

Mass Conversion of the Nations During the Millennium?

Mass Conversion of the Nations During the Millennium?

By Robert G. Theophilus

THIS BOOKLET IS NOT TO BE SOLD. The information provided is for the benefit of former members of the congregations of the Worldwide Church of God (WCG), and of current and prospective members of God's Church.

It was taught by the ministry of the Worldwide Church of God that during the Millennium there would be a great conversion of the nations of the world. God would call all men to salvation and just about everyone would follow their calling. Does the Bible confirm that this is indeed what will occur? Find out what Christ Himself tells us about being called and remaining converted.

Preamble

Please Note: All comments in brackets [] or in parentheses () as well as highlighted text (bolded and/or in blue) are from the author of this study. Bible quotations are in maroon.

I think it is essential to clarify the question of the “Holy Spirit” before we begin this study. If we say that who or what is the “Holy Spirit” is the question that needs to be answered, we are starting from the assumption that there exists such a being as the Holy Spirit and that it is a separate and distinct being from God and the Word. The question which should be asked is who are the beings the Bible tell us are holy, whose composition is spirit and who have existed eternally? Either the Bible plainly tells us who are the separate and distinct beings that existed from all eternity who created all things (spirit beings and the material universe) or we have no way of getting an answer to our question.

The Holy Spirits of the God Family

The Bible tells us in Gen 1:1 that:

Gen 1:1 In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

The Hebrew word translated “God” is “Eloheem” which is the plural form of “Eloah which means “God”. The word “Eloheem” refers to “gods.” It is a uniplural noun like family, group, team, etc. In the beginning, there was therefore more than one God being in existence but how many were there?

Joh 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

Joh 1:2 The same was in the beginning with God.

Joh 1:3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

In the beginning when God created the heaven and the earth there was God and there was another being with God who was also God, the Word. How can these two beings both be God; isn't that impossible?

The word God indicates the kind of existence of these 2 beings: their nature is to be God in the same way that all human beings have the same human nature. However, having the same nature does not mean that all human beings constitute a single being; indeed, they are all separate and distinct beings with their own personalities. God and the Word have in common the same nature or, level and type of existence, but they are separate and distinct beings just like all human beings who have the same human nature are separate and distinct beings.

God the Father

We read in the Bible that God became a father when the Word became flesh (Phi 2:5-8) by being born of woman after having been conceived in the virgin Mary by the holy spirit being called God (Luke 1:35). God from that point on became God the Father and the Word, who was born as the flesh-and-blood Jesus of Nazareth became God's Son or the Son of God. He was both fully God (his father was God and fully human (his mother was the virgin Mary).

Jesus was God the Father's only begotten son at the time when He was conceived in Mary's womb but He was not to be the only one begotten of the Father. God the Father is the holy spirit being in the Godhead that calls men to salvation.

Joh 6:44 No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.

Joh 6:65 And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.

Joh 18:9 That the saying might be fulfilled, which he spake, Of them which thou [God the Father] gavest me have I lost none.

1Pe 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

God the Word and Spokesman

The Bible term for being called is to be spiritually begotten by God the Father (1Pe 1:3). When we are begotten, we become a spiritual embryo that can be born again as a glorified spirit being with eternal life. Those begotten of the holy spirit God the Father who follow their calling are then able to come to the holy spirit being called the Word and Spokesman (John 6:44; 65; 18:9) who then teaches them. The glorified Jesus-Christ as God the Father's Word and Spokesman is the holy spirit being that works in the minds of God the Father's called and chosen ones.

Joh 7:39 (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.)

Jesus had to first be glorified for it to be possible for Christians to have access to the holy spirit called the Word and Spokesman because the glorified Christ is the holy spirit being who works in the minds of God's saints (John 14:17) in the same way that Satan is the evil spirit that works in the minds of the children of disobedience (Eph2:2).

Joh 14:17 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he [Christ] dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. [On the day of Pentecost, it would be in them and in all true Christians.]

Eph 2:2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, [Satan] the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:

The holy spirit God the Father calls men and those who follow their calling are then taught by the holy spirit called the Word and God the Father's Spokesman.

Joh 14:26 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.

The Holy Ghost

The expression “Holy Ghost” used in the Bible is in error as there are no ghosts in the Godhead but rather 2 beings that are holy (John 17:11; Isa 6:3) and spirit (John 4:24).

Joh 17:11 And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.

Isa 6:3 And one cried unto another, and said, **Holy, holy, holy**, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.

Joh 4:24 **God is a Spirit:** and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

These 2 God beings who are holy and spirit are the holy spirit beings of the God family who existed in the beginning at the creation of all things.

Joh 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

Joh 1:2 The same was in the beginning with God.

Joh 1:3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

And, the Word who was with God is before all things i.e., *nothing* existed before He created them whether made of spirit or matter.

Col 1:15 [Christ] Who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature:

Col 1:16 For by him [the Word who became Jesus-Christ] were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:

Col 1:17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

In the beginning before anything either physical or spiritual was created, there was God and the Word who existed before all things and no other being is mentioned as having existed with them. There is no bib-

lical evidence that there ever existed a third, separate and distinct personage in the Godhead called the “Holy Spirit” who dwelt in eternity with God and the Word.

God is a Family

Throughout the Bible we can find many verses which clearly indicates the existence of family relations between God and the Word and God’s called, chosen and faithful.

Mat 11:27 All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.

Mat 12:50 For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.

Joh 20:17 Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.

God is clearly a family in which many can be ultimately born again by a resurrection from the dead to eternal, glorified spirit life in God’s Kingdom.

Rom 8:29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he [God’s Son] might be the firstborn among many brethren.

Col 1:18 And he [the glorified Christ] is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.

Christ was the first to be born again by a resurrection from the dead to be followed by many brethren.

Bible Writing Convention

The practice in the Bible has been to simply use the expression “the Holy Spirit” without indicating which God personage in the Godhead the expression represents. Over time, because of this practice, just about everybody has come to believe that the Holy Spirit is a separate and distinct God being in the Godhead but, there is no single verse or group of verses in the Bible that prove the existence of such a third being in the Godhead. The words “holy” and “spirit” are adjectives that describe the nature of

God the Father and of God the Word i.e., they are holy beings made of spirit.

Whenever we encounter the expressions the “Holy Spirit” or simply the “Holy Spirit” in the Bible we must look at the context to determine of which holy spirit being of the Godhead the Bible is talking about: the holy spirit, God the Father or the holy spirit, the Word and Spokesman.

The Word is the holy spirit being in the Godhead who carries out the instructions and wishes of the holy spirit, God. He is the faithful son who seeks to do his father’s will in all things. He is the member of the God family that did the work of creating the heaven and the earth, who ruled over ancient Israel through Moses and his human successors, He is the one who became a man who suffered and died to be God the Father’s perfect sacrifice for sin and make the salvation of mankind possible, etc. and He came to reveal the Father to those who follow the Father’s calling.

Making Things Clearer

In this study, when referring to God’s spirit who, depending on the circumstances can be the holy spirit personage called God the Father or the holy spirit personage called God the Word and Spokesman, I will not capitalize either of the adjectives “holy” and “spirit”. This is in order to not perpetuate the false impression in the minds of readers that there is a 3rd being in the Godhead called the “Holy Spirit.” Instead, I will refer to either of the holy spirits in the God family as being God’s spirit without capitalizing the word “spirit” to make it plain that we are not referring to a third God being in the God family called the “Holy Spirit” but to one of the 2 God beings in the Godhead.

God’s family is presently made up of 2 holy spirit beings to which are to be added thousands and possibly millions of other holy spirit beings when God’s plan of salvation for mankind has reached its end. The saints that endure in the faith until the end of their natural human life, will be resurrected as individual holy spirit beings in God’s Kingdom when it is established.

There are two studies which you can read regarding what is the “Holy Spirit” and decide for yourself in light of the Bible-based evidence offered if such a being exists in the Godhead. These studies are: [What is the Holy Spirit? Cliff Notes Version](#) and [Who or What is the Holy Spirit?](#)

NOTE: All comments in brackets [] or in parentheses () as well as highlighted text (**bolded** and/or in **blue**) are from the author of this study. Bible quotations are in maroon

In the days before the destruction of the Worldwide Church of God (WCG) under the leadership of Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong (HWA), it was taught that the Millennium would be a time when after the 2nd Coming of Christ, the resurrection of the saints; the changing of the nature of animals and of climatic conditions and the holy spirit God the Father calling all men, that there would be a massive conversion of the nations of the world.

The Millennium would be a time of peace, safety and abundance brought about by nations that are converted and living their lives in accordance with the spirit of God's 10 commandments to the best of their abilities. Nations would not learn war anymore; they would turn their spear into pruning hooks, their swords into plowshares and be eager to learn God's way. The Millennium would be a time of joy and prosperity which would be a material type of God's eternal kingdom.

It was also taught that because of the great number of conversions then occurring there would be a need for many teachers to teach the truth of God to all those newcomers to the faith and that there would be a need to re-educate the masses in the right way of living as a preliminary step for them to come to conversion.

However, and this is what will be examined in detail in this study, we read in the Bible that shortly after the end of the Millennium there arises a great multitude of individuals from the four quarters of the earth whose number is as the sand of the sea and who converge on Israel and Jerusalem to destroy it.

Who is this great multitude of individuals from the four quarters of the earth that just a short time after the end of the Millennium rise up against Israel or the camp of the saints as the Bible states it?

How did so many individuals from all over the world whose number is as the sand of the sea in a short period of time after the end of the Millennium turn from being converted to being unconverted and head toward Israel/Jerusalem to destroy it?

How did we go from just about everyone being deeply converted during the Millennium to such a great multitude being unconverted shortly after the end of the Millennium?

The Bible tells us that Satan must be loosed for a short time after the end of the Millennium and that he is the one that gathers to battle against Jerusalem this very large group of unconverted from the four quarters of the earth and whose number is as the sand of the sea.

How can we reconcile the mass conversion of the nations following Christ's 2nd Coming and the great multitude of unconverted which arises shortly after the end of the Millennium and who march on Jerusalem to destroy it?

Mass Conversion of the Nations?

It is widely assumed that with the coming of the Millennium, the holy spirit God the Father calling all men to salvation (Joel 2:28) and, the binding up and sealing of Satan (Rev 20:1-3) there will be a quick and almost universal conversion of the nations having survived through the events of the Great Tribulation.

Joe 2:28 And it shall come to pass afterward, that **I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh**; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions:

Rev 20:1 And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.

Rev 20:2 And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years,

Rev 20:3 And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.

The Great Tribulation as you will recall is made up of the 5th seal martyrdom of Christians and the events of the Day of the Lord which will rain suffering, death and destruction on the world. It is a time of wrath, that of Satan (the first part of the Great Tribulation) and that of God (the second part of the Great Tribulation),

Rev 12:12 Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the **devil** is come down unto you, **having great wrath**, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.

Rev 16:1 And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out **the vials of the wrath of God** upon the earth.

Will this anticipated great, universal conversion of the nations occur?

We read in Revelation 20:7-10 where the time setting is **right after the end of the Millennium** when Satan is loosed out of his prison, that he then goes out to deceive the nations all around the world and, that the number of those that he deceives are as the sand of the sea i.e., a very great multitude.

Rev 20:7 And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison,

Rev 20:8 And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.

Rev 20:9 And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.

This begs the following questions: Did all of this vast multitude from all over the world become deceived instantly or in a very short time after

Satan is loosed out of his prison and were the minds of these individuals ever converted?

How can we know if these individuals were ever converted? Can those who have chosen to obey God after having been called again become deceived as to what is the truth of God?

Christ very clearly states that God's elect, those who have chosen to obey Him, cannot be deceived.

Mat 24:24 For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

If they could again be deceived, then God could not hold them responsible (they were not being judged when they didn't know the truth (1Pet 4:17)) for the evil that they do as they would again be blind as they were before their conversion. And, it would also mean that there is a power in the universe stronger than God.

1Pe 4:17 For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?

Remember that it is God who allows Satan to deceive humanity and it is God that makes it possible for those whom He calls to no longer be deceived. The great creator God is more powerful than Satan, a spirit being created by God. As originally created, Satan was called Lucifer and was not in opposition to God. It is only after having been placed on the throne of the earth and after that he and his angels rebelled and tried to overthrow God, that Lucifer became Satan and the angels that followed him became devils.

So who is this vast deceived multitude right after the end of the Millennium from the four quarters of the earth that God refers to as Gog and Magog (Rev 20:8) and who are deceived by Satan the devil after his release from the bottomless pit where he had been placed in chains and a seal put upon him so that he could no longer deceive the nations? (Rev 20:1-3)

Rev 20:8 And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.

Rev 20:9 And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.

Rev 20:1 And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.

Rev 20:2 And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years,

Rev 20:3 And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.

Rev 20:3 clearly tells us that Satan will be prevented from deceiving mankind during the Millennium. We also know that during the Millennium the holy spirit God the Father will call all men i.e., there will then be a universal calling of the nations of the world. But does this mean that all those that are called would follow their calling? Being called is a time of decision making. After having been given enough information to be able to make a decision, the called out one must decide whether or not to follow God's calling. Being called is not synonymous with becoming converted; one can be called but not become converted.

God has given man absolute free moral agency and will not force anyone to obey Him against their will. Mankind has been left free to self-willingly choose or reject the truth of God when it is given for them to come to know it. Simply being called does not lead to conversion. Being called is the first part of the process, the individual committing himself to obey God for the rest of their life is the second part of the process over which God has no control by choice.

Those that are to make up His kingdom must be individual with self-will, independent mind power and the ability to freely think for themselves and make their own decisions; otherwise, if their every thoughts and actions were controlled by a stronger being even if that being were God, they would be like robots without personality and individuality totally controlled by their programming and incapable of original independent thinking like all the animals created by God. And, God would not be able

to reproduce Himself through them.

Yes, all will be called but it will be left wholly up to the individuals to choose to follow or not their calling. (Deu 30:19)

Deu 30:19 I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live:

Do we have any indications in the Bible of what people do with their calling and of how many converted remain faithful?

In order to get our answer, let's examine what occurred during the centuries from the time of the foundation of God's Church to our present days.

Christ and Paul, as we will see, provide some very revealing information about how converts behave which can give us an indication of how people during the Millennium will react when called by God and how those who convert will then behave.

By looking at God's first century Church when the apostles were still alive and examining events that occurred in recent Church history, we can begin to understand with more clarity what will happen during the Millennium and why there will be such a large group of unconverted individuals at the end of the Millennium.

The First Century Church

Let's look at a few Scriptures among many which show the attitude of first era Church converts.

In Hebrews we see Paul saying the following to the congregations he had raised up.

Heb 5:11 Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing.

Heb 5:12 For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.

Basically, Paul is saying here is that he had been teaching them now for

so long that they should be at the point in their knowledge and understanding where they know the truth so well that they should be able to teach it to others but, no, he found they didn't know it all that well and that he had to go back to teaching them the basics of God's truth.

These are long term converts like many of you reading this study who were still at the starting gate, they had not made any progress despite all the time Paul had spent teaching them; they should have been able to teach the truth but Paul had to go back to teaching them the basics. Were they on-fire Christians hungering and thirsting for God's truth?

What about the Corinthian congregations, how were they doing? In 1 Corin's 11:17 – 34, Paul gives out strong correction to the Corinthian Churches as they were not keeping the Passover in the way he had taught them. They were making a party of eating and drinking out of it.

What did Paul tell Timothy to do and why did he tell him to do it? What Paul here is saying to Timothy is a revelation of what would be the spiritual status of those coming into God's Church not only in the first century but throughout the ages including in our days and during the Millennium and the Last Great Day.

2Ti 4:2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.

2Ti 4:3 For the time will come [in his days and this would be true throughout the ages] when they [the members of God's Church] will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;

2Ti 4:4 And they [the members of God's Church] shall turn away *their* ears from the truth, [they won't want to hear it anymore] and shall be turned unto fables. [They will believe the lies of the teachers they have chosen to follow and which were more to their liking.]

Truly converted members of God's Church of all ages would grow tired of being reproved, rebuked, corrected, and exhorted to greater effort in their following of the truth and they would be eager to find other teachers that would reassure them, praise them and tell them they were basically good and had nothing special to do, they were well on their way to salvation and that all was fine. They shall turn away their ears from the truth and those that teach them the truth to seek out other teach-

ers whose teachings are after their own lusts i.e., they did not reprove or rebuke them for their lustful behavior and spoke about other things more to their liking, especially giving reassurances that they didn't have to fear losing their salvation and that they had nothing to worry about, they are no longer under the law and they will be in God's Kingdom.

Did Christ have anything to say to those who throughout the centuries would come into God's Church?

Let's see? Ah yes, Mat 7:13-14

Mat 7:13 Enter ye [new converts coming into God's Church] in at the strait gate: for wide *is* the gate, and broad *is* the way, that leadeth to destruction, and **many** [please note that Christ Himself says it is not the few but the many that come into God's Church that take the broad way that leads to destruction] there be which go in thereat:

Mat 7:14 Because strait *is* the gate, and narrow *is* the way, [why do the many take the broad way? Because strait and narrow is the way (strict and difficult is the way that leads to life; converts must leave their former lives behind and live in newness of life)] which leadeth unto life, and **few** there be that find it.

Here Christ is speaking to those that would be called, become converted and be entering into God's Church throughout the existence of the Church over the centuries.

He gives out a very grave and serious warning.

Newcomers to the faith are exhorted to enter at the strait gate and to take the narrow way because wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction and **many** there be of those coming into God's Church **which go in by the broad way**.

The many going in by the broad way are those who try to reconcile their past lives and beliefs in the world with the requirements of God's Church; they want to somehow be able to do both; be saved and not fully abandon their former beliefs but Christ says it is impossible to serve two masters.

Mat 6:24 No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the

one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

In time, as this Scripture clearly says, you will come to despise one or the other of the masters and hold on to one; you cannot serve both. You can't have a foot in the Church and a foot in the world. If you do, you will come to fully be in the world and despise the truth you once followed. Matt 7: 13-14 says that the world wins out in most instances; the broad way leads to destruction no matter how much those taking it try to make themselves believe that they can serve two masters. They find themselves right back into their former way of life and they become blind again to God's truth and lose their salvation though often continuing to attend Church services.

As Mr. Armstrong always said, a blind or deceived person does not know they are deceived; if they did they would not be deceived. Those who again become deceived after having known the truth do not know they are deceived and this explain why most of the time they just keep on attending services. It also explains why it is impossible to bring them back to the truth; they firmly believe they have never left it. Many of us have had the personal and very frustrating experience of talking to such individuals and being utterly astonished that there is nothing we can say that can make them realize they have departed from the truth.

Christ says that it is the **many** coming into God's Church that take the broad way that leads to perdition and that it is the **few** that take the strait and narrow way that leads to salvation.

This is a clear and unambiguous Scripture that requires no special explanation to be understood.

There may still be some reading this study who even up to this point remain unconvinced that it is the few that are chosen and not the many.

Let's look at what we have witnessed with our own eyes after the death of Mr. Armstrong and see if there is any enduring truth to what Christ and Paul say in the Holy Bible.

The Debacle in God's Church After the Death of Mr. Armstrong

Many of you reading this study have personally seen what happened in God's Church after the death of Mr. Armstrong. Just about everybody left the faith or had left it a long time ago but had continued to participate in the assemblies of God's Church. They had gone back into the

world in their hearts (minds) or were seriously compromising with the ways of the world which are all contrary to God's truth while continuing to attend Church services.

When Mr. Armstrong died and Christ had not returned nor had anyone gone off to the place of safety which everybody expected would occur while Mr. Armstrong was the administrator of God's Church, they then ceased pretending they were following the truth and their innermost thoughts became evident for all to see.

These are quite bold assertions, and many will say how do you know that these people had left the faith. We are told not to judge others and this is what you are doing.

Christ says we would know the truth or lie of a thing by the fruit of what people do rather than what they say. Christians all through their lives are to make judgments as to what is true and what is false using God's truth as their reference point. It is fully part of a Christian's responsibility to be continuously choosing between good and evil and to be able to do so they must be constantly evaluating based on God's law what is good and what is evil. But, and here is the big difference which has to be kept in mind, we are not to decide whether a person is lost or saved as only God can do that and has reserved this type of judgment to Himself only. We can judge that a given action is good or bad but we cannot pose a judgment that someone is lost or saved. No problem.

After Mr. Armstrong's death, the ministry announced to the Church that they were not policeman; in other words, you could do openly within the congregation what you did when you were back home and we would not correct you. The message was clearly heard and the very next Sabbath we saw the Church's women of all ages coming into services with their faces all made up and wearing short skirts; cohabiting couples came out in the open and attended services; and attendance to Sabbath day service became a personal decision. The favorite and most popular new teaching in the Church was that Christians are no longer under the law.

Then there arose several new churches of God led by some of the leading men of God's Church while Mr. Armstrong was alive. Though coming from the same original church they were not united in doctrine; the new congregations of the so-called churches of God were mutually exclusive and each one appropriated for itself the title of being the one and only true Church and called all the others Laodiceans.

People left the Worldwide Church of God to join whichever new “church of God” best approximated in their view the Church in the days of Mr. Armstrong or who had preachers that had the kind of temperament, attitude and message they could live with.

The Worldwide Church of God has been renamed Grace Communion International and is now part of the mainstream religions of this world preaching the Trinity and the gospel of grace.

Nonetheless, God’s Church has continued uninterrupted and continues to exist today as it has since its foundation and as it will continue to exist until the end of the Last Great Day. Remember that all those coming to conversion during the Millennium and the during the Last Great Day become part of God’s Church if you understand who and what is God’s Church.

Now, let’s examine who are the teachers in God’s Church as it was taught by HWA that the saints resurrected at Christ’s 2nd Coming would be used by God to teach the nations of the world during the Millennium. Since they would all be called during the Millennium, it was considered there would be a massive conversion of the nations and that many teachers would be needed.

The Teachers of God’s Church

Since the foundation of His New Testament Spirit-begotten Church, God has instituted and has been following a process for bringing the unconverted to conversion.

First, He sent Christ to train specially-chosen men who would be the founding members of God’s Church. The Word himself became a man to teach those who were to be used to teach other men as they were called, God did not commission spirit beings to teach those coming to conversion. God would call men from the nations of the world but not everyone in every nation would become converted or stay converted. As you will see as you read on in this study that the Scriptures are clear that many are called but few follow their calling and of those who do, many do not remain converted. We will look at the relevant Scriptures a little later in this study.

Upon completion of their training, on the day of Pentecost, the disciples were filled with the holy spirit the Word and Spokesman who is the Comforter and Spirit of truth Christ said God the Father would send them.

Joh 14:16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

Christ was the Comforter who was with the disciples. He knew that after His death and glorification He was going back to His Father. So He tells His disciples that He would send them another Comforter, the Spirit of truth.

Joh 14:17 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

He told the disciples that the world didn't know who that Spirit was but that they did because he was dwelling with them (Christ) and would be in them after His resurrection and glorification.

Joh 14:26 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.

Christ was the Comforter and Spirit of truth that was teaching the disciples while He was a flesh-and-blood man who dwelt with them but He would again become a spirit being invisible to men. He would continue to teach the disciples and all truly converted Christians throughout the ages as the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman to God the Father's called and chosen ones. Jesus is the God being in the Godhead who speaks, teaches Got the Father's called and chosen ones. That's why He is called the Word and the Spokesman.

Joh16:13 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, [from God the Father] that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.

The apostles who had been personally trained by Christ then began to teach and some of those who heard them on the first day of Pentecost and that would hear them after, became converted.

God the Father initially used converted flesh-and-blood men, not spirit being materializing in visible form to humans, to teach other flesh-and-blood men whose minds He opened up to understand His spiritual truth which is otherwise completely unknowable by mankind.

The first century Church of the Ephesus Era set endured until persecutions became so pronounced on the Church that it had to flee into the wilderness to escape being eradicated by a new great false Christian religion. After the death of the apostles and of the men trained by them and fol-

lowing the scattering of God's faithful in the wilderness, much of the truth given the Church gradually became lost. Under ideal circumstances, the truth given the First Century Church would have been faithfully transmitted from one generation of believers to another but this did not happen. Typically, not everyone in a family is called and the children most of the time, don't follow the religious beliefs of the parents which makes it very difficult for spiritual knowledge to be passed on from one generation to another.

After the scattering of God's Church, it was necessary for truly converted Christians to behave in such a way as not to come to the attention of the authorities so as to not be imprisoned and put to death. This is another reason why the knowledge originally given to the disciples became loss over time. One last factor hindering the maintenance of the truth through truly converted Christians is that conversion is something that occurs in the mind, a changed attitude from one of being hostile to God to wanting to try to obey Him to the best of one's abilities. It is not something others can see. Truly converted Christians are invisible to both the converted and the unconverted.

Can any of you reading this study identify who are the true Christians in a crowd? If you are being honest, you know that you can't and this is why truly converted Christians will not be found in large organizations of men. They cannot congregate because they are invisible to each other. Because of all these considerations, the truth taught the disciples and those they trained gradually became lost but for some key elements such as the requirement to keep the Sabbath and to observe the 10 commandments.

After the scattering of truly converted Christians because of persecutions, there are no men who can teach God's Church. Truly converted Christians are being taught by the holy spirits of the Godhead, not men. God's Church is a spiritual not a physical organization being taught by the holy spirits of the Godhead.

Jer 3:15 And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding.

These won't be men who have proven themselves unable to care for the sheep but very good at making a living off of them. And, we can know for sure that NT teachers of God's Church are not men by what is said in Ez 34:10.

Eze 34:7 Therefore, ye shepherds, hear the word of the LORD;

Eze 34:8 As I live, saith the Lord GOD, surely because my flock

became a prey, and my flock became meat to every beast of the field, because there was no shepherd, neither did my shepherds search for my flock, but the shepherds fed themselves, and fed not my flock;

Eze 34:9 Therefore, O ye shepherds, hear the word of the LORD;

Eze 34:10 Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against the shepherds; and I will require my flock at their hand, and **cause them to cease from feeding the flock**; neither shall the shepherds feed themselves any more; for I will deliver my flock from their mouth, that they may not be meat for them.

No man today can honestly claim to have the knowledge given the apostles by Christ at His First Coming. No man today has such knowledge and anyone claiming they do and that none of their teachings can be questioned as they are the absolute truth of God are frauds. They are part of the many false prophets preaching for money. God calls money obtained by preaching, filthy lucre.

Are you part of a group with the words “church of God” somewhere in the title of their organization and claiming to be the true Church with their hand out constantly asking for more money. Money is a great corrupter of men which is why true preachers and money are mutually exclusive and cannot co-exist. Money is a great corrupter of men. One simply has to examine what men, converted and unconverted, will do to obtain money and seek to increase it to no end to realize why God does not want His ministers to be preaching for money. Using preaching as a means to earn a living, as a job, always leads to wanting more money and making money becomes the primary purpose of the ministry. The goal then becomes to grow the number of people attending their services and the dilution of God’s truth so as not to offend anyone to keep them attending their meetings.

In the book of Proverbs, chapter 7, sin is portrayed as a beautiful woman who is ready to tempt all passers by and have them partake of her physical beauty. Beautiful and accessible women like easy money are very difficult to always resist and few are those who do when given the opportunity.

This is why when Christ sent the disciples out to preach, He gave them the following instructions.

Mat 10:7 And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Mat 10:8 Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: **freely ye have received, freely give.**

Mat 10:9 Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses,

Mat 10:10 Nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat

Those who would believe the disciples were to provide them with shelter and food while they were with them. They were not to provide them with a steady income stream by paying a tithe to them.

The tithing system was instituted for ancient Israel as a means of sustaining the Aaron and his sons who were the priests and the other Levites who were not priests but were responsible for dismantling, transporting, setting up and maintaining the tabernacle of the congregation. The Levites had no part in the Promised Land. They didn't have herds and flocks nor did they plant, raise and harverst crops. They were dedicated to the service of the tabernacle of the congregation. Had God commanded Israel to give the Levites a tithe of their herds and flocks and of the produce of their fields, the Levites would have had heard, flocks and fields to take care of which God said is something they were not to do.

Based on how God has been administering His great master plan of salvation for mankind over the last 2,000 years, is it possible for us to know how God will administer His plan of salvation during the Millennium? God says He does not change (Heb 13:8).

Heb 13:8 Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.

God's Church During the Millennium

Let's keep going and see if we can't get to a Scripturally-sound, readily understandable answer to the question of how God will administer salvation during the coming Millennium.

It may come as a bit of a surprise to many Church members that the God family will have their church in existence all throughout the Millennium.

Mat 16:18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

But, should it really be all that surprising? Christ said that the Church would exist as long as there were human beings on the earth. It would never die out; there would always be a called and chosen ones who are remaining faithful. During the Millennium and the Last Great Day humanity will continue to exist and inhabit the earth. God's Church will also be in existence in those days or Mat 16:18 is a Scripture that can be broken but Christ said the Scriptures cannot be broken (John 10:35).

Who will be God's Church that is to exist all throughout the Millennium?

In Old Testament Scriptures we are made aware that God had called out a specific nation for the special purpose of it becoming His holy nation and kingdom of priests.

Exo 19:6 And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These *are* the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.

In Old Testament times, there were only very few individuals converted and these were the men God used to write the Bible. They were an exception to the rule so-to-speak because it was first necessary that Christ die as the perfect sacrifice for the sins of mankind and be resurrected to the glory He had known from eternity with God the Father before becoming a man born of woman before God the Father could open salvation to all men.

Joh 7:39 (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.)

The glorified Christ, who is the holy spirit being called the Word and Spokesman, is the holy spirit that works in the minds of the God the Father's chosen ones to make it possible for them to understand His spiritual truth.

Heb 1:1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,

Heb 1:2 Hath **in these last days spoken unto us by his Son**, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

We have been in the last days of God's plan of salvation since Christ's sacrifice was accepted by God the Father making sure God the Father's plan of salvation. We are now nearing the end of the 6th day of God 7,000 year plan.

Ancient Israel fully remained a carnal-minded nation like all other nations of the world and unable to obey God.

But, God very clearly says there is a time coming which is yet future to our time, when Israel returned from its scattering among the nations will be called.

Eze 36:26 A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.

Eze 36:27 And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do *them*. **[Those individuals of the nations constituting end-time Israel that enter the New Covenant will become God's holy nation; not all of them will.]**

Eze 36:28 And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers **[the Promised Land]**; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God.

These verses make it plain that in God's plan there is a time when Israel is to be offered salvation and that those who follow their calling will become part of God's holy nation and kingdom of priests in embryo (spiritually speaking); in other words, they are to become God's Church which as we know is made up of those in whom dwell the holy spirit God the Father and the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman because of their continued attitude of obedience to God in all things (Acts 5:32).

Act 5:32 And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given **to them that obey him**.

Those of physical Israel who enter into the New Covenant will become spiritual Israelites and members of God's spiritual nation or God's Church. Not all of Israel will convert and we will see why later in this study.

The converted end-time physical descendants of the ancient nation of Israel are to become part of God's holy nation and kingdom of priests in embryo (spiritually speaking) or God's church.

Israel was God's congregation in the wild that He had chosen through Abraham because of his obedience. In NT times, Israel is a spiritual nation made up of all those called and chosen by God the Father which include the gentile nations of the world. In order to be saved one has to become a spiritual Israelite or member of God's spiritual nation of Israel. At the

end of God's plan of salvation there will only be spiritual Israelites (flesh-and-blood men who are called, chosen and faithful), and those who were called and did not follow their calling or who turned away from it after having followed it. They die the second death in the Lake of Fire. God's Church or spiritual nation of Israel is God's Kingdom in embryo i.e., now only begotten or conceived and yet to be born as glorified holy spirit beings when God's Kingdom is fully established or born.

God's Church is God's holy nation and kingdom of priests in embryo who is also yet to be born into God's Kingdom. God's Church is at the same time, God's spiritual nation of Israel, God's holy nation, God's kingdom of priests and God's kingdom but all in embryo.

God nor those constituting God's Church are to reign or bear rule (be kings) over the unconverted nations of the world. God's kingdom of priests will rule over the new heaven and the new earth (Heb 2:6-8) in the same way Adam, and mankind descended from him, was given dominion or rulership over God's physical creation on the earth (Gen 1:26).

Heb 2:6 But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him?

Heb 2:7 Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands:

Heb 2:8 Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him.

Gen 1:26 And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

Christians are to remain separate from the world i.e., not live their lives according to their standards (Rom 12:2) while continuing to live among the unconverted. So, they have no command of God nor is there any requirement for them to rule over this present evil world even during the Millennium during which as we will see, the world to a great extent will remain unconverted.

Rom 12:2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

With this information in mind, let's move on to examining who is "spiritual" Gog and Magog and how it is different from "physical" Gog and Magog. This is something important to understand for us to know how things will go during the Millennium.

Physical Gog and Magog

Gog and Magog are mentioned mainly in 2 chapters of the Bible: Eze 38-39, where it occupies most of these chapters.

In Ezekiel 38 the time setting is at the **beginning** of the Millennium when Israel will have returned from its scattering (the 2nd Exodus) and be resettled in the Promised Land. Israel is then described as being a nation without walls i.e., it is unprotected (Ez 38:11) that would make an easy prey for any invader. Israel does not have any army or visible means of defense as their protector and defender is God.

At the **beginning** of the Millennium there is an attack on Israel restored to the Promised Land by a physical Gog and Magog (Ez 38). The terms "Gog" and "Magog" here represent actual peoples or nations that will attack Israel at the beginning of the Millennium; they are "physical" Gog and Magog as opposed to "spiritual" Gog and Magog who are as the sand of the sea in number and who come from the four corners of the earth. Gog and Magog at the beginning of the Millennium are actual, physical nations that will then be in existence. They will go up against Israel to pillage it and God will destroy them.

Eze 38:11 And thou shalt say, I will go up to the land of un-walled villages; I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates,

This is the nation of Israel which has been restored to the original Promised Land and who are prospering. They don't have armies and weapons to protect themselves from invaders. Their land is a land of un-walled villages and they are dwelling without bars nor gates. They look to be an easy prey whose wealth can be easily taken from them.

Eze 38:12 To take a spoil, and to take a prey; to turn thine hand upon the desolate places that are now inhabited, and upon the people that are gathered out of the nations, which have gotten

cattle and goods, that dwell in the midst of the land.

Israel was scattered among the nations and was reestablished in the Promised Land by Christ at His Second Coming.

Eze 38:13 Sheba, and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish, with all the young lions thereof, shall say unto thee, Art thou come to take a spoil? hast thou gathered thy company to take a prey? to carry away silver and gold, to take away cattle and goods, to take a great spoil?

Eze 38:14 Therefore, son of man, prophesy and say unto Gog, Thus saith the Lord GOD; In that day when my people of Israel dwelleth safely, shalt thou not know it?

Israel after the Great Tribulation is back in the Promised Land, dwelling there safely and being a wealthy country.

Eze 38:15 And thou shalt come from the place out of the north parts, thou, and many people with thee, all of them riding upon horses, a great company, and a mighty army:

Eze 38:16 And thou shalt come up against my people of Israel, as a cloud to cover the land; it shall be in the latter days, and I will bring thee against my land, that the heathen may know me, when I shall be sanctified in thee, O Gog, before their eyes.

Eze 39:9 And they that dwell in the cities of Israel shall go forth, and shall set on fire and burn the weapons, both the shields and the bucklers, the bows and the arrows, and the handstaves, and the spears, and they shall burn them with fire seven years:

God will destroy the armies of Gog and Magog and Israel shall go out and gather their weapons and burn them as firewood.

Eze 39:10 So that they shall take no wood out of the field, neither cut down any out of the forests; for they shall burn the weapons with fire: and **they shall spoil those that spoiled them, and rob those that robbed them**, saith the Lord GOD.

Eze 39:11 And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will give unto Gog a place there of graves in Israel, the valley of the passengers on the east of the sea: and it shall stop the noses of the passengers: and there shall they bury Gog and all his multitude:

and they shall call it **The valley of Hamongog**.

The hordes of Gog and Magog will be so great that for 7 months, Israel will be gathering their slain bodies and burying them in a place God calls Hammongog

Eze 39:12 And seven months shall the house of Israel be burying of them, that they may cleanse the land.

Eze 39:13 Yea, all the people of the land shall bury them; and it shall be to them a renown the day that I shall be glorified, saith the Lord GOD.

Now, who is spiritual Gog and Magog?

“Spiritual” Gog and Magog – Who are They?

God says that **after** the end of the Millennium, Satan would be loosed out of his prison and go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth i.e., those deceived will be from all over the world and their number is as the sand of the sea, a very great number of individuals.

Rev 20:7 And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison,

Rev 20:8 And shall go out **to deceive the nations** which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: **the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.**

The Gog and Magog that arises after the end of the Millennium are not members of the original physical nations destroyed by God at the beginning of the Millennium. They are from the many nations of the world and what they have in common is their spiritual condition; they are unconverted and what they share with the physical nations of Gog and Magog is their desire to destroy Israel and Jerusalem. This is why they are called “spiritual” (unconverted) Gog and Magog (want to destroy Israel).

In Revelation 20:8 where the time setting is **right after the end of the Millennium** we read that there will be a second attack by people from many nations from the four quarters of the earth the number of whom is as the sand of the sea and which God also calls Gog and Magog.

This Gog and Magog are not the physical nations of Gog and Magog mentioned in Ezekiel 38 which were miraculously destroyed at the beginning

of the Millennium by God with “.... **overflowing rain, and great hailstones, fire, and brimstone....**” (Ez 38:22). This Gog and Magog is made up of individuals from all nations from the four quarters of the earth; not from 2 nations living in specific regions of the world. They are individuals from all nations and they descend on Israel to fight against it (Rev 20:8-9).

Rev 20:8 And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.

Rev 20:9 And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints [Israel] about, and the beloved city: [Jerusalem] and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.

They are unconverted (their spiritual condition) and their goal is to destroy Israel and Jerusalem like the original 2 nations of Gog and Magog. That's why they are called spiritual (unconverted) Gog and Magog (want to destroy Israel).

Who are the ones that can be deceived? Is it converted individuals who have become part of God's Church? No, as we have seen, Christ Himself tells us that the elect cannot be deceived (Matt 24:24); therefore, it cannot be members of God's Church that Satan deceives after the end of the Millennium.

Mat 24:24 For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

Would those that are deceived by Satan be people alive after the end of the Millennium be those who were called but did not follow their calling, or who became converted during the Millennium and then turned away from the truth? If they did not follow their calling or became converted and turned away from the truth, then as the Bible makes clear, they have again become spiritually blind. They will not be able to recapture the truth they have left behind i.e., become again converted as made plain in Heb 6:4-6. Having turned away from the truth, they have lost their salvation and will be in the third resurrection of the Great White Throne Judgment.

Heb 6:4 For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, [spirit]

Heb 6:5 And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come,

Heb 6:6 If they shall fall away, to **renew them again unto repentence**; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.

Who then are the individuals that will be deceived in large numbers by Satan once released from the bottomless pit after the end of the Millennium and who will constitute spiritual Gog and Magog?

The only people that can be deceived and which Satan deceived in the past and who are today deceived, are those who are not converted. During the Millennium all will be called but as we have noted, being called is not the same thing as being converted; first the calling occurs then the called out ones has to make a decision whether or not to follow God's calling or to go back into the world.

Christ tells us very clearly that many are called but few are chosen (Mat 22:14).

Mat 22:14 For many are called, but few are chosen.

Few are chosen because though called they do not follow their calling by committing themselves to obey God for the rest of their lives; they chose to go back to their former lives in the world.

Christ says of the **many** called that it is the **few** that will follow God the Father's calling.

Mat 7:13 Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:

Mat 7:14 Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

Take a bit of time to let that sink in; it is the **few** not the **many** that will follow their calling. Only a small number of all those called will commit themselves to obeying God for the rest of their lives. Would this be the reason why God calls His Church the "little" flock (Luke 12:32)?

Luk 12:32 Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

In the past we have somehow imagined despite these Scriptures (and

there are others) that in the end, just about everybody would be saved but for a hardcore few who would refuse to obey God.

Let's pursue our analysis.

What is the fate of those who were called and do not follow their calling?

Are these individuals lost?

Let's go through the calling out process to see if we can come to a clear determination of the fate of those who are called but do not become converted.

Mr. Armstrong used to explain God's calling out process using the following story.

Until we are called we are like a man lost in a very dark forest unable to find our way out when unexpectedly he sees a light approaching. It comes to him and starts leading the way out of the forest. The man has to follow the light and as long as he is following it, he is coming out of the dark forest in which he was lost. But, if at any time he ceases to follow the light, the light will continue on its way and will not come back a second time to lead him out of the darkness.

When God the Father calls someone, He begins to reveal to the person spiritual truth which this person had always rejected before but which he now comes to see in a different light. God reveals more and more of His spiritual truth to him and in time brings the called out one to the cross-roads. For the first time in his life the called out one realizes that God exists and that salvation requires a fundamental change in the way he has been living up to that time and that he has to leave his former life behind and live a new life. He also comes to the realization that he cannot remain with one foot in the world and be able to fully and faithfully serve God; he has to fully commit to God's way of life and never go back to his former ways before being called. God is placing life and death before him, blessings and cursings (Deu 30:19) and he must choose one or the other.

Deu 30:19 I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live:

God gives him sufficient knowledge for him to be able to clearly know and understand the choice set before him: life or death. If he follows his calling, life and if he doesn't, death; there is no in-between decision possible.

Being called is a one time process. If the called out one refuses to commit

to changing his life and obeying God to the best of his abilities until the end of his natural life, the holy spirit God the Father will not force him to do so. He ceases to remain around the person; the individual again becomes completely blind to God's spiritual truth as he was before his calling. The holy spirit God the Father will not come back a second time. The individual has been given his chance to choose and he has chosen to remain in the world. All are given only one chance to choose eternal life or the second death. God will respect man's decision and the absolute free moral agency He has given him which is that there is no power on earth or in heaven that can force him to believe or choose something against his will.

There is an Old Testament story that I believe illustrates well the fate of those who are called to come out of the world but who refuse to follow their calling. Those who refuse to follow their calling are those who turn back into the world before having become converted; their decision is to not commit themselves to obeying God for the rest of their lives; they never undergo conversion. The fate of those that do so is illustrated by the story of Lot's wife.

Gen 19:23 The sun was risen upon the earth when Lot entered into Zoar.

Gen 19:24 Then the LORD rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven;

Gen 19:25 And he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground.

Gen 19:26 But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt.

God called Lot and his family out of Sodom and Gomorrah (cities used as an example of the sinful ways of the world cut off from God) as He has called individuals to come out of the world since the foundation of His Church. He led Lot, his wife and their family out of Sodom and Gomorrah so they would escape dying when He would destroy it by raining fire on it. As they were being led away from Sodom and Gomorrah Lot's wife looked back. God transformed her into a pillar of salt; she lost her life that was being saved as long as she was coming out of Sodom and Gomorrah but when she looked back i.e., did not forsake Sodom and Gomorrah, she lost her life. The Hebrew word for "looked" has the following meaning: "..... to scan, that is, look intently at; by implication to regard with pleasure, favor or care....." She felt sorrow about leaving Sodom and Gomorrah

which she didn't think was all that bad and about which she continued to care even though God said its wickedness had become so great that it could not be allowed to go on.

It is the same process for those who are being called out of the world. When the time comes for them to make the decision to forsake their former lives and obey God they look back and see a world which in their estimation is not all that bad after all. They turn away from their calling and return into the world. Lot's wife lost her physical life, they will lose their eternal life. And having rejected God's calling, God will not call them a second time. It would be pointless to do so. By their refusal to follow their calling they have made it clear that they would rather stay in the world which they find more to their liking. God will respect their decision; no one will be dragged into God's kingdom against their will.

During the Millennium, all of humanity will be called but not all will respond to their calling even though Satan will not be there to deceive them. The individuals that are deceived by Satan after his release from the bottomless pit can only be unconverted people whose minds are open to being deceived; the elect as we have seen cannot be deceived. Part of this group would also include all those who became converted at God's calling but who after a time, went back into the world and who no longer have the holy spirit God the Father and the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman dwelling in them.

There are many, the number of whom is as the sand of the sea, that will refuse to submit to God during the Millennium even though called by God at a time when Satan's ability to deceive them has been neutralized. After the release of Satan at the end of the Millennium, all those who do not have the holy spirits of the God family dwelling in them will be subject to Satan's deception, a power of deception that cannot be overcome without God's intervention. All these individuals have had their chance at salvation and chose to remain in the world. The sad and unfortunate conclusion is that they are lost and in greater number than we had ever imagined possible.

Surprisingly enough it is a very large number of individuals that will not follow their calling in addition to those who turn away from the truth after having committed themselves to following it as is made evident by Rev 20:8.

Rev 20:7 And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison,

Rev 20:8 And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in

the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.

When Satan is freed he deceives them; they surround the camp of the saints and are destroyed by God who rains fire on them (Rev 20:9).

Rev 20:9 And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints [[Israel](#)] about, and the beloved city: [[Jerusalem](#)] and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.

This great multitude are spiritual Gog and Magog. They, like the physical nations of Gog and Magog at the beginning of the Millennium, will march against Israel and Jerusalem to destroy it and like physical Gog and Magog they will be supernaturally destroyed by God. They're called spiritual Gog and Magog because what unites them as nations against Israel and Jerusalem is that they have lost their salvation; spiritually, though from the many nations of the world, they are one nation in their hatred of Israel and Jerusalem.

There is then only those who have converted minds left on the earth i.e., God's Church as we enter into the Last Great Day.

But, we are not without having been warned ahead of time that this is what would happen as we will see in the next part of this study.

Warnings Given to the Church

There is a Scripture which has been quoted and read countless times by just about everyone that has ever come in contact with God's Church or who became members, and it is the following one.

Mat 22:14 For many are called, but few are chosen.

We have already spent some time on this Scripture but given its importance, let's look at it some more. Mr. Armstrong used to explain this Scripture by saying that today they are many called but relative to the total number of people in the world, it is the few. However, Rev. 20:8 we have just read, makes it clear that it will indeed be a very high number of people that will not be chosen because upon being called they will refuse to submit to God and choose to stay in the world.

Today is not the time when the many are being called, the Millennium and the Last Great Day is the time when all will be called.

The time setting of Revelation 20 is at the very end of the Millennium when you would expect that at the end of 1,000 years when all of mankind has been called, and Satan bound and a seal placed over him that he should deceive the nations no more, that the vast majority of mankind would have repented, believed and become truly converted members of God's Church. But, this is not what will occur if we allow ourselves to believe what the Scriptures clearly say even though what they say goes squarely against what many have always believed.

If it were to be only a minority that does not follow their calling then the Bible could not state that the number of those in the world who are still unconverted at the end of the Millennium is as the sand of the sea i.e., a very large, uncountable number of individuals.

Joel 2:28 shows that all will be called (during the Millennium but Rev 20:8 says that the number of those deceived at the end of the Millennium will be as the sand of the sea.

They were all called during the Millennium (Joel 2:28) but the many did not choose to follow their calling preferring to remain in the world (Rev 20:8) and not being converted they are deceived by Satan when he is released as only God's elect cannot be deceived and he gathers them against Israel and Jerusalem to destroy it but are themselves destroyed by God.

I fully know and well realize that this is incredible and not in accordance with what we once thought that but for a few incorrigibly wicked individuals, all would be saved during the Millennium and the Last Great Day. This is something that was implicitly understood but which I don't recall was ever really explained and supported with Scriptures; it was just assumed that this is how it was going to be.

It may help us to be less shocked if we spend a bit of time looking at what the Bible says about the early Church as recorded in the epistles.

Were the early converts to Christianity full of zeal and enthusiasm to obey God and does the Biblical record show that they would all faithfully endure in the truth they had been given?

Final Thoughts

The Millennium will not be the time when there will be massive and lasting conversions of the nations.

The true Church has never been a large, visible-to-the-world organization.

For most of its existence it has been small and invisible to the world and persecuted by the world whenever it came to its attention.

Christ referred to His Church as the little flock; it would not be big.

How small is it going to be we cannot know but it is a sure thing based on what the Book of Revelation allows us to understand regarding the very great number of unconverted individuals at the end of the Millennium and based on Christ's clear warning to the Church that it is the few and not the many that will be saved. It is the little flock which is to inherit God's kingdom.

Luk 12:32 Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

It is unsettling to realize that salvation will not be a thing of the many but of the few, but this is what the Scriptures always said though this hadn't been really clearly realized until now.

We know that the Laodicean Era Church converts will be an innumerable multitude or a very great number of people and it would seem that this would make God's saved a large flock. However, given the whole of humanity since Adam and Eve to the end of the Last Great Day, all converts when compared to the large number of human beings having existed will constitute but a little group.

Those losing their salvation is because of their own freely taken decisions to cease following the truth that had been given them and to which they had committed themselves before God to follow for the rest of their lives. It is also the fate of those whom God calls and who refuse to change their lives to one of obedience to God preferring to remain in the world.

Knowing that it is the few and not the many that are to be saved and this by their own choice, it should certainly serve to motivate all those who have remained with the truth to make their calling and election sure by being careful to be spending enough time every day in study and prayer and in putting forth effort to follow God's law in every aspects of their lives to the best of their abilities.

Getting into God's Kingdom will not be as easy or as much of a sure thing as we may have once thought.

The behavior of God's first century Church members which illustrates what would go on throughout the centuries of the existence of God's Church; Christ's own words about how those who would be called out would react to their calling (most would not follow it); how converted members of

God's Church would not endure sound doctrine and would heap up to themselves teachers according to their own lusts having itchy ears (being eager to hear them); and the fairly recent destruction of the corporate body of the Worldwide Church of God and the resulting fallout should make plain to us that this is the sad truth as much as we don't like it.

2Ti 4:3 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;

2Ti 4:4 And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

Lastly, some will recall how Mr. Armstrong every now and then would strongly warn the Church of its lack of interest in the truth he was giving it and being consumed with interest for worldly matters. Mr. Armstrong used to say, he could give a sermon explaining a new spiritual truth revealed to him by God and hardly anyone talked about it. A great, new revelation from God that should have had everybody talking; but it hardly made a ripple in the Church. But, he said, let me make a comment about make-up and the message flashes across all the churches with everybody on the phone talking about it.

Mr. Armstrong also said that the Church wasn't really paying attention to what he was saying; rather, they were taken up by the person of Herbert W. Armstrong. Church members would make great efforts to hear him speak live but after they went back to their congregations, their friends would ask them, how they had found the sermon; they would ask: "What did Mr. Armstrong talk about? Their reply was "I don't remember, but I saw Mr. Armstrong, I saw Mr. Armstrong, I saw Mr. Armstrong."

He would tell the story to the Church in an effort to give it an idea of its spiritual condition and in the hope that it would stir some to greater effort. They weren't listening nor taking to heart what they were being taught.

It is indeed disconcerting and sad to understand that it is the few and not the many that will inherit salvation.

We can choose to ignore Church history, Christ's own words on the matter, Paul's warning to Timothy of how the church would not endure sound doctrine, the behavior of the first century Church as revealed in the epistles and the events after the death of Mr. Armstrong.

God leaves us free to do that.

But as for me, I believe the clear message of the Scriptures as bitter as

it may be and I take to heart the message that I need, and all those who are serious about their salvation, to make my calling and election sure by being about my Father's business.

It is not a given that almost all will be saved in the end as was once believed. In fact, the Scriptures clearly say, it is the few.

Mat 22:14 For many are called, but few are chosen.

And, to those who are called and who are chosen because they follow their calling and are entering into God's Church Christ warns them to:

Mat 7:13 Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:

Mat 7:14 Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

And, those that will be in God's Kingdom with Christ, the Lamb of God are described in Revelation 17:14.

Rev 17:14 These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful.

It is those that are called, chosen and faithful; all 3 of those elements are needed to be saved. It is not sufficient to have been called without having followed our calling and it is not enough to have been called and chosen (we followed our calling) without having remained faithful until the end of our natural lives.

Those that are to inherit salvation are those who were called by God the Father, who followed their calling and were chosen AND, who have remained faithful their whole life in living the truth they have been given.

As the Scriptures make clear to every Church era, it is only those who endure in their repentance and belief of the truth given them until the end of their natural lives that will be saved (See God's message to the 7 era churches in the book of Revelation chapters 2 and 3).

It is up to each and every one of us to make sure we are part of that small number that is to inherit salvation.

