he will not even bother to read anything I have written. His mind is all made up -- in advance. Merely because I don't fall down before the feet of his idol, Herbert W. Armstrong, he refuses to even "read" my material and articles! Case closed, as far as he is concerned!

The Flurry Case

God says in His Word, "He that reproveth a scorner getteth to himself a shame: and he that rebuketh a wicked man getteth himself a blot. Reprove not a scorner, lest he hate thee: rebuke a WISE man, and he will love thee" (Proverbs 9:7-8).

Jesus Christ said much the same thing when He warned His disciples, "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you" (Matt.7:6).

It is not my purpose in this article to attack Gerald Flurry, his character, his personality, or his reputation. I leave that to Almighty God. However, I warn Gerald Flurry that in his vicious and sneaky attacks on me, he had better be careful. I am not the servant of Satan, as he insists, any more than Jesus Christ was the servant of Satan, according to the accusations of the wicked Pharisees of His time! But, as Gamaliel, a leading doctor of the law, told the Sanhedrin 2,000 years ago, Flurry ought to take a hint, and get the message! Gamaliel told those wicked men:

"Refrain from these men, and LET THEM ALONE: for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought: *But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God*" (Acts 5:38-39).

God Almighty fights my battles. He also is the One who "teacheth my hands to war, and my fingers to fight" (Psalm 144:1). Those who attack this Work of the Living God, which is inspired by His Holy Spirit, are on dangerous, trembling ground, and are rushing in where angels fear to tread. Woe unto them!

As John the Baptist said to similar religious leaders of his own day, "O generation of vipers,

who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? *Bring forth fruits therefore meet for repentance:*
 . . .

"And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit, and with fire [for the wicked]: Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will BURN UP THE CHAFF with unquenchable fire" (Matt.3:7-12).

Two Very Interesting Letters

Informing me of the unkind comments and ridicule of Gerald Flurry, a gentleman sent me a copy of a recent sermon which Flurry gave. The man wrote in a letter accompanying the tape:

"Thank you very much for all the great inspiring articles that you have been sending to the Canton faithful. God has given you a gift that I am thankful I can now rely upon whenever I need someone or some literature to add depth and life to my personal study. I have enclosed a copy of the Gerald Flurry tape that I mentioned to you on the phone. I have put the 2 excerpts which mention you on the front of the tape with the full sermon following. The first comment on the tape is a letter from someone who is just learning about the Flurry experience and they think he is the only one who sees the problems in the Laodicean Church.

"Flurry's followers are under the mistaken notion that he is the first one to see the problems of Worldwide, while the truth is you have been writing about all the problems in Worldwide for over four years.

When Flurry tries to tie you in with John 4:22 it makes me wonder if he has any Biblical understanding since he again has the story backwards, just like his interpretations of Malachi, Joshua, and Habakkuk."

Hard on the heels of this letter, I received another letter with another tape! This writer declared of Mr. Flurry:

"Enclosed is one of Mr. Flurry's tapes. I thought you would appreciate the 'clever' way he tries to minimize the importance of what you are teaching. He also *blatantly twists* and *distorts* the way you speak of HWA. You may want to respond.

"It appears that you are now officially 'at war' with the PCG. It is getting very 'intense' here in Ohio. John Amos has just been transferred full-time to Columbus, OH. -- this is probably due, in part, to some of the 'waves' we've created around here concerning Passover, Pentecost, 144,000, etc.

"Anyway -- keep up the *GREAT WORK* and we are all backing your effort to publish the *TRUTH*. Take care.

"P.S. Great job on the P.C.G. article (Boy was I surprised!! -- and also now . . . in 'trouble' . . . "

Doctrinal Errors of Gerald Flurry

Gerald Flurry, judging by the comments he made in his sermon, has no interest in studying into the subjects of Passover, Pentecost, the 144,000 of Revelation, or any other area where he is in error and teaching false doctrine. He seems to have the attitude typical of most false ministers, who exclaim, "My mind is already made up -- don't confuse me with the facts!"

What about you? Have you already "pre-judged" the issue, before you study into it? Do you, like Flurry, first condemn the man and then ignore the message? Wise king Solomon wrote of those who judge matters before they get the facts, or who make snap judgments without bothering to get all the evidence. He wrote:

"He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is *folly and shame* unto him" (Prov.18:13).

Solomon also wrote about the researching and investigative process:

"It is the glory of God to conceal a thing: but the honour of kings
is to SEARCH OUT a matter" (Prov.25:2).

A Flurry Theological Oxymoron

Gerald Flurry says that I am like the Samaritan woman of whom Jesus Christ said, "Ye know not what ye worship." He claims that I am totally deceived and actually worship Satan the devil. At one point in his sermon, he refers to me as "Billy," a name I haven't heard used for me since I was ten years old! Apparently, I have really gotten under his skin, because he just couldn't seem to let well enough alone. He ridiculed, joked, and poked fun, and accused and condemned -- but never once did he bother to address a single substantive ISSUE! But mere "name-calling" will solve nothing. Only the TRUTH matters! Even unpalatable truth is better than NO truth!

What IS the true day when we should observe Passover? Do the Jews observe it at the right time after all? Why do the Worldwide Church of God, Church of God International, and Flurry's Philadelphia Church of God, all observe Pentecost on a DIFFERENT DAY than the JEWS, to whom God gave His Word and "oracles" to preserve (Rom.3:1-2)? These questions are not merely "idle curiosity" items of no importance! They involve the very meaning and significance and TIMES of God's annual Holy Days! If we worship God incorrectly, or on the wrong day, will He bless us?

Isn't it time we examine -- and answer -- these questions? Should we be afraid to face them?

In John 4:22 Jesus Christ says to the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well: "*Ye worship ye know not what: We know what we worship, for SALVATION IS OF THE JEWS.*" Gerald Flurry says that I worship I know not what, like the Samaritans. That is very strange, because it is HE who follows the SAMARITAN DATE for PENTECOST! I follow the date the Jews, and Jesus Christ Himself, followed! Bizarre as it may appear, it is he and his followers who today follow in the footsteps and traditions and beliefs of the Samaritans! The Samaritans taught that Pentecost should be counted from the weekly Sabbath that falls during the Feast of Unleavened Bread, contrary to the teaching of the Jews, the Pharisees, and the rabbis! Any good Bible Dictionary, as well as the book *Antiquities of the Jews* by the first century Jewish historian Josephus, or modern Jewish religious history of the holy days, will attest to this fact.

Christ said we should follow the teaching of the Pharisees in matters concerning the laws of God (see Matt.23:2-3). He plainly said, "The scribes and Pharisees" -- not the Samaritans or Sadducees -- "sit in MOSES' SEAT. All therefore whatsoever THEY bid you observe, THAT observe and DO" (Matt.23:1-3). The Pharisees, history proves, observed Pentecost by counting fifty days from the first High Holy Day of Unleavened Bread! The apostle Paul acknowledged that as a Pharisee since he was a child, he had observed God's Laws -- which would include Passover and Pentecost -- in a manner that was "BLAMELESS"! (Phil.3:5-6).

Jesus condemned the apostate ideas of the pagan Samaritans, who received many of their religious notions from ancient king Jeroboam the Apostate (see II Kings 17:24-41; I Kings 12:25-33). Since Flurry follows the teachings of the Samaritans, then it must truly be HIMSELF who falls into the same category as the woman from Samaria, of whom Jesus said, "Ye worship ye know not what."

Actually, the Samaritans were worshiping demons and Satan the devil in their cleverly devised and compromised, blended and amalgamated syncretic religion combining paganism and perverted use of Scripture.

Gerald Flurry points his finger at me, accusing me of "worshipping I know not what." Herbert Armstrong, whom Flurry seems to virtually worship, used to point out repeatedly, in sermon after sermon, that a person who points the finger at another has four fingers pointed back at himself!

If you would like to PROVE the truth about when Passover and Pentecost should be observed, then write for my articles, "How to Count Pentecost," "Pentecost -- the Final Answer!", "When Should the Passover Be Observed?", and "Passover -- the Final Solution!"

Beware the "Flurried" Work!

How important is the "work" that Flurry has begun? Is Gerald Flurry teaching the truth of God, and getting the Church back on the right track? A careful study of his literature, especially his book Malachi's Message, shows that his theological understanding leaves a lot to be desired. He is right in rejecting the apostasy of the Worldwide Church of God, and Joseph Tkach, but that is where semblance to truth ends. His doctrine that the 144,000 all perish in the Great Tribulation is totally un-Biblical (see Rev.7:1-8), for they are obviously still alive and to be protected during the "Day of the Lord"!

His claim that the promise God gives to the Laodiceans who overcome (Rev.3:19-21) really is a promise to the Philadelphian Church boggles the mind (Rev.3:7-12).

Flurry makes a great point, also, of claiming that the "Joshua the high priest" of Zechariah's prophecy is a prophetic reference to Joseph W. Tkach, the arch-apostate of the Worldwide Church of God. This interpretation is utterly ridiculous and does great violence to the Scriptures themselves! Zechariah tells us that this "Joshua the high priest" is a chosen vessel of God, "a brand plucked out of the fire" (Zech.3:2) -- not an apostate who is going to be cast INTO the fire! This prophetic "Joshua" wears "filthy garments" in the beginning (verse 3), but these garments of unrighteousness are TAKEN FROM HIM, and his iniquities are FORGIVEN (verse 4), and he is given new, clean garments symbolizing righteousness (verse 5). This story, this prophecy, therefore, describes the DIAMETRIC OPPOSITE of what Gerald Flurry claims it says! It does not describe a man of God rushing off into sheer apostasy, such as Joseph Tkach. Rather, it describes a sinful religious leader who REPENTS of his sins, and turns to GOD!

Can you really believe a man who twists and distorts Scripture like Flurry does? Can you really have faith in such a man's Biblical understanding and exegesis? Flurry is upset because people are asking him questions about Passover and Pentecost, and these other matters. He says in his sermon that he wants Church brethren to follow him and his ministry "like little children," and to have "faith" in their ministry! He said to them, in his sermon, "We will not mislead you." But that is exactly what he is doing!

Gerald Flurry in Bible Prophecy

Gerald Flurry claims that he KNOWS Herbert Armstrong was a mighty man of God and the Elijah to come, and therefore dismisses everything I write as of no consequence. By assuming Herbert was right in all things, he ASSUMES I must be wrong!

Do you know what the word "ASSUME" is when broken down into its components? It is an "ASS" leading "U" and "ME"! Now, as for me, I refuse steadfastly to follow an "ass" or any other long-eared "donkey" or related quadruped!

Should we "assume," therefore, anything that Gerald Flurry says is "true"? The apostle Paul exhorts every true Christian, "*PROVE ALL THINGS*; hold fast that which is TRUE" (I Thess.5:21). We should not take anything for granted. We should not assume ANYTHING! The apostle John wrote, "Beloved, BELIEVE NOT every spirit, but try [test, prove] the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (I John 4:1). Isaiah the prophet wrote, "To the LAW and to the TESTIMONY: if they speak not according to THIS WORD, it is because there is NO LIGHT in them" (Isaiah 8:20).

Jesus Christ warned that in these last days, in particular, that, "Many will come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall DECEIVE MANY" (Matt.24:5). He warned, also, "And MANY false prophets shall rise, and shall DECEIVE MANY" (verse 11).

The apostle Paul warned the people of God: "For I know this, that after my departing shall GRIEVOUS WOLVES enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking PERVERSE THINGS, to draw away disciples after them" (Acts 20:29-30).

Although Gerald Flurry is right to reject the apostasy and error of the modern Worldwide Church of God, and its leadership, he himself has gone off on a novel path of error, and teaches many "PERVERSE things," including a dictatorial form of Church government, claiming to be the only true representative of God on the earth, and expelling women from the Church just for using a little make up. One of his ministers led the people to use "pita bread" during the Feast of Unleavened Bread" in 1991, and when suspicious members later found out it was leavened and told him so, the minister exploded at them, railed on them, accused them of meddling and demanded, "By what authority did you check up on this?" He was not happy to have been corrected; he almost suspended them from

Church for "insubordination"!

Jesus Christ said, "BEWARE of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall KNOW THEM BY THEIR FRUITS. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the FIRE. Wherefore *BY THEIR FRUITS ye shall know them*" (Matt.7:15-20).

How important is the work of Gerald Flurry in God's sight? We must judge by the fruits. The Philadelphia Church of God falls far short of the mark when it comes to preaching the TRUTH of God! Nor are their minds open to receiving more new truth, judging by their own closed-minded prattle. Therefore, Jesus Christ says of them: "Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up. Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch" (Matt.15:13-14).

Gerald Flurry is an example of a blind man leading the blind. He himself does not understand, yet he leads many others who also do not understand. Many of them are gullible, trusting, naive sheep. They may not know any better, and simply need to be informed as to the truth. But Flurry is another case altogether. He ought to know better. In teaching bizarre error and following Herbert Armstrong, "right or wrong," he commits the sin of idolatry, a heinous sin in the sight of God.

What's In a Name?

God often names people what they are. Names often have great significance and spiritual importance. "Adam" means "man" (Gen.2:15). Abraham means "father of a great multitude" (Gen.17:5). Sarah means "princess" (verse 15). Jacob means "supplanter," which shows his character in supplanting Esau to get the birthright. But God changed his name to "Israel," which means "Prince of power with God" (Gen.32:28). The name "Jesus" means "Saviour," and He is our Saviour (Matt.1:21). What about the name "Flurry"? Gerald Flurry's name should tell us something about him, too -- something about his character. What does "FLURRY" mean?

According to *Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary*, "flurry" means: "a gust of wind"; "a brief light snowfall"; "nervous commotion, bustle"; "a brief advance or decline in prices"; "a SHORT-LIVED OUTBURST of trading activity." Does this describe the work, activity and commotion being caused by Gerald Flurry and his Philadelphia Church of God? Is it just a brief "gust of wind," signifying nothing? Is it to be just a "short-lived outburst" of activity, before it disappears from the scene? Will it last but a short while, and then disappear into the Great Tribulation, because of its failure to accept new truth and to reject old error?

The word "flurry," as a transitive verb, means "TO CAUSE TO BECOME AGITATED AND CONFUSED," as in, "*to become flurried.*" Is Gerald Flurry confused, himself? He certainly is causing many people to become agitated and confused and "flurried." Sad and tragic as it is, people can only blame themselves if they swallow hook, line and sinker the new "Gospel according to Gerald

Flurry." Those who blindly, unwittingly and carelessly follow him will suffer the same fate he will suffer -- unless he repents bitterly and whole-heartedly! The truth is, it is Flurry himself who does not understand the true meaning of real, sincere, heart-felt repentance and conversion.

I think that about says it all.

Further Suggested Reading

1. Article, "Herbert W. Armstrong: 1892-1986," available for \$1.00 from Richard Nickels, Giving& Sharing, 4673 Onondaga Trail, St. Charles, MO 63303-7328.
2. Article, "The Worldwide Church of God vs. The Church of God, 7th Day," available from John Kiesz, 820 Woodlawn Avenue, Canon City, CO 81212.
3. A photocopied packet of materials on HWA including the booklet "Has Time Been Lost?" and the threat by Worldwide to sue the Church of God, 7th Day for stealing "their" booklet! Write to: Church of God, 7th Day, P.O. Box 33677, Denver CO 80233.
4. *Ambassador Report*, article entitled "Herbert Armstrong's Religious Roots," and other special issues dealing with his personal past history. Write to: *Ambassador Report*, P.O. Box 60068, Pasadena CA 91116.
5. The book *Herbert Armstrong's Tangled Web*, by David Robinson, P.O. Box 35982, Tulsa OK 74135.
6. "How Are the Mighty Fallen!", "Back to Babylon," "The Amazing Prophetic Errors of Herbert W. Armstrong," "Who Are the 144,000 of Revelation?", "The Plain Truth about Church Government," "What Went WRONG with the Philadelphia Church of God?" Write to: Triumph Prophetic Ministries, P.O. Box 842, Omak WA 98841.

(Please note that as this article was originally written over twenty years ago, some of the addresses above for "further suggested reading" may have changed.)