

Joseph Tkach – Is He an *End-Time* “SON OF PERDITION”?

Just who is the "son of perdition" and "man of lawlessness" prophesied to arise in the Church of God during the Last Days? Does the Word of God foretell a final End-Time APOSTASY and Rebellion against the Truth of God, a final Falling Away from the Truth, within the very CHURCH OF GOD? What is the real MEANING BEHIND the many doctrinal CHANGES in the Worldwide Church of God in recent years? May God help YOU to WAKE UP and to realize what supreme, awesome DANGER you are in!

William F. Dankenbring

For years I have wondered who was the head of the End-time Laodicean Church. Beginning in 1967 I began seeing signs that the Worldwide Church of God was beginning to compromise with God's Truth, "liberal" elements were changing doctrines right and left, often (though not always) for the worse! Then I saw the agent of most of these changes, Ted Armstrong, ejected from the Church in 1978 -- and he began his OWN Church, which had all the signs of "Laodicea"!

But years later, in January 1986, Herbert Armstrong died, and Joe Tkach took over the reigns of the Worldwide Church of God as the new "apostle general." And almost immediately, he began implementing most of the changes Ted had sought -- and then began hurtling PAST Ted Armstrong in changes, plunging back into virtual mainstream Protestantism in basic theology!

Even before Herbert's death, Tkach wrote an article telling Church members they did not have to -- indeed, could not -- "qualify" for salvation! With this play on the word "qualify," he virtually dismantled Herbert Armstrong's basic teaching that we MUST obey God and keep His commandments in order to be "saved." Joe Tkach equated "qualify" with "earning" salvation,

and then proceeded to claim since we cannot "earn" salvation, therefore we cannot "qualify" either!

This was just the beginning. Then he began to change the healing doctrine, Passover, the nature of Christ, the doctrine of being born into the FAMILY of God, "born again," began teaching we are "saved by grace alone," destroyed or withdrew all of Herbert Armstrong's old articles, and books, repudiated his life's opus *Mystery of the Ages*, withdrew and dismantled the U.S. and British Commonwealth being the tribe of Joseph of the lost ten tribes doctrine, began teaching a new version of the "Trinity" doctrine, and last I heard, a few months ago, began a flanking attack on the Ten Commandments!

Laodicea -- or Supreme Apostasy?

Who is this man, Joseph Tkach? Could a man who leads an entire Church into perdition and loss of salvation, really be the head of God's end-time, degenerate "Laodicean Church"?

Although there may well be many "Laodiceans" in the Worldwide Church of God, members who are lukewarm, lacking real spiritual zeal and energy for good works, who are spiritually "wretched, and miserable, and poor [spiritually], and blind and naked" (Rev.3:17), partly due to the devastating spiritual influence of the apostasizing church leadership, nevertheless, it has come forcibly to my mind that Joseph Tkach himself is NOT the "messenger of the Church of Laodicea" (Rev.3:14, Living Bible), to whom the letter to the Laodicean Church is written in Revelation 3:14!

No, that dubious "honor" must still go to the one who BEGAN the movement in these last days into lukewarm compromise and indifferent apathy toward the TRUTH of God -- none other than Garner Ted Armstrong! He is the one who BEGAN the trend, liberalizing doctrines -- but he has never DEPARTED from the truth, as Joseph Tkach has. He has never attacked his father, although he disagreed on some doctrines. He still preaches Biblical prophecy, the warning message to "Israel," the correct identity of the lost ten tribes, and keeping God's commandments. However, the fact that he made many liberalizing changes, and began his OWN "church" after leaving Worldwide, indicates that at that time he literally founded and began the true, main branch of the LAODICEAN Church!

The Worldwide Church of God is also "Laodicean," in that it also is lukewarm, "wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked" spiritually. Both churches have the attitude of thinking they are "rich, and increased with goods [spiritually], and in need of nothing." Both are impervious to correction, resistant to rebuke, and hostile to new truth.

But, my friends, there is indeed a world of difference between being Laodicean, and being an agent of APOSTASY and WHOLESAL DEPARTURE from the truth of GOD!

"Traitors" Foretold!

Joseph W. Tkach, with his numerous doctrine changes, and rejection of the HEART AND CORE of the teachings of Herbert Armstrong (except tithing three tithes and church "government!"), has not just proven himself to be Laodicean, but an unregenerate, unconverted, spiritual WHORE! He is not merely an erring minister who has made a few "mistakes" -- he is a total FALSE PROPHET!

Believe it or not, the rise to the top of God's Church in the END TIMES of a great false teacher and false apostle and RENEGADE Traitor from the Truth, was prophesied, in the pages of your Bible! Notice these amazing Biblical prophecies!

The apostle Paul warned that "traitors" would arise in the "last days," men who were "heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a FORM of godliness, but denying the POWER thereof [including God's power to HEAL!]." Paul commands God's people: "FROM SUCH TURN AWAY"! (see II Tim.3:1-5). He says these men are "ever learning" [that is, pseudo-intellectual], and NEVER ABLE to come to the knowledge of the TRUTH" (verse 7), and warns that these men "resist the TRUTH: men of CORRUPT minds, reprobate concerning the faith" (verse 8).

Doesn't this describe the abominable changes in doctrine that have been authorized and foisted upon the Church by Joe Tkach during recent years, up to the very present time?

Consider! Paul warned further, "For the time will come when they [many church members] will not endure SOUND DOCTRINE [it is too hard, they desire an "easy path" to salvation!]; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the TRUTH, and shall be *turned unto FABLES*" (II Tim.4:3-4).

Peter also prophesied of END TIME APOSTASY, of church leaders DEPARTING FROM God's Truth. These prophecies cannot be about churches which NEVER HAD the Truth, but rather about a Church prominent in the last days which FORSAKES the Truth it once held precious and in high regard!

Peter wrote: "There shall be FALSE TEACHERS AMONG YOU, who privily [secretly] SHALL bring in [FUTURE TENSE] DAMNABLE HERESIES, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And MANY shall follow their PERNICIOUS ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through COVETOUSNESS shall they with FEIGNED WORDS make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not" (II Pet.2:1-3).

Perdition

The word "pernicious," which Peter uses here to describe their ways and teachings, comes from the Latin root meaning "destruction," "violent death," and means, literally, "highly injurious or destructive; deadly." The original Greek word Peter used here is *apoleia*, which means, "damnable, destruction, die, perdition, pernicious, waste." It means literally the WAY OF PERDITION!

The same word is used several times in the New Testament, and is often translated "perdition." It is used in reference to Judas Iscariot, the "son of perdition" -- the same word. Judas, of course, is the wicked apostle who betrayed Christ and delivered Him up to the Sadducees and Pharisees to be crucified! But amazingly enough, the Bible foretells an END-TIME "SON OF PERDITION," like Judas himself, who would rise up IN THE CHURCH of God, rebel against the Truth of God, and become a TRAITOR to God and Christ! He also is called a "son of perdition"!

"Earnestly Contend for the Faith"

Before revealing this end-time "son of perdition," as the Bible calls him, notice how the apostle Jude also foretold widespread apostasy and departure from the Truth during the last days. He wrote: "For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the GRACE of our God into lasciviousness [license to do EVIL!], and DENYING the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ" (Jude 4).

Because of these end-time evil leaders in the Church, Jude exhorted TRUE Christians, saying, "It was NEEDFUL for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should EARNESTLY CONTEND [FIGHT, STRUGGLE] FOR THE FAITH [DOCTRINES, BODY OF BELIEFS] which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3).

Isn't it interesting how Joseph Tkach's new "focus" of teaching emphasizes you don't have to "qualify" for salvation, and "GRACE"? He had even begun to RIDICULE the Ten Commandments, saying they don't teach us how to "love" our neighbor! He says we don't have to "work out our salvation with fear and trembling" (Phil.2:12), but claims we are ALREADY "BORN AGAIN" and already "IN THE KINGDOM"!

Think about it! All these diabolical new doctrinal changes all tie in together!

They spell one thing -- **D-O-O-M** -- to every end-time Christian who swallows them, like a viciously lethal insecticide poison!

The End-Time "Son of Perdition"

To the Church in Thessalonica, the apostle Paul warned the brethren not to worry about those who said the day of Christ's coming was "at hand" in that day (II Thess.2:1-2). He went on to prophesy: "Let no man deceive you by any means: for

that day shall not come, except there come a FALLING AWAY [Greek *apostasia*, meaning "defection from the truth, forsaking, apostasy"!] FIRST, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God [God's Church is called a "temple" -- see Eph.2:20-22], shewing himself that he is God" (II Thess.2:3-4).

Notice! Paul predicted under divine inspiration that a great APOSTASY would occur during the End Time! Many would defect from the truth. In order to do this, these apostasy-prone people must have first HAD the Truth! To lose it, and forsake it, they first had to *possess* it!

The individual who LEADS them in this apostasy is called "that man of SIN," a man who is a notorious liar, sinner, and wicked individual (who, of course, hides his evil and covers his tracks). He is called "the son of perdition," just like Judas Iscariot, putting him on a level with the arch-traitor and most treacherous individual of ALL TIME!

Judas, remember, was a very disciple of Christ -- an "apostle"! Therefore, it seems likely that this END-TIME JUDAS must also have been a "disciple" in God's End-Time Work, and also an END-TIME "APOSTLE"! Judas was never really converted -- never received the Holy Spirit as a begettal. Therefore, this End-Time traitor also was probably never REALLY converted -- never received the Holy Spirit! His fruits would attest to the fact that he was always an inveterate, congenital LIAR, and a self-seeking, pleasure-seeking, cruel and AMBITIOUS individual who would obviously, by hook or crook, RISE TO THE TOP!

This end-time Traitor would RULE in the House or Temple of God -- the Church! People would adulate him, virtually worship him, APPLAUD AND EXTOL him, and he would EXALT himself! By denying the Word of Christ, and the Truth of God, he would in a sense put himself therefore BEFORE GOD -- making himself an "idol" -- acting "as God" himself by changing doctrines without God's approval and changing "times and laws" (Dan.7:25).

This architect of evil would enter the Church craftily, and begin changing doctrines subtly. Like the beast of Revelation, who is his anti-type in the world, "through his policy also he shall cause CRAFT to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify himself in his heart, and by PEACE [Hebrew, "PROSPERITY"!] shall DESTROY MANY [cause many of God's people to lose their salvation!] . . ." (Dan.8:25).

This spiritual "bastard" of the foulest rank and stripe is depicted in Scripture as a "vile person, to whom they shall not give the honour of the kingdom: but he shall come in peaceably, and OBTAIN THE KINGDOM [control over the Church of God!] BY FLATTERIES" -- flattering up his predecessor, boot-licking and fawning before Herbert W. Armstrong, and deceiving him as to his "true loyalty" (see Dan.11:21).

This insidious plot of Satan the devil to instill HIS OWN unregenerate "apostle" over the final End-Time Church of God WAS FORETOLD IN SCRIPTURAL PROPHECY! Why should we be surprised or startled? God allowed it to happen. This is a means God has chosen to TEST His true people -- to force them to CHOOSE -- to compel them to STAND UP FOR TRUTH -- OR COMPROMISE WITH EVIL, AND BECOME DESTROYED!

Restrained Until "His Time"

Paul went on, in this amazing prophecy, "Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed IN HIS TIME" (II Thess.2:5-6). Joseph W. Tkach was revealed to the world AFTER the death of Herbert W. Armstrong (January 1986). Before that time, he watched his "p's" and "q's" very carefully, and trod the line, expressing total fawning loyalty to his master, Herbert W. Armstrong. But once Herbert was out of the way, the End-Time leader of God's Church was dead, THEN Joseph began to work his wicked work, and gradually DESTROY the truth of God, and replace it with subtle, ingenious, clever "CRAFT" -- SATANIC ERROR!

Paul goes on, "For the MYSTERY OF INIQUITY doth already work: only he who now letteth [restrains, in the Greek] will let [restrain, or hold back], until he be taken out of the way" (verse 7). The one who restrained the advent of evil and wholesale apostasy, was Herbert W. Armstrong. His final days and years were spent trying to get the Church "BACK ON THE TRACK." He only partially succeeded. But when he was "taken out of the way" -- that is, when he died, the ROAD LAY OPEN before Joe Tkach, now invested with all the dictatorial powers and authority of Herbert Armstrong, to do AS HE WILLED with the Church.

Nobody dared oppose him. Nobody dared stand up to him. Those who did were summarily exiled, fired, deposed, stripped of all authority, rank, and prestige -- relegated to the "dust bin" of former evangelists and pastors. Those who remained in his "hire," serving his every whim of doctrine, became or revealed what they really were all along -- spiritual "HIRELINGS" or "hired hands" who taught and preached for their paycheck (John 10:11-13). They don't love the sheep of the flock. They don't care for the sheep, the members. They serve only for hire -- money is their true "god" (Matt.6:24).

Paul continues: "And THEN shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power [in the church] and signs and lying wonders [they are "wonderful liars," aren't they? Very clever!], and with ALL DECEIVABLENESS of unrighteousness [disobedience to God's laws] in them that PERISH [church members who go along with the apostasy movement, regardless of their "excuse"!]; because they received not the LOVE OF THE TRUTH, that they might be saved.

"And for this cause [because these church members don't LOVE God's Truth and consider it PRECIOUS, and therefore don't CLING and CLEAVE to it] God shall send them STRONG DELUSION, that they should believe a LIE: That they all might be damned who believed not the TRUTH, but had pleasure in unrighteousness" (II Thess.2:8-11).

Are you by chance following this End-Time deceiver? Are you caught up in the web of deceit spun by this man whose very name means "WEAVER"?

God has identified him for you. Will you listen to this WARNING MESSAGE from GOD?

The Moffatt translation calls this final apostasy "the Rebellion" (II Thess.2:3) and calls the architect who orchestrates it "the Lawless One" (same verse). Thus, Joseph Tkach is leading the modern REBELLION AGAINST GOD, JUST AS NIMROD DID soon after the Flood! Is that why his cohorts now ridicule the book by Alexander Hislop, *The Two Babylons*, and no longer use it? Joseph Tkach is nothing less than a modern spiritual NIMROD, a "mighty hunter AGAINST the Lord" (compare Gen.10:9). He is "hunting" for YOUR salvation -- he is hunting for YOUR "soul." He seeks to devour and destroy YOUR spiritual LIFE!

When will many of you people WAKE UP? Those of you who remain in the Worldwide Church of God are in GRAVE DANGER -- ominous PERIL -- and don't even know it! Those who follow Joseph W. Tkach are NOT merely in danger of going into the Great Tribulation, as is prophesied for the Laodicean Church. Rather, they are in danger of LOSING THEIR SALVATION -- of PERDITION and DESTRUCTION in the very flames of the final Lake of Fire, the Gehenna Holocaust!

May God help you to **WAKE UP!**

"JOE TKACH -- THE WARRIOR"

In the Worldwide Church of God, much has been made of Joseph Tkach's supposed brilliant military career. Ministers in the Church have claimed that Joe's exploits during World War II were superlative, even comparing his exploits with General George S. Patton. Tkach was ostensibly a navy gunner who gained fame relentlessly downing Japanese kamikazes. What is the truth about "gunner Joe's" claimed naval exploits?

According to the *Worldwide News*, Tkach was a crewman aboard the destroyer *USS Austin* during World War II. Naval records, however, tell us the ship was not a destroyer, but a destroyer escort, classified as DE-15. Attached to the Pacific Fleet, it operated with Task Force 51 in the vicinity of Alaska and during the recapture of Attu,

May 11, 1943. It then escorted convoys between San Francisco and Hawaii until September 14, 1943. The following year she escorted vessels between Alaskan ports, patrolled and acted as a weather ship. From April 1945 till the end of the war, the Austin did escort and patrol duty in the Carolines and Marianas. This information can be found in the authoritative *Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships*, volume 1 (19590), published by the Navy Department, Chief of Naval Operations, Naval History Division, Washington, D.C.

Notice! The Austin was NOT involved in the battles where the Japanese introduced the infamous kamikaze suicide fighters -- the battles of Leyte Gulf and Okinawa! The closest the Austin got to actual combat was during the landing of troops on Attu in the Aleutian chain on May 11, 1943. If Tkach had been on the Austin then, he would have been only 16 years of age -- and all enlisted men had to be 18 or over. The Japanese on Attu did not use kamikaze piloted planes!

Nevertheless, the legendary heroics of Joe Tkach, famed World War II warrior, seemed to grow taller each time evangelist Gerald Waterhouse told them. Waterhouse even told an account where Tkach led another sailor to jump ship and go AWOL, swimming to an island where they were incarcerated with a bunch of Marines, whom Joe fought daily. They were then placed on a different ship -- and their previous ship was sunk by the Japanese! It was "God's hand in history," according to Gerald Waterhouse -- but really just another Paul Bunyanesque TALL TALE!

Tkach's Early Life

We read in the *Worldwide News*, January 27, 1986, in "The Passing of the Baton" by Jeff Zhorne and the illustrious Michael Snyder:

"Before coming into God's Church, Mr. Tkach served in the U.S. Navy, receiving a certificate in basic engineering in 1945. He then attended the Illinois Institute of Technology in Chicago, studying industrial management, industrial safety and human factors in industry. In 1950 Mr. Tkach was hired by Hupp Aviation, where he worked in the apprentice program. Before resigning in 1963 to serve in the ministry, he advanced to supervisor and obtained journeyman credentials. He was once fired by Hupp Aviation for keeping the Sabbath, an incident he described to the combined Pasadena churches Jan.18. 'I was threatened if I didn't come in on that Sabbath for a special meeting that I would be fired,' Mr.Tkach recalled. 'Upon coming home from Church services there was a telegram waiting for me stating that I was fired. Monday morning I received a telephone call from the personnel manager saying, "Management would like you to come in immediately, as fast as you can get here." I didn't know what to expect,' the pastor general continued. 'But after arriving at the plant, out in the parking lot there were almost 2,000 people milling around on a wildcat strike because they heard I was fired. You see, we serve a God who fights our battles for us. My job was given back to me.'"

How much "TRUTH" is there in this story -- or is it *another* "TALL TALE"? When telephoned long distance and asked about this story, Hupp Aviation contradicted it on several points. Hupp Aviation explained, first of all, that their company NEVER had more than a couple of hundred employees -- nowhere near the 2,000 that Tkach claims. An older engineer who had been at the company since the early fifties

remembered Tkach and his wife Elaine, who had worked in the company's office. This man said Tkach had NEVER been a supervisor -- he was "just one of the guys -- just one of the guys who worked in the plant," he told John Trechak of *Ambassador Report* (March 1989 issue). The engineer did not recall any such incident as the wildcat strike, pointed out the company was never large enough for such a demonstration, and said that even a small strike or demonstration would hardly have escaped his notice.

Hupp Aviation's own files showed that actually Tkach started working there in 1947, not 1950, as the Worldwide News article stated. The office verified that Tkach was never a supervisor, just an hourly wage employee. For 16 years all Tkach did was "assembly work." Company records do not show he was ever fired; only that he quit in 1963. Illinois Institute of Technology, furthermore, did a lengthy search of their records, and found that no one by the name of Joseph Tkach ever attended there, or took classes there. Furthermore, the classes Tkach claimed to have taken were never even offered by IIT! Records at Gage Park High School and Tilden High School in Chicago reveal that Joe Tkach never even graduated from high school. He was a high school drop-out, long before that became commonplace.

Chancellor Tkach -- How a High School Drop-Out Rose to the Top of an Educational Institution!

A funny story is told that when Herbert Armstrong appointed Joseph Tkach to the powerful post over Church Administration, Roderick C. Meredith -- long-time evangelist, at one time the "third" most powerful minister in the Church, and a previous head of the Church Administration Department -- was so upset that he contacted a fellow elder and exploded. Meredith -- absolutely staggered and dumbfounded that Tkach would be chosen for such a high position -- explained how back in the 1960's he had personally reviewed all the entrance applications and I.Q. scores of field ministers brought to Ambassador College for further training. Said Meredith, Tkach's I.Q. score was among the very lowest of those ever admitted to Ambassador, and was in fact "even lower than the Blacks!"

While this anecdote may say more about Meredith's racial attitude than Tkach's intelligence, there is a perception among high level WCG executives that Joseph Tkach just isn't all that bright. John Trechak writes in *Ambassador Report*:

"Of course, we should not fault someone for what nature has not provided. Most of us do not have a precision of mind, command of language, and store of memory of which we may be proud. But regarding Tkach, there is the perception among many that he has never made a real effort to gain any type of education or to achieve excellence in anything other than WCG rank (if indeed 'excellence' and 'WCG rank' may properly be used in the same breath). . . . Claims about Tkach having attended the Illinois Intitute of Technology notwithstanding, I have seen no evidence that Tkach ever took even one class at an

accredited college. At unaccredited Ambassador College, where he is now the Chancellor, Tkach supposedly had three years of classes -- at least that is what was stated in the Jan.27, 1986 *Worldwide News*. But according to many I interviewed, including former WCG administrator Al Carrozo who was Tkach's superior during the period in question, Tkach really had only one full year at Ambassador and his academic performance was mediocre, at best. Afterward he may have sat in on a few lectures, but he was never matriculated toward a degree, and he definitely never graduated.

". . .Strangely, of the scores of people I have interviewed for this article and who have personally known Tkach, not one could recall Tkach ever reading, collecting, quoting, or even talking about *any* book, with the exception of the Bible. And some who worked with him in the past say he didn't seem all that interested in studying the Bible, either. I wonder if similar observations were made by Plain Truth editor Herman L. Hoeh and church founder Herbert Armstrong. For in the past, Hoeh is said to have derisively referred to Tkach as 'that Russian peasant' and some who were close to HWA say that the church founder viewed Tkach as 'a virtual illiterate.'

"All of the above leads to two rather obvious questions: How is Tkach able to run the mammoth WCG organization? And how in the world did Tkach ever get put in charge?"

-- Ambassador Report, September 1989.

The "Pancake Apostle"

"This flipflop from the 'flapjak' or 'PANCAKE APOSTLE' -- Joseph Tkach used to be famous in Pasadena Church area for his part in cooking pancakes at Church socials -- will no doubt make their message acceptable in the eyes of Protestantism and Catholicism. . . .

"The WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD now says that 'EVERY DOCTRINE' is now 'ON THE TABLE.'" -- April 1991 *Prophecy Flash*.

Michael Snyder, spokesman for the Worldwide Church of God, was asked on a Christian radio broadcast:

"Michael, *salvation by grace through faith alone is a standard Reformation doctrine*. Is that the way you would formulate your doctrine of salvation -- salvation by grace through faith alone?"

Snyder's answer:

"Yes. . . . salvation cannot be worked out or obtained by any physical works whatsoever. . . the credit for salvation solely must go to Christ's sacrifice and His atoning for our sins."

The words of Jesus Christ he deftly ignored (Matt.5:17-19; 19:17-18).

What about the Sabbath? Sabbath observance is one of the cardinal teachings

of the Worldwide Church of God. Snyder was asked: "Is Sabbath keeping a prerequisite to salvation?"

Snyder answered: "Well, no, because salvation is by grace."

Asked if Sunday observance was "the mark of the Beast," as the Church taught for over fifty years, Snyder replied: "I don't think that is the way we would characterize it, today."

When asked about the Trinity, Snyder hemmed and hawed and glibly replied: "We affirm that the Holy Spirit is divine. . . We don't hold to the belief that the Trinity is a divinely revealed concept . . . but we do not deny the oneness of God and we do not deny the divinity of the Holy Spirit."

Asked if the Worldwide Church of God would describe God as one God in three persons, Snyder answered: ". . . it is not even really an appropriate label to call God a person."

Asked about the belief that the United States and British Commonwealth constitute the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel, Snyder responded: "The Church has never believed in what is commonly called Anglo-Israelism or British-Israelism. . . We have never embraced that."

These are just a FEW of the shocking, astonishing FLIPFLOPS of the new Pancake Apostle, Joseph W. (for "Wicked") Tkach!!!

The CHANCELLOR'S NEW CLOTHES

A woman wrote me a letter, greatly concerned about the amazing changes going on in the Worldwide Church of God. She said that the deceit and the doubletalk are just too much. She pointed out how Joseph Tkach has changed the doctrine of being "born again" and now applies this religious term to the experience of conversion, just like all the Protestant Churches do. She laments:

"Now, Mr. Dankenbring, they have just changed a MAJOR DOCTRINE OF THE WORLDWIDE CHURCH. But they 'said' they didn't. Our poor brain dead brethren back in WW will believe what Father Tkach tells them

"Yes, that is why I write to you, Mr. Dankenbring . . . I respect you a great deal for giving us the muzzled and grief stricken a voice to cry out against the doubletalk at Headquarters, and a place to expose the evil works of darkness. Now, if they would have just TOLD THE BROTHERS THAT THEY WERE CHANGING THE DOCTRINE AND CALLED AN ACE AN ACE AND A SPADE A SPADE, I probably wouldn't have written at all. I find it maddening to read an article that says it doesn't say what it says.

"I also recognize the methods of our author. I saw them in the book *The Psychopathic*

God about Adolf Hitler. If you preach against something, it confuses the masses. If you say you did not say something, but did, it confuses the masses. I take the stand of the little boy and the emperor . . . I SEE that the emperor has on no clothes . . . and I say it. Worldwide just changed another doctrine."

The incredible pace of change of major doctrines in the Worldwide Church of God reminds me of the old song by Frank Sinatra about the ant that had "high hopes," and finally, after great effort, was able to knock over rubber tree plants, and even a billion-kilowatt dam! "Whoops, there goes another rubber tree plant!" "Whoops, there goes another billion kilowatt dam!"

The churches of the world virtually NEVER change their doctrines. Historically, it is only when the TRUE CHURCH GOES ASTRAY that such an onslaught of doctrinal changes occurs!

"Brother, have you been born again?" "Brother, have you been saved?"

Think of it! Maybe now all Worldwide Church of God members will begin going around and asking their neighbors, "Have you been born again?" Evangelist David Albert of the Church now recommends this, and says members "had better get used to it!"

Joseph W. ("Wicked") Tkach is now the "BORN AGAIN APOSTLE"! *Unbelievable!*

The "MAFIA APOSTLE"

"Burning rubber for half a block, the black Plymouth Fury catapulted into the night leaving Jack standing there on the sidewalk with an incredulous look on his face. Shouldering his unloaded shotgun, Jack turned and made his way back to his friend's apartment, shaking his head in disbelief. 'This can't be for real,' he thought to himself, 'it just can't be.'

"Does this sound like a scene from a grade 'C' movie -- a typical 'Al Capone' gangland style scenario? Well, guess again! This was 'for real' and actually occurred -- it was a REAL LIFE incident involving none other than the so-called 'apostle of Christ' -- Joseph W. Tkach -- as one of the lead actors!" -- (quoted from "The Mafia Apostle," by John D. Keyser, published by Triumph Prophetic Ministries).

What was behind this remarkable scene? John Trechak tells us in the March 1989 *Ambassador Report*, under the caption "The Big Black Car," an incredible story about two Ambassador College graduates of the class of 1970, who were going through hard times after graduation. They obtained subsistence-level jobs from 1970-73, alternating with periods of unemployment. Jack (not his real name) was just getting by as a night-time clerk in a liquor store, had no car, and poor clothes, and lost his apartment. Rick (also not his real name) let Jack move in with him; he had gotten a

job with the Ambassador College Press not long before.

Turmoil was striking the Church in those days, and many ministers left in 1974 over doctrinal differences and leadership doubts. Jack, a diligent Bible student, became convinced the Church was in error on many key doctrines and stopped attending services. Church spies caught Jack attending a few meetings with former minister Al Carrozzo. As a result, Trechak reports:

"On a Monday evening in early 1974, Jack answered a knock on the door only to find himself nose to nose with Tkach and, standing behind him, an associate named Elmer. 'We've come to talk with you, Jack. It'll only take a few minutes,' said Tkach. Jack wasn't feeling very sociable. For the last few weeks he had been hearing stories of how Herbert Armstrong had *known* for many years that his marriage-destroying doctrines were in error, but for ego reasons had refused to change them. Jack had also learned that for years Herbert's evangelist son, Garner Ted Armstrong (GTA), had seduced dozens of Ambassador coeds and ministers'wives yet was still allowed to continue as church spokesman on radio and television.

"But besides having all that on his mind, Jack could see in Tkach's bloodshot eyes that Tkach really wasn't interested in his concerns about the church or in his personal problems. Tkach only needed 'a few minutes' because he had come to subject Jack to the 'knuckle under or be disfellowshipped' ritual. Jack thought, 'If anyone needs to be thrown out of the church, it's HWA, GTA, and goons like Tkach.' Jack didn't move out of the doorway but looked Tkach in the eye and said, 'I'm busy and you didn't make an appointment.' startled, Tkach could only stammer, 'But Jack, it'll only take a few minutes.' 'Good night!' said Jack, as he shut the door in Tkach's face.

"Rick, who had overheard the brief conversation from the next room, said, 'You know, if you leave here tonight, Tkach will be waiting outside for you. He's not used to being talked to that way.' When Jack responded that he thought the suggestion was silly, Rick pointed to the guncase in the corner of the room --- a case that held a double-barreled, twelve-gauge shotgun. 'Look,' said Rick, 'don't load the gun, but take it with you. When they stop you, they'll see it, and it'll give them a good scare.'

"Jack thought Rick was letting his imagination run amuk, 'but what the heck,' he thought. 'Maybe Rick knows something I don't; it might give us a laugh.' He waited ten minutes, then hung the guncase containing the shotgun over his right shoulder. He exited the building, turned left, walked twenty yards and, not seeing anyone, went back to Rick's apartment feeling very foolish for listening to Rick. But Rick was adamant. 'No! No! I'm sure they're out there!' he yelled. 'You should have turned to the right. They're out there waiting for you. I just know it!'

"'Okay, okay,' said Jack, rolling his eyes. 'Just to show you what a nut you are, I'll go back out there.' Jack walked out the door, again with the sheathed gun hanging from his right shoulder. This time he turned to the right. Halfway down the darkened street, he heard a car engine start up somewhere behind him. Then over his left shoulder he noticed a black Plymouth Fury slowly following him. He walked a little faster. The car sped up. Suddenly, as he approached a driveway, the black sedan surged forward and pulled to the right, partly blocking his path. Before even coming to a complete stop the car's back door was swung open by a push from a shadowy figure in the front passenger seat.

"It was Tkach. In an angry and authoritative voice, he commanded, 'Get in Jack! Right now!' The thought flashed through Jack's mind that maybe he had made a mistake in not

loading the shotgun. Jack glowered at Tkach and told him firmly, 'No one's forcing me into any car. No one!' Jack instinctively reached up for the strap on the guncase. But then as the shotgun slid down into better view, Tkach screamed out in a panic to his driver, 'It's a gun, Elmer! Get out of here!' Elmer's foot hit the gas peddle like it was made out of solid lead. Burning rubber for half a block, the black Fury sped away into the night.

"Back at the apartment Jack and Rick had a good laugh. The next day Tkach never called for an appointment, but he had Elmer phone. And Elmer told Rick that if he didn't immediately order Jack out of the apartment, he'd be fired from his job. That evening, Jack, penniless, found himself literally on the street.

"Not many churches are headed by apostles who enjoy making zealous Bible students homeless, or who will sneak up to Christians on darkened streets to hustle them off in big, black cars. Such overbearing behavior has undoubtedly contributed to some of the sinister rumors surrounding Tkach. But it's important to notice that Tkach does not relish conversations with angry people toting shotguns. Perhaps that shows he isn't really the tough guy he often pretends -- or maybe it shows he has a bit of sense after all."

Does that sound like an apostle of Jesus Christ? Or more like a "MAFIA don"? Interestingly, Tkach used to drive around Pasadena with a bumper sticker on his car that read: "MAFIA STAFF CAR." Tkach married Elaine Apostolos. Her brother spent time in Pontiac Prison, Michigan, for armed robbery, and told John Trechak, in a telephone conversation: "My father was Mafia. He knew Alfons [Al Capone]. My father and Alfons were good friends." Apostolos told Trechak that Joe Tkach used to always visit him in prison.

Earl Timmons, a Worldwide Church of God member from the early sixties, who left the Church prior to the Receivership Crisis, is totally convinced Tkach has gangland friends. He was a close friend and confidant of Tkach from 1969 through 1978.

Timmons was also good friends with a Pasadena businessman George Pappageorge, who, he claimed was a central figure in a major crime ring. Timmons claimed Pappageorge and his associates were involved in burglary, robbery, interstate trafficking in stolen cars and other merchandise. Pappageorge and two associates, Kenneth Moran and Sidney Bartolotta, were convicted in 1974 of multiple counts of kidnapping (at gunpoint), robbery, burglary, and conspiracy and sent to prison.

Tkach's Gangland Connections

John Trechak wrote in *Ambassador Report*:

From reading the court records it becomes obvious that Pappageorge and his many associates were involved in a very wide range of criminal activity. Yet, according to Timmons, George Pappageorge and his associate Kenny Morgan were very close friends of Joe Tkach. Timmons is sure of this, he says, because he was the one who introduced Tkach to Pappageorge" (December 1989 issue).

Timmons told Trechak that he was informed by a deputy attorney general during

the Receivership Crisis of the Church that Tkach tried to use his influence to gain the release of Kenneth Moran from Folsom Prison and George Pappageorge from San Quentin. Evangelist Gerald Waterhouse related in sermons around the world that during the Receivership Crisis of the Church in 1979 that Joe Tkach was in contact with two prison inmates (possibly the same two) who "offered him the services of hit men" (December 1989, *Ambassador Report*).

Are these the fruits of a true man of God? -- an "apostle of Christ"?

Wise king Solomon wrote: "He who walks with the wise grows wise, but a companion of fools suffers harm [shall be destroyed, KJV]" (Prov. 13:20). He added: "A righteous man is cautious in friendship, but the way of the wicked leads them astray" (Proverbs 12:26).

The apostle Paul wrote under divine inspiration: "Do not be misled. Bad company corrupts good character" (I Cor.15:33). Jesus Christ said with unequivocal authority: "By their fruits you shall KNOW them" (Matt.7:20).

What are the REAL fruits of Joseph Tkach? What do you think?