

## Fundamentals of Belief #21A: Why a Monday Pentecost?

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Jon W. Brisby; 5-3-2003

This afternoon, brethren, we are going to get back to the Fundamentals of Belief series that I began two or three years ago. We've been covering these in a fairly exhaustive manner—the Fundamentals of Belief of Church of God, The Eternal. As you will recall, we have gone through the first twenty fundamentals, and we're now up to fundamental number twenty-one.

The first twenty fundamentals are the very same fundamentals that Mr. Herbert Armstrong wrote way back, probably in the 1930s or '40s—the fundamentals of the Radio Church of God. Mr. Raymond Cole adopted those same twenty fundamentals of belief as the foundation for Church of God, The Eternal when we became an organized body in 1975. At the same time, however, Mr. Cole added several fundamentals of belief, and we actually have a total of twenty-six. What are these last six fundamentals that were not a part of that which Mr. Armstrong originally wrote? Are these new doctrines? Are they new or different beliefs from that which Mr. Armstrong taught from the beginning? Not at all. What you're going to find is that these final six were also absolutely fundamentals of belief of the Radio Church of God; they just weren't considered significant enough at that time to be made a part of the written body of those fundamentals.

Mr. Armstrong focused on the twenty that, for the given time in that era, gave the best picture of our beliefs as a body and how we were distinguished from the rest of the churches of the world. So why is it that we felt the need to add six additional fundamentals over the last twenty-eight years? It is because certain beliefs that were taught from the beginning have taken on special significance—especially the one that we're going to cover today concerning a Monday Pentecost.

Monday Pentecost was taught from the very beginning, and it was a fundamental belief that Mr. Armstrong taught; and yet, it didn't gain significance to be added because, at the time, it was accepted by the majority of the Church under the

heading of the Holy Days. Now, we've already been through the Sabbath and the Holy Days. Pentecost is one of those annual Holy Days that is commanded, and we've gone through that. Why is it, then, that Monday Pentecost has become significant enough to rate its own fundamental of belief? It is because, of course, as many of you know, that very Holy Day became the catalyst for a dramatic change that happened within the very Body of Christ in these last days that catapulted the Church into a state of apostasy—the debate over the proper keeping of Pentecost. In these last days, this particular Holy Day has become the lightning rod of distinction and differentiation in the thinking of those that God has called out of this world. The decision that we make on when and how we keep Pentecost says everything about our orientation to the Truth, to that which God gave by divine revelation. It is, brethren, why this very keeping of Pentecost continues to be that which distinguishes this little remnant body from all of the rest of these groups that came out of our parent organization. We are still identified, probably first and foremost, as that "Monday Pentecost-keeping" group. It still distinguishes us, and there is a reason.

Let's read fundamental number twenty-one. I'll tell you up front: I don't know how many sermons it's going to take to cover this subject. There's going to be a lot, but here is the fundamental as it is written:

We believe that Pentecost always falls on a Monday—following a complete fifty-day count from the Sabbath occurring within the Days of Unleavened Bread. That this day pictures the receipt of God's Holy Spirit and the beginning of the New Testament Church.

That's our belief. So, how am I going to handle the explanation of that fundamental? I can tell you what I'm not going to do. I'm not immediately going to jump into a technical explanation of Leviticus 23:15 and 16 and the technical count of Pentecost. Are we going to go through it? You better believe it. We're going to go through the technical count of Pentecost, but I've got at least two sermons to complete before we get there. Why? Because the thing that I want you to get more than anything else on this topic, brethren, is that you do not have to be a technician with Hebrew and Greek languages in order to understand and have absolute confidence in the right day for Pentecost. God did not call us as a body of scholars, having the mental prowess to be able to fathom all of these machinations and technicalities. And He did not require that, in order for somebody to be a

faithful member of the Body of Christ and to hold fast until the very return of Jesus Christ, we all have to have this technical capability to study all of these contrary papers and to be able to ferret out all of the in's and out's of the different arguments. He just does not require it.

So instead, brethren, to begin to talk about our fundamental of belief on Pentecost, I want to focus on the keys that are really important for all of us in order to have absolute assurance and confidence. How are we going to do that? We're going to start by going back and looking at the history of the keeping of Pentecost in this last-day Church. What was it that Mr. Armstrong taught from the beginning? How did it come to be that the Radio Church of God kept a Monday Pentecost? What happened in the early 1970s that caused them to change to a Sunday? How did that come about? You see, if you understand the history of what happened and why, and you can put all of these pieces together, then you will have the tapestry which gives you that overview. Then, the motives of the different parties involved become evidently clear; and regardless of the technicalities—if you understand why and how we came to keep Monday as a body in the first place, and then you understand everything that happened on the road to changing it to Sunday—you will then have a very clear picture and an understanding of the dishonesty that was involved in making that cataclysmic change in 1974.

What was, therefore, the original teaching of the Radio Church of God? Let's go all the way back to the beginning. I'm going to read several quotes today out of old literature—that which is documented in the history of the Church and which anyone can find. In the 1957 version, and then in the 1970 revision, of a booklet entitled, *Pagan Holidays or God's Holy Days, Which?*, Mr. Herbert Armstrong states emphatically concerning the founding of God's Church: ". . . the New Testament dispensation, began on Monday—Pentecost, June 18, 31 A.D." That's what he taught. He also states, "The New Testament Church of God was not founded on Sunday." That was the original teaching of the Church. It's in writing. It's documented.

Let me give you another quote from a Radio Church of God article entitled, "Was the New Testament Church Founded on Sunday?", written in 1953 by Mr. Herman Hoeh. Here's what he said: "Pentecost in 31 A.D., the exact day upon which the true Church was founded by Jesus Christ, was June 18. This day was a MONDAY, which you can prove in your own home if you check in *Webster's*

*Collegiate Dictionary* under 'perpetual calendar.'" So, he's not saying you can use *Webster's Dictionary* to prove that Pentecost is on Monday, but he's saying you can prove that June 18, 31 A.D. was a Monday. Continuing the quote: "God's true Church—the Church that Jesus built—has been observing the *true* day of Pentecost to this day. That is why it has not forgotten the right year in which it was founded. All other churches have resulted from apostacies and have accepted pagan doctrines. They have forgotten the right year and the right day . . . They are not the churches that Jesus promised to build and *which He promised to guide into all truth!* Only the *true* church which has kept the *true* day of Pentecost could remember when Jesus founded the Church."

That's a pretty bold statement, isn't it? That was what the Church taught for almost forty years—that Pentecost was a Monday as revealed by God and that it was imperative that we understand and know when Pentecost is. Mr. Armstrong emphasized that a body who did not know when it was even founded could not be legitimate.

One other quote from this same article in 1953: "Yes, Jesus founded *His Church* on the day of Pentecost—not before then! . . . Was the true Church founded on a Sunday in A.D. 33 as the *Catholic and a few other churches claim?* REMEMBER, if any church which claims apostolic authority has erred in the traditional date of its founding, *how can we* believe that its other traditions are true?" If a church does not even understand and be consistent about the day on which it was founded, how can it be trusted to have truth on any other matter? That's what he's saying. It is a very compelling argument and one that we still hold to. It is imperative, brethren, that we know when God's Church was founded.

John 16 and verse 12. From this very quote I read just a couple of minutes ago: "They are not the churches that Jesus promised to build and *which He promised to guide into all truth!*" This was a very reference to John 16, which was a promise that God would guide and lead the Church into truth and not into error.

Beginning in verse 12: "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when [it] . . ." Now, I'm changing all of these out of the masculine form because that was a mistranslation in the *King James*.

Howbeit when [it], the Spirit of truth, is come, [it] will guide you into all truth: for [it] shall not speak of [itself]; but whatsoever [it] shall hear, that shall [it] speak: and [it] will shew you things to come.

What was it that was promised to the true people of God—those who would make up the Church, the very Body of Jesus Christ? They were promised the Holy Spirit, and it was a Spirit that was going to guide them into Truth, not into error. ". . . [it] will guide you into all truth: for [it] shall not speak of [itself]; but whatsoever [it] shall hear, that shall [it] speak . . ." The only question becomes, brethren, were we legitimately—as the Radio Church of God—the true Church of God, or were we just another manmade church espousing doctrine that was a mixture of truth and error out of the mind and the thinking of human beings guided by the deceiver, Satan the Devil? Or, were we truly members of the Body that Jesus Christ established in these last days through the ministry of Herbert Armstrong, which had the Truth, including the knowledge of the right Pentecost? That is the fundamental question.

What you're going to find, brethren, as we go through this topic of Pentecost, is that I cannot separate it from the topic of divine revelation. It will probably be months down the line before I get to it; but fundamental number twenty-four is on the topic of divine revelation, and we're going to go through that in detail. It's going to be a lot of repetition of some of the things you're going to hear in this series on Pentecost because divine revelation is the key to understanding the right day of Pentecost and to having confidence. The most simple of intellect of those that God has called and placed within the Body, can understand the concept and the significance of divine revelation. We may not all be able to understand the complexities of counting in the Hebrew, but we can understand the significance of divine revelation and of God's promise to tell the truth and not to lie. Even the most simple can understand that, and that's ultimately where our confidence is going to lie if we're going to make the right decisions.

It is not the scholars and the technicians—those with the highest IQ—that are going to have the upper hand when it comes to doing the right thing, being in the right place, and making the right decisions when times are difficult. It is those who simply believe that God tells the truth. Those are the ones that are going to be in good stead. Those are the ones that are going to be able to stand in faith to face whatever may befall us before the return of Jesus Christ. And so I tell you from the

outset, brethren, that my focus, when it comes to this explanation of the right day of Pentecost, is going to go hand-in-hand with our understanding and our confidence in divine revelation. That's how we're going to know it.

Ephesians 3 and verse 4: "Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ)." Here, the Apostle Paul was claiming to have knowledge. He was claiming to possess something that he was obviously saying these other religious practitioners out there did not have or possess. ". . . when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ)." It was a mystery—why? Because God hid it from the world so that they couldn't receive it; they couldn't understand it.

. . . ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets [How?] by the Spirit.

The whole formula, brethren, for the things that you need in order to pass the test of the last days, is right here in verse 5. It's synoptically covered in its entirety. ". . . in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit." It tells you precisely the formula that God chose to use in order to make sure His Church—His called-out ones—would have and would hold on to the Truth. What is the formula? Truth comes by revelation; it comes through the preaching of chosen human servants—who are instruments, who are just a mouthpiece for the work of God—and they are led by the Holy Spirit so that they are the instruments of Truth.

That's how God works. That's how He has worked from the very beginning. Find any example in the history of the Bible when God did not work in this specific way with those patriarchs of old. Oh, He certainly did. He gave truth from the beginning—not a lie—and He did so through the inspired speaking of chosen servants. Those servants did not speak of their own minds and their own hearts, but they spoke that which God gave them through the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit gave them the Truth, not a lie. The only question for us is, was Mr. Armstrong such an apostle? Meaning, a selected, commissioned servant in these last days who, like the apostles of old—like Moses, like the prophets—was given a divine message that he was told to carry and to repeat to those who would be called and made a part of the Body? Or, was Herbert Armstrong just another religious shyster

who chose to make religion a profession for the sake of providing an income for himself? That's what we all have to decide. But, brethren, it is absolutely inconsistent for anybody to want to hold on to the idea that Herbert Armstrong was a legitimate apostle, and then reject a Monday Pentecost. Either he was led through the Holy Spirit in assigning Pentecost on Monday from the beginning, or else, in his human reasoning, he made a mistake. And if he made a mistake, brethren, that's just an indication that he wasn't being led by God at all. That is the simple criteria.

How, then, did Herbert Armstrong come to teach a Monday Pentecost? How did it start? The first thing people will say when we talk about divine revelation is, "What? Do you think that God just opened up Herbert Armstrong's head and poured all of this truth into it?" They'll say, "He'll even admit that it didn't happen that way", and we also admit that it didn't happen that way. No, God taught Mr. Armstrong one piece at a time over a protracted period. He didn't give Mr. Armstrong all truth at one time; He led him gradually by revelation to understand one piece of the puzzle after another. The secret is to understand, brethren, that once God put a piece of the puzzle in place, that piece was right. Herbert Armstrong wasn't building the puzzle—making it up as he went, making guesses, going back and having to fix things. Once God led him to put the right piece in the right spot, that piece was there and you could count on it. Then, gradually, as he added the other pieces, the whole thing came into view. The body of that doctrine, which became the foundation of the Ambassador College Correspondence Course—from which we were all taught those foundational doctrines—was all put together for our benefit.

Here is a quote from *The Autobiography of Herbert W. Armstrong*: "As this study of the Bible continued, I was forced to come out of the fog of religious babylon *a single doctrine at a time*. It was years later before I came to see the WHOLE picture—to understand God's PURPOSE being worked out here below, and why, and how, He is working it out. Like a jigsaw puzzle, the many single doctrinal parts ultimately fit together, and then, for the first time, the WHOLE picture burst joyfully into view. It was like being so close to one tree at a time I could not see the forest. I had to examine every doctrinal tree in the religious forest. Many, as I had been brought up to believe them, were felled on close examination IN THE BIBLE."

What are these "doctrinal trees" he's talking about? He's talking about the doctrines that he had grown up believing—those things in false Christian churches that he had always thought were true. He is not talking about an idea that, at any given time after God reveals His Truth, we should go back and reprove those things and subject them to scrutiny once again to prove whether they're still God's or not. This original forest he's speaking of, is all of the doctrinal trees that were of the world's religions that he had to examine one at a time as God was guiding him.

Continuing the quote: "New doctrinal trees came into view. But finally, after years, I was able to see the whole forest of TRUTH, with dead doctrinal trees removed. That is why students at Ambassador College today are able to learn the TRUTH much more rapidly than I could. That is why the readers of *The PLAIN TRUTH*, the regular listeners of *The WORLD TOMORROW* program, and the students of the Ambassador College Correspondence Course are able to come to mature knowledge of the truth so quickly. The pioneer work has been done. The weeds have been removed. The very *trunks* of the trees of false doctrines have been chopped down and uprooted."

Mr. Armstrong confirms the very process by which God gave him this direction that ultimately resulted in the body of doctrine which was taught by the Radio Church of God. It came one at a time over the course of a number of years. God didn't open his head and pour all of those things in at one time; he learned them one by one. But, brethren, once God showed him a revealed doctrine, that became one of those true doctrinal trees that could be counted on. If it were of God and if God is the one who revealed it, then it can never change. Otherwise, we are saying that God either lied, misdirected, or allowed His servant to go in a totally wrong direction from the beginning. That is not how He works. Once God reveals a new piece of the doctrinal puzzle, that piece becomes a part of the faith once delivered.

Brethren, those doctrines did not come out of the human mind of Herbert Armstrong. That's why we're here today doing what we're doing, keeping what we're keeping—because we believe that Herbert Armstrong was a servant that God used and to whom He brought the Truth, in raising up the Church of the last days. Now, if anybody doesn't believe that Herbert Armstrong was a legitimate apostle of God, then they should reject everything that he taught and go and seek truth somewhere else entirely. But this idea of accepting Herbert Armstrong as a faithful



apostle, but then taking exception with the doctrines that were taught from the beginning and, piecemeal, throwing some out on the basis of better human wisdom and technical scholarship, is an absolute effrontery to God.

Another quote from a Co-worker Letter dated November 29, 1954. Did Mr. Armstrong claim that he was inspired directly by God, even as the Apostle Paul was inspired? You bet he did. Here's his quote from 1954: "And so I say to you, as the Apostle Paul said to those at Galatia: I certify you, brethren, that the GOSPEL which is preached of me is not after man, for I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it but BY THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST. . . . When it pleased God, who . . . called me by His grace, to reveal His Son in me that I might preach Him to the world; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood—neither went I to any sect or denomination or human theologian, but I went directly to the WORD of GOD, on my knees, corrected, reproved, and instructed in God's righteousness and TRUTH!"

What was Mr. Armstrong quoting? He was actually using Galatians chapter 1:11–20 as the basis for his own statement about the source of his inspiration. He was quoting from the Apostle Paul, who absolutely asserted that he had been taught by God directly, and not by man. And we accept that, don't we? Just about everyone who picks up the Bible accepts the fact that Paul was motivated by God, called on the road to Damascus, and sent out into the wilderness for three years to be taught directly by Jesus Christ. We accept the fact that the Apostle Paul was taught the Truth, don't we? We don't think that Jesus Christ taught Paul some truth, but then let Paul kind of mess up on a few areas so that he went back and taught the Gentile churches a mixture of truth and error that had to be fixed forty years later. We don't believe that, do we? I think most of us accept the fact that the Apostle Paul was taught the Truth by the inspiration of Jesus Christ directly through the Holy Spirit, and then he took that same message in his commission and raised up those churches in Asia Minor. He taught them precisely what Jesus Christ taught him. So, we accept that. Most of us accept the fact that the New Testament Church was founded on truth, and not on a mixture of truth and error.

Why is it, though, that we have a problem accepting the fact that the last-day Church—that same Body—was also founded on truth, and not a mixture of truth and error? The last-day Church understood because God revealed, through that chosen commissioned servant, the proper day for the keeping of Pentecost, as well

as all of those other fundamental teachings. We knew the day that the New Testament Church began—June 18, A.D. 31, a Monday—and that it was significant for many reasons. Mr. Armstrong certainly claimed apostolic authority from the beginning even though he didn't claim personally to be an apostle, yet he was doing an apostle's work. We recognize that today because he was taught directly by God. God gave him that Truth and commissioned him to preach it and to raise up those churches, which is exactly what he did. What happened in the aftermath of 1974 is a totally different story, and we're going to get to that. But, brethren, if there's anything of substance, of value, to any of these doctrines that came out of the Radio Church of God—which later became the Worldwide Church of God—it is that which came from the beginning because it came by God and His inspiration, and not by the wisdom of any human being. If all of these things were just cooked up out of the imagination of Herbert Armstrong through his personal Bible study, then we're wasting our time. It has no value unless it was that which God did and God gave. Brethren, it is the only way that God has ever worked to give Truth to the Church.

1 John 1 and verse 1: "That which was from the beginning . . ." How many times is this very concept repeated in the Bible—the faith once delivered, getting back to the first works, that which we were taught from the beginning? It's there time and time again. Brethren, I fear to be among these that are out there now, teaching, proclaiming and pursuing their own ideas about the Truth, who have a little bit of the foundation of our early teachings left, and yet they've perverted it and changed it. I fear to be in their shoes, if they're still in that state when they have to stand before Jesus Christ, because there is no excuse for not understanding the simplicity of Christ which says that God reveals truth at the beginning, and then our responsibility is to hold fast and not let anybody change it or take it away from us. It's that simple, and a Monday Pentecost was a part of that beginning.

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life.

Here, the Apostle John was speaking through the inspiration of that same Spirit, and he was one of those personal witnesses to the ministry of Christ. He was one of those taught directly by Christ in the flesh. And after His death and resurrection, that same Jesus Christ continued to teach those apostles through the

Holy Spirit that He sent on that first day of Pentecost in 31 A.D. He continued to inspire those faithful servants to give the Truth.

(For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) [So, these apostles claimed that Christ—the Word of life, the Truth—was manifested to them, and it was that which they, then, proclaimed to the Church. Verse 3:] That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you . . .

You see, John didn't say, "What Christ revealed to me, then I kind of mixed and matched together with my own wisdom and came up with the package which I sold to the Church." That's not what he said. John, as a faithful apostle, was strictly a mouthpiece—a conduit. He gave the Church precisely that which Jesus Christ delivered, taught and proclaimed. In the very same way, brethren, when you read the way that God worked with Moses, you see that God gave Moses the message and said what he was to speak, and then Moses went and told the Israelites precisely that. I've mentioned it in the past; it is very likely the reason that you see repetitive passages in Exodus. Why is it that God recorded first that He told Moses, "And God spake unto Moses and said," and then you have several verses full of specific instructions? And then He says, "Now you go and tell the people." Then it says, "And Moses spoke unto the children of Israel and said," and then you see the whole thing repeated again. Why "waste" that much space in the Bible, repeating the same commands twice? Wouldn't it have been enough just to record it once? I think one of the main reasons it's there, is for emphasis—to show the process of revelation and the way Truth is given to the called and chosen. It confirms that God gave the message to the commissioned servant by revelation and then that messenger repeated it entirely and accurately to the body. Brethren, if you're dealing with a faithful servant, that is precisely the formula that you will see. That mouthpiece, that foolish human preacher in the flesh, is not speaking his own words; he is only a conduit for that which he is given by divine revelation. Brethren, that's what we believe we had in the ministry of Herbert Armstrong—even as the Apostle John is saying here:

That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto

you, that your joy may be full. This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth.

A very profound statement. And it was written, brethren, for you and me and for all of those who are a part of the last-day Church upon whom the ends of the earth will very likely soon come.

. . . God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth.

So, I know I'm getting ahead of myself, but what about those who claimed and wrote at the highest levels on behalf of the Church in 1974, that now we had new truth concerning Pentecost? We had been in darkness on the subject of the right day for keeping Pentecost for almost forty years, but now God was bringing us out of that darkness and showing us that Sunday was the proper day. Does that not smack just a little bit of inconsistency, to believe that? Does that not just bother the conscience a little bit, to think that if this were truly God's Church, He would have allowed Herbert Armstrong to assign the wrong day for Pentecost—the day which pictures the receipt of the Holy Spirit and the founding of the New Testament Church—and that for almost forty years, we were in that kind of darkness when, supposedly, this was the true Church that was being led and directed by Jesus Christ; and that Herbert Armstrong, as a commissioned servant, was speaking that which had been given to him by Jesus Christ, and yet now, forty years later, we have to fix it and make it right?

It is why, brethren, to some who have recently asked me about this doctrine of Monday Pentecost—many who are yet confused on it, trying to sort out the why's and the wherefore's—I simply said this: "If anyone ever convinces me that Pentecost is not on Monday, you will have convinced me to throw out everything I ever learned from Herbert Armstrong, and to go do something else." It all stands or it falls together because if you convince me that Pentecost is not on Monday, you will have convinced me that God is not the one who revealed Truth through the work of Mr. Armstrong. You will have convinced me that he was just another man making up doctrine out of his own reading of the Bible. If it's true that Pentecost

had to be changed, then it's true for every other doctrine that he taught. It's true for everything concerning those unique doctrines about the plan of salvation that no one else taught—that God is reproducing Himself, that our hope, our reason for existence, is because God is creating a spiritual family who is going to share all of His power and glory, who are going to be turned into the very sons of God through a birth process in the Spirit. You see, he's the only one who ever taught that, so if he was wrong on Pentecost—if he was wrong on all of these other doctrines—then you can't convince me that he was right about the Family of God doctrine either. If Pentecost isn't on Monday, you have no hope, brethren, that anything else he taught came from God. It all stands or it falls together. That's how simple it really is.

Those are the things, brethren, that no matter your education, no matter your IQ—if you've been called and placed within the Body of Jesus Christ—those are principles you can understand. Those are the things that you can have confidence in that are going to drive you forward without being subject to being drawn off onto a tangent or made unsure or shaky by the latest paper written by one of these former ministers. You do not have to be at the whim of these men who espouse their new doctrines, and worry that you have to study them out in detail and find the flaw, or else if you don't find the flaw—if you can't immediately put your finger on why they're wrong—now you're subject to wondering whether you've got it right or whether you've got to go back because maybe you were wrong the whole time.

No, brethren, if you understand this topic of divine revelation and the source of the way God chose to work to reveal Truth, then you can have absolute confidence in all of these fundamental doctrines, including the right day for keeping Pentecost. Some do not understand that key principle. There are some brethren who still keep a Monday Pentecost, and yet they have rejected the idea that God revealed Truth through a chosen servant. They keep Pentecost on Monday only because they technically understand the right Hebrew count. Good for them. Not good enough, however, because invariably, based upon their technical errors and particular renderings, they take exception with other doctrines that are a part of the faith once delivered.

And so, just having a technical understanding of Pentecost is not enough. You can understand the right day for Pentecost and be wrong on divorce and remarriage. You can understand a Monday Pentecost and be wrong on the nature of man. You can understand a Monday Pentecost and be wrong about the source

of the true calendar. If you can't put all of the pieces together and understand the significance of the faith once delivered as a package, as God delivered it piece by piece and put those doctrines into the Church through the ministry of Herbert Armstrong—if you can't recognize and come to grips with divine revelation as the key—then sooner or later one of these other doctrines is going to pull you right out of the Church. It has happened time and time again.

That's why, brethren, Pentecost is tied, along with all of these other doctrines, to this topic of divine revelation. When I get to fundamental number twenty-four, you're going to get all of this again. But it's that critical. There is nothing that is more significant to your spiritual salvation and to mine than understanding the way God works and the fact that He promised to tell the truth, and that the true Church of God is led into all truth—not into a mixture of truth and error. That's what Satan does. Satan is the deceiver. He gives you a little bit of truth to make it appear legitimate and then runs in a whole lot of error with it. Truth plus error equals error. The only way to have truth is to have unadulterated truth in its purity, and the only way that comes is by a divine miracle through the operation of the Holy Spirit. And God chose to do it through the foolishness of preaching, through those who would be called and commissioned to proclaim.

This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you [So said John.], that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie . . .

In that case, God is not the liar, because He tells the truth; and He is the personification of Truth. "If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth." Brethren, if we say that we're the true Church of God and yet we kept the wrong day of Pentecost for almost forty years, we lie and do not the truth. The only ones that have the opportunity to have a close, personal relationship with Jesus Christ are those who refuse to call Him a liar, who refuse to say that Christ allowed Herbert Armstrong to select the wrong day for a critical Holy Day like Pentecost, which represents the very lifeline of the Church—the gift of the Holy Spirit, the harvest of the firstfruits, which we all have our hope of being a part of. If we say that Jesus Christ allowed an error on that for almost forty years, then we're basically making Christ guilty of a lie. I'm not going to do it.

So, Herbert Armstrong claimed to speak the Truth by divine revelation. Now, we each have to decide whether or not we believe it. He and Mrs. Armstrong kept the Holy Days on their own for several years, from the time that Mrs. Armstrong first began to keep the Sabbath. If you read the autobiography, then you know the story. God called Mr. Armstrong by beginning to work through Mrs. Armstrong. She was incredibly faithful to that Truth until her dying day in 1967. That was the way that Mr. Armstrong first began to study it, in order to try and prove his wife wrong about the weekly Sabbath. God guided him through his Bible study because He was working with him for a special commission. He showed him that the Sabbath was absolutely imperative. In time, then, over the next few years, God made known the necessity to keep the annual Sabbaths, as well as the weekly Sabbath. So Mr. and Mrs. Armstrong began to keep those annual Sabbaths on their own; there was no one else at the time to keep them with.

The first year that a small group met together with the Armstrongs to keep the annual Sabbaths was 1934, and even then, Mr. Armstrong did not understand the purpose for those Holy Days. He had come to understand that they needed to be kept, but God had not yet revealed to him how all of those Holy Days pictured a plan of salvation—the difference in the times of salvation for the firstfruits, the early harvest versus the late harvest, and the significance of Trumpets and Atonement, the Feast of Tabernacles and the Last Great Day. All of those things had to come a piece at a time, even as he said that God had made known those truths one by one like trees in the forest, putting together that entire picture, that puzzle, into one harmonious tapestry.

And so, the Armstrongs kept the Holy Days by themselves at first. They came to understand that they had to keep them, and began to keep them. They did not yet have all the pieces to know how to keep them properly and what they meant; that came in time. In 1934 a small group began to meet to keep the annual Holy Days. When Mr. Armstrong found out he should keep the Holy Days, where did he go to find out when and what days to keep? Well, he went to the Hebrew calendar, and he went to the Jews. And so, the initial keeping of Pentecost was on Sivan 6 for about three years. Why? Because that's what the Jews were keeping. We'll go into this later when we get into the technicalities, but the Jews count Pentecost from the first day of Unleavened Bread, not from the weekly Sabbath that falls within the seven-day Feast of Unleavened Bread. When you count Pentecost from a calendar date, you count fifty from Nisan 15, which is what the

Jews do. Fifty days later by their count (they actually only count forty-nine and admit it) leads them to Sivan 6—the same statutory calendar date every single year. Whereas we understand that it is the weekly Sabbath that falls within the seven-day Feast of Unleavened Bread that we are to count from, and because that weekly Sabbath is a different calendar date every year, then Pentecost falls on a different calendar date every year, but always on the same day of the week.

I remember my parents, from the time that they were baptized in 1959, first got just a few pieces of information about the Holy Days and how they were supposed to be kept. Their first Atonement was on their way down to Big Sandy to keep the Feast of Tabernacles, and they kept it sitting on the side of a river, drinking water. They knew they weren't supposed to eat, but they didn't understand fully the command about how to keep Atonement properly, so they thought it was ok to drink water. It reminds me very much of the way that Mr. Armstrong came to understand these new doctrinal pieces one at a time.

And so, he initially went to the Jews. The Jews were keeping and assigning Pentecost on Sivan 6. Now, Sivan 6 can fall on several different days of the week, year by year, including Wednesday, Friday, Sunday. So, in fact, in 1934 Sivan 6 fell on a Sunday, but in 1935 it fell on a Friday. In 1936 it fell on a Wednesday, but something monumental happened in 1937. In 1937 that group kept Pentecost on a Monday for the first time. How did it come to be? Mr. Armstrong became compelled by some force. Now, we have to decide what it was. Was it his own reasoning or was it the inspiration of God? He became absolutely compelled that God would not have started His New Testament Church on Satan's pagan day of worship—on Sunday. He started without the evidence of any technicality whatsoever, and yet he had this overwhelming feeling that Sunday could not be the right day for Pentecost.

Now, those who have their confidence in technicalities will say, "See, Herbert Armstrong was just making it up according to his own intuition. His intuition was no better than mine or yours or anybody else's. So, our only choice to find truth is to go into the Word with our lexicons and our Bible helps, and figure out the Truth ourselves." The problem is, all the people who do that, all come up with a different answer. So, whose truth? But Herbert Armstrong became compelled by something. I believe it was the Holy Spirit guiding him, even as God guided the Apostle Paul and brought him into all truth by the Spirit—the same way that the



Apostle John was taught the Truth by Christ directly, and not a lie. During this time, God began to make the next step clear and to show Mr. Armstrong that Sunday was never the Day of Pentecost. It could not be. And so, even though for about three years or so, he accepted at face value the Jews' assignment of Pentecost on Sivan 6—in 1934 it fell on a Sunday; in 1935 it was Friday; in 1936 it was Wednesday—something monumental happened in 1937.

We have, in fact, a member sitting among our fellowship today, who was back there in 1937 and who kept that Pentecost on Monday. She kept a personal diary and still does, as far as I know. Every single day she wrote a little note about something significant about that day. We have copies of her diary from 1937 because this particular member was baptized in 1936, and her first Pentecost with Mr. Armstrong and that little group was in 1937. Mrs. Lorinda LeBleu's diary records a Pentecost meeting on Monday, May 17, 1937 at the home of the Cons. On Monday, June 6, 1938, the following year, Pentecost was kept at the White's. Her diary also records a meeting on Monday, May 29, 1939 at Wilma Christiansen's home. This shows you very plainly that even though it's sketchy as far as those statistics prior to 1937, we know that from 1937 forward, Monday was the day that Mr. Armstrong kept.

Now, we don't have a lot of additional information. What was it that became compelling about 1937, as far as God's revealing Monday to Mr. Herbert Armstrong? What I find very interesting, when you look at the way the dates fell during that time, is that if Mr. Armstrong had continued to accept at face value the assignment of Pentecost by the Jews, Pentecost would have been kept on a Sunday in 1937. I don't have the proof for it, but I have the strong suspicion, the inclination, that it was very likely that this revelation that God gave him to know that Sunday could not be Pentecost—that what led him to recognize that something was desperately wrong there—was because, had he just continued on accepting a Sivan 6, he would have been keeping a Sunday in 1937. It appears, then, that probably somewhere between Pentecost in 1936 and in 1937 is precisely when God compelled him that Sunday could not be Pentecost; and therefore, he was not willing any longer just to accept the Jews' assignment for that Holy Day. Somewhere there, it appears—probably because that 1937 Pentecost, according to Jewish reckoning, was going to be on a Sunday. It caused him and led him to find out the true Pentecost.

Mr. Armstrong published a Holy Day calendar, listing dates for future years. So, back in the mid-1930s, he was publishing this calendar for future years, like we do today. He had assigned Pentecost on Sivan 6 before God gave him this piece of revelation. But we know that 1937 was the first year that Monday was kept, which means they basically did away with that calendar, and the Church literally began to keep a Monday from 1937 forward—every year.

1 Thessalonians 2 and verse 13:

For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.

Brethren, if we believe that Mr. Armstrong was an instrument in God's hands, then we also accept the fact that it was God who was guiding him uniquely to understand and to put together the pieces of this puzzle. It's not the way He promised to work with all the rest of us as lay members of the Church. You know, I grew up in the Church. I was baptized at age nineteen, but God didn't work to give me unique revelation from my personal Bible study. No, I received my inspiration by hearing the messages of the commissioned ministry who spoke through the power of the Holy Spirit. That gave me my direction, which matched with my personal Bible study and, through the Holy Spirit working upon my mind, showed me what changes I needed to make in my own life. But, see, I never claimed that God was going to work to reveal new knowledge and truth to me as a lay member of the Church. I never believed that. The fact that I am an ordained minister today is not the reason that I believe that God works to inspire through a ministry. I've believed that all of my life. That's how God chose to work. If Herbert Armstrong was one of those faithful ministers to whom God gave that special inspiration of Truth, then we see the operation of the way God led him, including coming to the knowledge of a Monday Pentecost—not as a human endeavor, but as a divine operation.

"For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us . . ." Yes, we heard it through a human being, the foolishness of preaching—a weak, fallible human being, as we all are, and even as Mr. Armstrong was—but yet with a special commission and the

inspiration of the Holy Spirit. It was the chance for something unique to happen that was not going to happen according to his own mind. ". . . ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men . . ."—even though it was coming out of the mouth of a human being—" . . . but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe." That Spirit is the Spirit of truth, brethren. It guides into all truth, not into error.

1 Corinthians 2 and verse 9:

But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

We're dealing with a miraculous force of the very mind of God leading the Church to Truth. If we ever were the true Church of God, then we had that operation working through Mr. Armstrong as a commissioned servant.

Matthew 12 and verse 31. Here we're going to find how serious it is to deny the operation of that Spirit. Remember, it is a Spirit of truth because that Spirit emanates from the God Family and from Jesus Christ who is the Word made flesh, a personification of that Truth. It is His Spirit, then, that motivated those human agents, those commissioned servants, to proclaim the same Truth from the beginning. What happens if we deny or take exception with that which came as a function of the Spirit?

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.

What does it mean to blaspheme against the Holy Spirit? It means to deny that the Spirit produces Truth. It means to take exception with the message that came from the Spirit. It means to take exception with God who used the Holy Spirit to miraculously give Truth to the Church; and anyone, therefore, brethren—whether he recognizes it or not—who is saying that we did not have the truth of a Monday Pentecost from the beginning, is blaspheming the Holy Spirit. If he remains in that situation without repentance, there is no forgiveness. Rejecting

God as the founder and the manifestation of Truth in the Church today is a rejection of the Holy Spirit. And I'm telling you, brethren, that when the Worldwide Church of God changed Pentecost from a Monday to a Sunday in 1974, it was a rejection of the inspiration of God. It was a rejection of the Spirit—it was a blasphemy against the Holy Spirit—and God withdrew Himself from that body.

When Mr. Armstrong had the conviction way back in the 1930s that Pentecost could not be on a Sunday, it was because the Spirit led him and guided him to that conviction. He didn't have the evidence yet, but he felt it. God was showing it to him. Based upon that conviction that it couldn't be on Sunday, he knew he had to figure out when it was. God pointed him to Monday through a simple rendering of Leviticus 23 using the *King James Version* and an exclusive count. We're not going to turn to Leviticus 23 today, but we will go through that exclusive count in the future, along with the Hebrew enumeration rule and the proper Hebrew count. But, brethren, I think it's incredibly significant—divine revelation is the key to understanding this.

Even if Mr. Armstrong had become a Hebrew technician and had first explained a Monday Pentecost by the Hebrew, that still would have given substantiation—to whom? To the scholars. Instead, God led Mr. Armstrong to understand Monday by a simple rendering in the English. He counted from—away, out of—Sunday, and arrived on Pentecost as day fifty by an exclusive count. We understand by the Hebrew that Sunday is day one of the count. Pentecost is still Monday according to the proper Hebrew, when you apply it in full at the beginning and the end—all fifty days have to be counted. We're going to go into all those technicalities; we're going to see it. What is phenomenal is to understand that God did not reveal it to Mr. Armstrong through the technicalities of the Hebrew as human beings like to focus on. He allowed him to come to the right day without the understanding of the Hebrew—the simple, exclusive count in the English.

It's like the example—maybe this happened to you in your school years—where you were in a math class, maybe algebra, and the teacher assigned a problem. And you worked out the problem and you got the right answer, but you didn't get it the same way the teacher did. In some cases, the teacher was surprised. "How did you get the right answer? Because you did this wrong and that wrong." And yet, you still got to the right result. Does that make the answer wrong? That's pretty much what happened with the way that God revealed a

Monday Pentecost. He showed it in its simplicity to Mr. Armstrong because He was guiding him by divine revelation, not through technicalities. Yet we know and understand, as we're going to see, that even the proper technicalities of the Hebrew—the proper application of that Hebrew enumeration rule—will still lead you to a Monday Pentecost. God's Truth is substantiated by the technical, but He wants us to come to understand that it's not the technical understanding on which we should have our confidence.

I can tell you, brethren, I had at least the gifts that God gave me in mind in order to understand the technical. When I was still a freshman at Ambassador College, but unsettled with the things that were going on in the Church in 1980 and 1981, I began to search, and became aware of Raymond Cole's ministry. I began to study those articles on the technicalities of the Pentecost count. I was able to understand it. I was able to see and understand the *mimahorat's* and the Hebrew enumeration rule—the double *mimahorat* in verses 15 and 16—and how that fits together. I understood it. I put those pieces together, following the logic, and it works—and it leads to a Monday. But, brethren, I'm telling you that I did not get truly excited about the Truth, about the faith once delivered, until I came to understand that regardless of the technicalities, it had to be a Monday because of divine revelation from the beginning. That was what got me excited about it. Just technically understanding and proving Monday by the Hebrew was not that significant to me, but divine revelation as the key to all understanding of truth on doctrine was fabulous. When I came to understand that, is when I decided to get baptized—when it ceased being just a religion of my parents that I had been taught growing up, that which I recognize now is legitimately the operation of God, and that which I knew I had to embrace for myself.

Divine revelation is the key, brethren, so we're not going to forget that. We're going to go through these technicalities, but I do not want you to get lost on being consumed with the technical part of the counts. They will support Monday. They will support that which God gave by divine revelation, but it does not have to be your confidence whatsoever.

2 Corinthians 11 and verse 2 in closing this afternoon:

For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to

Christ. But I fear [says the Apostle Paul in speaking to the Corinthian Church], lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus . . .

Meaning, if some other professing minister who says he's being inspired by Christ, stands up and begins to teach a different doctrine or writes his little paper with new truth about a doctrine of the Church:

For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached [Meaning, it's a contrary message.], or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him.

Paul was afraid of the seed of apostasy within the Church. He knew the proclivities of the human mind, and it applied not just to those who were in Corinth, brethren. This was written for you and me because according to our carnal, rebellious minds—especially under the deceived influence of Satan the Devil and his spirit, which is absolutely consistent with ours—the message of Satan makes sense to us. It seems right; it seems to fit. And so, with that weakness, we are ever vulnerable to casting away the Truth God gave and replacing it instead with a counterfeit. That was precisely what Paul was admonishing the Corinthian Church to be careful about.

For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him.

He's saying, we, as members of that Body, might be subject to being fooled and pulled off into the way of error because of these technical explanations by other false ministers claiming to be representatives of Christ, who are going to try and lead us astray. Did that happen to God's last-day Church? You better believe it did—and to people who were very, very well-meaning. They accepted that change in Pentecost, as well as all of those doctrinal perversions that followed in the years after, based on very smooth words and technical explanations by those in the ministry that they trusted. I'm telling you, brethren, it was a lie, and the fruits of it have borne out that it was not of God, but the very operation of an adversary.

Next time, we're going to go into the technical reasons for the change in 1974. I'm going to read you some quotes about why it was changed, and then we're going to talk about some of the behind-the-scene things of why it was really changed. And then, we're going to see some other significant things about the proper keeping of Pentecost before we eventually get into the technical aspects of the count.