November 13, 2013

David:

I have spoken to you privately over the years regarding specific incidents, events and topics that presented themselves and raised concerns. I did so even though you did not seek my input. I am compelled, again to provide input though you have not asked. You have made it clear to the entire Church, from the pulpit and in a member letter, that you are not fond of unsolicited counsel – a fact that is troubling in light of certain statements in scripture (see, Proverbs 11:14 and 12:15). Nonetheless, here it is.

I told you when we were forced out of the United Church of God that you would have my support so long as you would “move heaven and hell the way Mr. Armstrong had tried to, to preach the gospel.” So writing this to you now, considering the events of January, the Ministerial Conferences this year, the articles that have appeared in Vision since 2001; the ones that have not, recent member letters and your last two sermons is difficult.

Because of its impact on everything we do as an organization, your view of government and authority is of primary concern. In your recent sermon on government, gospel and godliness, great effort was expended in an attempt to demonstrate, using scripture and the Apostle Paul, that you are entitled to rule in what can only be called an autocratic manner. What was not in your presentation was any acknowledgement that what makes government work is godliness, beginning with faith.

Unfortunately, government, more specifically, Biblically based government, is a topic about which leaders in the church, for as long as I have been in the church (40 years), seem to know very little. The ignorance may be understandable given the normal human predilection for self-deceit, the natural obsession of man to protect what he or she thinks is theirs, and our utter inability as humans to have faith in our Creators. Too often, those in authority in the Church adopt the premise that there is something about them that actually qualifies them to govern others. It is a notion that is completely contrary to scripture. Three familiar ones should suffice to illustrate the point: Jeremiah 10:23; 17:9 and Proverbs 16:25. When it becomes clear that they are no better at governing than any other human before them, they selectively misuse scripture in an effort to excuse their failings. This has been manifest in many, if not most, Church leaders in our age.

Once in power, leaders seek to protect that power. Not surprisingly, by asserting their authority, based on their position, to do so. This kind of circular reasoning has been true even of Church leaders. What makes it worse when Church leaders behave in such a manner is that they misuse scripture to justify their acquisition, possession and retention of authority. That is precisely what you did in your sermon on government, gospel and godliness.

The problem really dates back to Adam and Eve and a tale of two trees. Our parents made the mistake described above – they presumed that they were qualified to govern themselves without any appreciation of what James Madison would say thousands of years later as the United States of America was in its formative stages. At that time, James Madison encapsulated the challenge that lay before the colonists as they sought to devise an alternative to governing: “In framing a government which is to be administered by men over men, the great difficulty” Madison said, is to “first enable the government to control the governed; and in the next place oblige it to control itself.”

Simply stated, Adam and Eve found themselves outside the garden because they proved incapable of self-governance. That failure was at its most fundamental level a failure of their faith in Elohim and their government. As should be apparent from the plethora of material I have sent to you and the board, that seems to be your and John Anderson’s challenge as well.

Stripped from any pretense or effort to justify one’s authority, what does the scripture actually say about governing and authority? Again, we begin in the Garden of Eden. It was there that man’s first effort at self-governance failed. That failure was a failure of faith that resulted in disobedience. That disobedience resulted in judgment. That judgment became man’s catalyst to prove to Elohim (whether man acknowledges the existence of Elohim or not) that he could recover himself – govern himself without his Creators. The record of man’s history from Genesis 3 through Genesis 6 is a lawless one. Man was not accountable to man but to the Eternal (Genesis 4:13-16). The end of this era was another judgment – the flood. Elohim then committed power to Noah (Genesis 9:1-6, see especially verse 4). From that time to this, mankind has been tried and abused under the restraints of human authority and government. But, as Madison correctly noted, man ruling man was not, and is not, the answer to man’s recovery to a state where he can govern himself. In fact, man ruling man has proven only to open man to serial idolatry as he searches for that man-god messiah to restore order to his chaos.

To illustrate the utter futility of man’s efforts, the Father called one family with whom his son would work. To the patriarchs of that family, he made many promises that were not fulfilled during their lifetimes. To the children of those patriarchs he gave his covenant, his law, his statutes and judgments. He also gave them his holy days and he did it all before they did anything. What he did not give them, in general, was his Holy Spirit. Despite it all, they proved no more capable of restoring themselves and mankind to a state of self-governance than any man or group of men that had preceded them. In other words, the law, of itself, was not sufficient to cure man’s defect and restore him to a state where he could govern himself.

With the coming of Jesus, government and authority changed (Luke 22:24-30). Of course, until the Kingdom of God is established, man will still be accountable to man – human authority and government will exist. But within the Church it is different (Acts 5:29). With the resurrection of the Christ, we are not citizens of this world (Ephesians 2:19) we are subject to Christ. As such we are to, like Christ, learn to serve. If we don’t we will never rule. Jesus’ point to his disciples and future Apostles in Luke 22 was that if they learned to govern by serving others they would judge the twelve tribes of Israel. It should go without saying that serving others demands first governing the self. When Jesus returns to rule, Isaiah tells us (9:6) that the government will be on his shoulders, not under his foot. Serving will continue to be the model for all eternity.

Most poignant, but usually ignored by those stumping their own authority, is the fact that there is not one instance in the gospels or the apostolic writings of autocratic authority actually being exercised. One would have thought that if there was an occasion for such an exercise of authority, it would have been in the matter of Onesimus the slave of Philemon. In that case, the apostle Paul does not even reference his authority as an apostle. He appeals to Philemon as a brother. As I stated in a sermon on this topic, the most likely reason is that Paul realized that if he were to go with the nuclear authority option it would polarize the congregation at Colossae around these two very powerful men and split the church. He wisely chose not to play the authority card. The closest Paul ever comes to an autocratic exercise of authority in correction is in Corinth in the matter of the man committing incest. What is he upset about? He is upset that the congregation forced him to exercise apostolic authority instead of handling the matter themselves.

What Paul does teach us is that the authority structure for the Church is the family structure as set out in Ephesians 5 – the Household of God. Paul begins by encouraging us as **beloved children of the Father**, to imitate our elder brother’s submission to the Father. It is the Father in heaven who has both primary and ultimate authority in all matters (John 8:29, John 17:3; I Corinthians 15:24).

Beginning in verse 22 of Ephesians 5, Paul describes the authority structure in a family. He tells us that the husband is head of the wife just as Christ is head of the Church and imposes on the husband the responsibility to love his wife as Christ loved the church – to serve her. In verse 24, he tells us that the Church is subject to Christ, not himself, any other apostle – indeed no man.

We saw in Ephesians 5:1 to whom Christ was in subjection. The authority structure for the family, Paul says, speaks to a mystery – that of Christ and the Church (Ephesians 5:32). The manner in which authority within a family is to be exercised is based on the principle of mutual submission (Ephesians 5:21). Some scriptures that outline the extent of Jesus’ authority, the nature of his submission to his Father and the mutuality with which each functions that are worthy of note include:

John 3:35 – The Father loves the Son and has given all things into his hand – more specifically, all authority and judgment. See, Matthew 28:18 with respect to authority and John 5:22 with respect to judgment. With respect to Jesus’ submission he says of himself in John 5:19 – “the Son does nothing of himself.” It is the Father who does the works and the Son only does what he sees his Father doing and has come in his Father’s name (John 5:43; 8:28). Jesus had no crusade or initiatives of his own (John 8:28) he came solely to do the will of the Father (Hebrews 10:5-7; quoting Psalm 40). As a result, it is the Father who glorifies the Son (John 8:54). Despite all the authority given to the Son, notice the Son’s ultimate willing submission to his Father in I Corinthians 15:28. After the Son obliterates anyone and anything that represents itself as an authority, he yields his own authority back to his Father and sits down at his right hand.

As I have explained to you and board, The Church of God, an International Community was created for the following purposes (Bylaws Article 3.1 emphasis added throughout):

**“…the corporation shall serve as an instrument of the Church of God to publicly proclaim the gospel of the Kingdom of God to the world as a witness and care for those that God, the Father, shall call. The corporation shall not, except to an insubstantial degree, engage in any activities or exercise any powers that are not in furtherance of the purposes of this corporation…”**

The corporation is a California Nonprofit Religious Corporation under the California Corporations Code. California Nonprofit Corporations Code §9210(a) provides that a Nonprofit Religious Corporation is required to have a board of directors. It further provides that the activities and affairs of the corporation **shall** be managed and **all** corporate powers **shall be** exercised by or under the direction of the board. Subsection (b) of that same section allows the board to delegate management of the activities of the corporation to any “person or persons” **“provided that the activities and affairs of the corporation shall be managed and all corporate powers be exercised under the ultimate direction of the board.”**

This means that under California law, the board of a Nonprofit Religious Corporation is the highest authority for the organization. No particular board member, including its Chairman enjoys sole authority and the authority of the officers of the corporation is subordinate to that of the board acting as a body. The lawful operation of the organization demands this structure and specifically eschews autocracy. Romans 13, particularly verses 1-2, require those of us in the Church to respect the laws of the land unless they contradict the laws of God (Acts 5:29).

In these scriptures, we are given clear lines of authority with respect to governing. Since there is nothing in the Nonprofit Corporations Code that contradicts the scriptures, those laws and the structure they provide need to be respected and upheld. The model of governance on which California law is based is not different in the UK, Australia, Canada or any other location in which the Church is incorporated to facilitate its work. Notwithstanding, implicit in all government and governing is authority. And while it is the California Corporations Code that defines authority within the corporate entity of the Church of God, an International Community (an instrument of the Church), the bylaws that establish operating authority for the organization have been subordinated to scripture. I did that intentionally.

So whether we are speaking of the Church of God, or the corporation established as an instrument to facilitate the work of the Church, neither primary, nor ultimate authority rests with you, any other individual or any group of individuals. Authority rests with Christ and based on his Father’s instruction, he demands mutual submission, not autocratic rule. Primary and ultimate authority rests with the Father.

Your sermon on Government, Gospel and Godliness referenced none of this. Rather, it painted a threatening picture of your autocracy within the household of the Father. Not a few people felt threatened. Was it your intent to threaten the **beloved children of the Father**?

In that sermon you at least implied that your authority is, or should be, like that of the apostle Paul. But the apostle Paul, an apostle trained personally by the resurrected Jesus, (I Corinthians 9:1) was no autocrat. He never made that error. Only one example is necessary to illustrate Paul’s view of his authority within the Father’s household. As you noted, during the time Paul spent in Corinth establishing the congregation, he made tents (Acts 18:3). He did so despite the fact that he had the authority, and absolute right according to the law of God, to demand to be supported from their tithes (I Corinthians 9:6; 8-11). But he did not exercise his right because he reasoned that to do so would be an obstruction to the furtherance of the gospel (I Corinthians 9:12). So rather than assert his authority, and risk obstructing the furtherance of the gospel, Paul imposed limits on himself and on his authority. He practiced serving through self-governance. To put it another way, he submitted himself to the **beloved children of the Most High** to serve them and the will of the Father. Why, as you were using the Apostle Paul to establish your own authority with scripture, did you fail to reference Paul’s example in that regard (I Corinthians 9, see especially verse 15. See also, II Corinthians 11:7-9)?

The misuse, abuse of authority by Church leaders, primarily ministers, is a major cause, if not the major cause, of the fracturing and division we have seen in the Church of God in this modern era. So please explain how your view of, and the actual exercise of, authority on your part is different than the abusive authority to which the Father’s children have been subjected in the past? Please explain how your view, and practice, of your authority is compliant with the law of those nations in which we function. Can you say that you act in submission to that law, respect the authority of the Boards responsible to govern the Corporations of the Church?

Seriously David, why are you not afraid? Since your authority is neither primary nor ultimate, why present it as though it is? Thinking, as you seem to, that you have sole authority creates problems. Those that have resulted in unlawful conduct I have written to you and the board about and will not rehearse here. One example that has more to do with doctrine and how people are treated occurred two years ago.

Two years ago, Jerry DeGier angrily misused his Pastoral authority and refused to ask the Father's blessing on a little baby. For the only time in my forty years in the church, a pastor did not reference the scriptures related to the blessing of the little children prior to asking the blessing. For the only time in forty years a child, presumably present because the family was drawn by the Father to seek his blessing, was turned away. You defended and supported Jerry in this. Did Jerry, based on scripture have the authority to do what he did? Did you? Reflect on the fact that Jesus corrected his future Apostles for their efforts to limit access to the Father through him. He corrected them for attempting to do what Jerry, and later you, ultimately did. Even Jesus did not seek to restrict those drawn by the Father from coming to him (Mark 10). The matter speaks for itself. If the Father had not drawn them, how would they have thought to come to him? What is most significant here is that Jesus knew that he had no authority to turn them away. So, if even Jesus knew the limits of his own authority, why is that you and Jerry DeGier felt comfortable doing something Jesus did not and would not do?

But the greatest wrong was yet to be inflicted, by you, on an already embarrassed and hurt family. You would to try to convince Mr. Mendez that Jesus' example in Mark 10 was not what it appeared to be and his words in that same chapter did not say what they clearly said – that is what drove him and his family (three generations) away. Why is it ever right in our Father's eyes for his called out ones to be driven away (John 6:37, see the NIV)? In what way can it be said that your actions and the exercise of your authority is in submission to the will of the Father when it exceeds what Jesus, the living Christ would allow for himself?

Following on from that you rewrote Mark 10 and mischaracterized the example Jesus left us. You changed what is not, and was never intended to be, a church ceremony into a Church ceremony. You will obviously have to answer for your own motivation in so doing. However, the practical reality is that in so doing, you garnered to yourself, control over who is to receive the blessing of the Father and who is not. Again, why were you not afraid to act in this manner? Why were you unafraid to rewrite Jesus words and contradict his example? Do you believe that your authority is greater than that of Jesus — thus making it equivalent to that of the Father? There is another way to view Mark 10, see attached.

You seem to have taken a similar approach to the gospel and the preaching of it. In that regard, and by way of foundation, what we do must meet the standard of John 5:30 (see the New American Standard). Jesus did nothing on his own initiative. He did not come to do his own will but that of the Father (John 6:38). He did not speak his own words, but those of the Father (John 7:18). So, please explain the attached letter from Mike Snyder sent to me in 2004. Surely you remember Mr. Armstrong’s public repentance with respect to Human Potential and Quest? He labeled that initiative as a misdirection and a misuse of God’s tithes because they exalted human achievement and humanist efforts. They did nothing to advance the gospel and Mr. Armstrong ceased to publish them. On one occasion, you told me that you had been advised to abandon “your crusade. Is this your crusade, to recreate in some way Human Potential and Quest? Is that why “Vision” approaches the “gospel” in the manner that it does? If so, then appreciate that the Father will not, indeed cannot, bless our efforts if those efforts represent your initiatives. And he has not blessed those efforts.

The second question is: So what? In other words, what is its impact of the message we have been sending out? I have spoken to you before about Isaiah 55:5-11 and Romans 9:6-7; 10:14-20; 11:1-5? Both sections of scripture speak to the Father’s will to call people. No one is being called. Isaiah says that when the word of the Lord goes forth, it does not come back empty, yet Vision only comes back empty. Paul says if we preach it they will come. We say we are preaching it, but no one comes. Our standard answer for this phenomenon is that the Father is not calling at this time. Is that the case or is it the case that we have not, and are not, sending his message to the world? This is not about numbers, it is about a message that goes out in the earth and because of its special qualities of content is, through the power of Holy Spirit, blessed by the Father so that it provides an increase in righteousness (Acts 2:47). Why do you refuse to consider that the words that go out in Vision are more yours than the Father's? Is it appropriate to blame our Father in heaven when we fall short? Another discussion that has not taken place is one concerning whether we are “seeding” the right field. We have all heard your explanations about the gatekeeper concept – fine –but what about Matthew 13? Do we really believe that gatekeepers – leaders in this world – are going to carry the message we have been tasked to take to the world (Acts 26 suggests the opposite).

Two examples (hundreds could be referenced) suffice to illustrate the problem: In your article (May 2001 the Vision version not the CGN version), "The Violent Heart," you concluded this:

**How, then, do we begin to come to terms with the violence that seems so naturally a part of us? There is no question that understanding what we are up against in the spirit world is central. A strong sense of personal moral identity is also a key. Knowing who we are morally – cannot be underestimated. This speaks to the early and continuous formation of character: knowing what is right and exercising the will to do it Glover writes: "The sense of moral identity is one relevant aspect of character Those who have a strong sense of who they are and of the kind of person they want to be have an extra defence against conditioning in cruelty, obedience or ideology."**

This passage begs a number of questions:

* Why are we speaking of conditioning against violence when the good news is that our Father through his Son by the power of the Holy Spirit is going to give all mankind a new heart. (Isaiah 9; Jeremiah 31; Ezekiel 20).
* Given man's deceitful heart, how is it we know what is right if we are not shown what is right? Who will do that for us? Jonathan Glover? If we don’t tell the world based on the law of God, how will they know? If they don’t know to repent, why would they?
* Why isn’t Paul’s experience in Romans 7 referenced here? Indeed, why does anyone care what Jonathan Glover thinks? Certainly our Father does not.
* And why are we preaching Jonathan Glover’s message instead of Jesus’ message?
* Why aren’t we talking about the role of the Holy Spirit in giving mankind the power to come to terms with his moral identity (Jeremiah 17:9)?

When one reads about people like the Pharaohs, Nebuchadnezzar, Alexander the Great, Hitler, Mussolini, Pol Pot, Bashar al Assad the problem is not the absence of a sense of identity, who they think they are or what they want to be. All of these people have an outrageously over stimulated sense of who they are and what they want to be. Their psychopathy of narcissism is so fully developed that they became megalomaniacal and then sociopathic. Their inflated sense of self, like Satan's, reflects an absence of a moral connection to anyone or anything but self. What do self-styled messiah’s like Glover tell us about changing these people? Is it your belief that somehow all men and women will, of themselves, simply decide to be "moral" people? And if so, moral according to whose standard?

**He, Glover, continues: "Sometimes people's actions seem to be disconnected from their sense of who they are. This may be because they slide into participation by imperceptible degrees, so that there is never the sense of a frontier being crossed. This gentle slide can be a feature of the training of torturers. It was what the Nazis aimed at in securing collaboration in occupied countries. With the atomic bomb, the slide was gradual from making it only as a deterrent against Hitler to making it for actual use against Japan." We must be careful that we do not become participants in cruelty or violence *gradually.* A well-formed personal moral identity should prevent it, but we sometimes allow ourselves to be compromised. Vigilance about our state of mind is essential.**

How is it that a deceitful and desperately wicked mind develops a well formed moral identity? By what power are we saying that occurs? Is there one scripture that supports anything Glover and you are saying here?

In your recent publication Big Questions — Straight Answers beginning on page 110 in the article entitled, "A Change of Mind," you write this: "The role of the will in change of heart and mind is part and parcel of the conceptual framework we use to explain how our decision making is affected by our own independent thought processes." "...We are not irreversibly programmed by our genes nor by our early environment; **we can make changes in our existence by conscious, willed thought** (emphasis added) leading to action." "... **In other words we can change our own patterns of thought and behavior by our self-directed will."** (Emphasis added). Neuroplasticity is the solution **for certain disorders and behavioral problems and because it has benefit in certain limited situations it "goes without saying" that neuroplasticity is the answer in other "mental and behavioral impasses."** (See page 111, last paragraph, first sentence. It does not "go without saying" according to the apostle Paul).

You go on to state this: "The new findings have profound implications for improvement in the most difficult and sensitive human problems from depression to addictions of all kinds and even protracted national and international deadlocks." You then reference a Four Steps program in which people learn to recognize what is happening inside their brains and "take appropriate self-directed or willed actions." The apostle James (chapter 4) is under the impression that war (international deadlocks) is the result of the exercise of man's self-will. Who is correct in your view? Schwartz or the apostle James? One presumes, given the context, that the purpose of self-directed or willed action is to solve man's thinking problem. How does neuroplasticity compare to Jeremiah 31:33? Is there a new moral code that is a substitute for an ancient moral code that needs to be imbedded in man's heart (mind) for man to change?

You then reference a "spiritual" parallel. You speak of the Hebrew term "shub" and the Greek term "metanoeo." You equate Schwartz's four steps program with Biblical repentance and then state: "Another way of saying it is that **sin can be overcome through change at the conscious level of the mind when the will is engaged** (emphasis added)." This, you later describe as **"the only way forward, the way to health both physically and spiritually (emphasis added)."** Continuing on, you conclude that: "What we have not understood until recently is the role of the physical brain in this process. **Once the will to change is engaged and specific actions are taken, new neural pathways are created and new attitudes and new behaviors *result.* The more we take the new action, the more lasting the behavior becomes (emphasis added).” "...The way out of human problems as diverse as obsessive-compulsive disorder, bad habits, racial prejudice, hate crimes, depression, brutality, and exploitation of others remains a fundamental change of mind (emphasis added)."**

Again, a number of questions come to mind:

* You reference sin but sin is the transgression of the Father’s law (I John 3:4). It is also anything done that is not done from faith in the Father and the Son (Romans 14:28). What is it that Jeffrey Schwartz can tell us or mankind in general about those things? Aren’t we the ones who have to tell people those things? And if we don’t, how will they know?
* When you speak of lasting changes are you talking about change for as long as one lives or for all eternity. The question needs to be asked because the good news is that through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and the gift of the Holy Spirit mankind can have lasting change for all eternity. Can Jeffrey Schwartz promise that or is that something that can come only through the name “Jesus Christ” (Acts 4:12)? Seems like this is something we should have said in this article.
* I thought the way out of human problems was Jesus Christ living his life in us (Romans 6). The good news is that he will if we are willing. However, can we be willing without the Holy Spirit? (Romans 8:7). True Biblical repentance is a gift from the Father (Romans 3 and Ephesians 2).
* How can what you discuss in this article be said to be the Father’s words when so many fundamental truths are omitted?

Also in this article, you reference, but do not quote the Judeo-Christian scriptures -- why? And technically, they are not the Judeo-Christian scriptures they are the words of Elohim, the Most High, YHWH, El Olam, El Shaddai – see II Timothy 3:16-17. This kind of obfuscation cannot be pleasing to the Father. You speak of what they say as "tradition" but they are much more than that — they are **TRUTH – the words of LIFE.**

You then say as part of an ongoing, and frankly convoluted, conclusion, this: "As we have seen." **As we have seen?** You referenced a Hebrew word and a Greek word and quoted absolutely no scriptures and provided no context in which those words are used to define repentance scripturally. We have seen exactly nothing of what the scriptures say. Don't you think such a statement is deceitful and insincere and cuts against even what Jeffrey Schwarz recommends we do to practice his notion of "repentance"? (See your last paragraph and in particular the last two sentences of that paragraph on page 113).

In fact, your idea of the Biblical definition of repentance – "introspecting and changing our way of doing so that change is lasting,” while acceptable to Jeffrey Schwartz, falls far short of statements by John the Baptist, Jesus, the Apostles and in particular, II Corinthians 7.

Here are some really **Big Questions** that your straight answers have sent begging:

1. The gospel, as you should know, is the good news of the kingdom of God. That Kingdom is comprised of humans made spirit. These are individuals who have recovered what was lost in the Garden of Eden through repentance and overcoming (I Corinthians 15) – men and women who learned self-sacrifice and service after the pattern of the Messiah, Jesus, the Christ. (Philippians 2). These are those who, while flesh, acquired the mind of their Father in heaven (again, Isaiah 55, especially vv. 6-9). This is the whole point of human existence (Ecclesiastes 12). As a result, they are qualified to govern with him at his return. They will teach and instruct mankind how to have the same mind and thought process as their Creators because they have learned how to do that (Romans 12:1-2). They will guide and uphold. They will warn people before they make mistakes (Obadiah and Colossians) not just correct them afterward. There are a multitude of scriptures relating to these truths. They are not dealt with in these articles. So the questions are:

1. Are we to understand and believe that it is **good news, the gospel,** that we, through self-directed, conscience will, engaged to make right choices are capable of loving the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our soul and with all our mind? How exactly does such self-directed will to make right choices occur? What about man’s experience as recorded in Genesis 3? When and how can we as humans even know what is right unless our the Father shows us (Proverbs 14:12 and 16:25)? Jesus tells us that we should love the Father with all our heart, soul and mind (Matthew 22:37) but the apostle Paul says that the human mind set on things of the flesh (the natural state of the human mind), is at war, in conflict with, hostile to or, as you put it, in **"deadlock"** with the mind of God (Romans 8:7). Paul goes on to say that the human mind is not subject to the law of God and indeed cannot be. In other words, without some power outside of himself (Romans 7:24-25), man cannot perform the function for which he was created. So, again, how is it that the self-directed will of man engages, of itself, to do the right thing (Romans 3:12-18 quoting the prophet Isaiah and various of the Psalms)?
2. Is it your contention that we can, of ourselves, approach the mind of God on our own terms? Can we disarm the natural human hatred that the human mind has for our Creators? If so, then why does Paul say, that when we are renewed, we are renewed to repent and there are circumstances that deny further renewal (Hebrews 6, see verse 6 in particular)? Repentance comes from the Father (Romans 2:4) where do you tell people that? Are we to believe that repentance comes to us from Jeffrey Schwartz if we only do his four steps? How is your approach to becoming like Elohim different from Adam and Eve's? Specifically, do you believe repentance and a lasting change of mind require the power of the Holy Spirit? A straight answer here is imperative. Or, are we to look to ourselves, and the messiahs named Glover and Schwartz?
3. If the Father does not call (John 6:44) and lead someone to repentance, Paul's statements about man's physical brain make repentance (even on Schwartz's level) impossible. So, by the way, does Isaiah 55 and countless other scriptures.

Since these articles address the conflict of two natures and man’s struggle with them both, why don't you tell people about the Apostle Paul's experience and what he says in Romans 7 (vv 14-25)? Both of your articles address that same conflict but with a very different conclusion than Paul’s. The distinction between you and the apostle Paul is how you resolve that conflict. You, tell us that Jonathan Glover and Jeffrey Schwartz are our saviors and Paul says Jesus, the living Christ, is. You make no reference to the Holy Spirit and Paul makes it clear that we are completely powerless without it. Notice what he says in Romans 7 beginning in verse14:

For we know that the Law is spiritual, but I am of flesh, sold into bondage to sin. For what I am doing, I do not understand; for I am not practicing what I *would* like to *do,* but I am doing the very thing I hate. But if I do the very thing I do not want *to do,* I agree with the Law, *confessing* that the Law is good. So now, no longer am I the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me. For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh; for the willing is present in me, but the doing of the good *is* not. For the good that I want, I do not do, but I practice the very evil that I do not want. But if I am doing the very thing I do not want, I am no longer the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me. I find then the principle that evil is present in me, the one who wants to do good. For I joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man, but I see a different law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members. Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, on the one hand I myself with my mind am serving the law of God, but on the other, with my flesh the law of sin.

Since Jesus, came, lived a sinless life, was beaten and crucified so we could be renewed (have a lasting change of mind) and then left this earth so that the Father could and would send the Holy Spirit to empower us to do our Father's will and uphold our Brother's word, why is this good news omitted in these articles?

Your attempts in two separate board meetings and in the pages of Vision, to construct from the psychology of neuroplasticity, "our new way forward," is nothing more than a corruption of I Corinthians 2 and the gospel. It denies the power of the Holy Spirit. You have no cause to be angry with me for whatever it is you think I did to prevent such a perversion of the truth. So that you know, the last sermon I gave, entitled "Curing the Defect" was not per se a response to your attempt to substitute neuroplasticity for the work of the Holy Spirit, it was the same sermon I gave on Pentecost in 1999 and one you sent to be played in all churches. The purpose of the sermon was to help us all prepare for the Passover and Days of Unleavened Bread. Your angry reaction and that of John Anderson, to that sermon begs the question: What happened between Pentecost of 1999 and January of 2013 to make that sermon unacceptable?

I was uninvited to the Ministerial Conference this year. I am told that there was an effort on your part to assault the scriptural truth related to Israel. Please don’t do that. Because, if the sun came up this morning and if it set in the evening, if the moon and stars are still in the sky, then all of the Father's promises relating to Israel stand — and will for eternity (Jeremiah 31; 32:27, 37-44; 33:14-18. Notice in particular verse 19-22). You are not the first to challenge this all important truth. Note what Jeremiah has to say in chapter 33:24-26. Do you suppose that is why when the branch of David comes (Jeremiah 33:14-16), he gives priority to the lost sheep of the House of Israel (Matthew 10:5-12). Please appreciate that the context of Jesus’ instructions to his disciples is the preaching of the gospel. If there is no Israel, or if all the promises have been fulfilled, then there is no gospel. If Israel’s experience can be dismissed, i.e., not even the law of God, the covenant and the Sabbaths can reform man, then maybe there still is another way for man to find to his own recovery – something like neuroplasticity? But if the truth of Israel stands for all eternity, and it does and that is great news, then the only way forward for mankind is the power of the Holy Spirit through Jesus Christ and fellowship with the Father.

Of course, doctrinal corruption is a big problem. But, as I told Joseph Tkach, it is accompanied by perhaps a bigger problem – misuse of the Holy Tithe. I know you did not ask, but great care needs to be taken here. It appears that the Holy Tithe is not being used for its intended purpose. If something that belongs to our Father is indeed misappropriated because it is used to prosecute one’s personal initiative and not preach our Father’s gospel then that will surely invite our Father’s judgment. It occurs to me that if a man can end up in the lake of fire for stealing what belongs to another man (say his wages, James 5:4), what can happen to that man if he takes something Holy to the Most High and uses it for his own purposes? Is this not also in fact a misuse of the Father’s elect? Is it possible that it is these matters, and not the Father's reluctance to call, that is the source of the problem?

When the Church was preaching the gospel in a manner pleasing to the Father we were blessed. It wasn’t just the substance of the message that was correct, it was the pattern or method. When the message and the manner began to be corrupted in the Worldwide Church of God I was tasked by Joseph Tkach, Sr. and Mike Feasell to develop something from scripture they could use to explain how the message would be approached. I have attached that as well. I know that Mr. Armstrong did not put these scriptures together the way they are presented. But they do describe what he was led to see and do. And when we did it, the Church was greatly blessed.

With Sincere Concern Steven D. Andrews