

15. Letter to author from Esther Word Burgess, Nov. 28, 1989
16. *Happy On My Way To Heaven*, p. 103
17. Interview with Archie Word by Don Hunt, Jr., Feb. 1988
18. *Ibid*
19. Letter to author from Bill Jessup, Jan. 19, 1990
20. *The Church Speaks*, Feb. 1, 1948
21. *Ibid*, April 4, 1948
22. *Ibid*
23. Letter to author from Don Stram, Mar. 20, 1989
24. *The Church Speaks*, May 9, 1948
25. *Ibid*, June 27, 1948
26. *North American Gold*, pp. 43, 44
27. *The Voice of Evangelism*, May 31, 1952
28. *Christian Standard*, Aug. 17, 1946
29. *The Church Speaks*, June 28, 1948
30. *Ibid*
31. *North American Gold*, p. 32
32. *NACC Update*, Dec./Jan. 1990
33. Letter to author from Verna Ramme. Oct. 5, 1990
34. Letter to author from Kenneth Broad, Sept. 14, 1990
35. *The Church Speaks*, May 9, 1948
36. *Montavilla Memories*, p. 53
37. *Ibid*, p. 54
38. *The Church Speaks*, Sept. 5, 1948
39. *Ibid*, Aug. 1, 1948
40. *Ibid*
41. *Ibid*
42. *The Church Speaks*, Feb. 1, 1948
43. *Ibid*, Aug. 1, 1948
44. *Ibid*, June 27, 1948
45. *Ibid*
46. *Ibid*
47. *The Church Speaks*, Jan. 1, 1950
48. *Ibid*, Dec. 4, 1948
49. Letter to author from Esther Word Burgess, Nov. 28, 1989

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“HERE I STAND!” (1949-1951)

Your life is nearing the half century mark.
I pray the years yet may be many.
For of all I have met in this world below,
I love you the best of any.

—Florence Word, on Archie’s 48th birthday

THE BREAK WITH SAN JOSE BIBLE COLLEGE

The front sidewalk that led up to the main entrance of San Jose Bible college was unlike any other sidewalk in America. While the cement was still wet the following words had been carefully etched in six successive sections of sidewalk:

HEAR
BELIEVE
REPENT
CONFESS
BE BAPTIZED
LIVE GODLY

As Archie Word briskly strode up the sidewalk January 12, 1949, he probably did not know that this would be the last Conference on Evangelism he would attend in San Jose for many years. Perhaps he paused on the word "Repent" and recalled his recent series of editorials on "Jap Balloon" preaching. Perhaps he paused again on the words "Live Godly" and thought long and hard about what he now considered to be a "play program" at the college that had meant so much to him through the years. In any event, when he left the campus two days later, walking over those same words inscribed in concrete, he had, as old friend Bill Jessup put it, "agreed to disagree."¹

Roy Shaw, another old school mate and friend, was both disappointed and hurt over Archie's severance of fellowship with the college. Roy's wife, Dorothy, remembers:

Archie . . . began to feel that San Jose Bible College was compromising the gospel. . . . Roy was saddened by this lack of spiritual fellowship because he knew that he had not changed. Roy never debated or argued the issues raised against the college.²

To their credit, Roy and Archie remained good friends, even though Archie no longer would associate with the school. Dorothy noted, "Roy continued to accept Archie as a good friend and brother . . . (he)

never stopped writing friendly personal letters and Archie answered in the same way."³

Archie Word, though never on the faculty at San Jose, had been a power at the school. He had sent dozens of students there, had preached some unforgettable sermons in chapel and on the Conference on Evangelism, had sent his own children to the school. "The most powerful sermon I ever heard anyone preach," testified Woodrow Phillips, "was Archie Word at a Conference on Evangelism at San Jose, 'The Non-Conversion of Felix.' The audience was absolutely spellbound. There were at least 50 responses to the invitation."⁴

Phillips believes that at one time, in 1942 or 1943, Archie seriously considered joining the faculty at San Jose Bible College. He says that Archie "put out a fleece," that if the house on Glisan Street in Portland sold, he would move to San Jose. The house didn't sell and Archie didn't move.⁵

One factor that is sometimes overlooked in Archie's break with San Jose was the case of Barbara Word, the Word's second daughter, who was dismissed from the college before the break because of discipline problems. But nearly all agree that Archie, a strict disciplinarian himself, stood behind the school on its decision; so not much, if anything, should be read into this factor.

ARCHIE'S RELIEF EFFORTS

Back in Portland again, Archie began looking to the future. A new associate, Harold Reyman, began his work with Archie and the Montavilla congregation January 10. Reyman, who first came under Word's influence in Brookings, South Dakota (a church led by

Word convert Elston Knight that produced 13 future preachers), would assist Word and Leo Yoder, the "senior" associate, with song leading, personal visitation and young people's work (this in the days before it was customary to have a "youth minister").

As February approached, much of the news in the Portland papers was devoted to the dramatic "Berlin Airlift." In the eight months since the airlift had begun, over one million tons of cargo had been flown into the beleaguered city. Archie Word had his own relief efforts going in 1949. In *The Church Speaks* (Feb. 6, 1949), he made an appeal for the Church of Christ in Dunsmuir, California, where Don Jessup preached. Fire had destroyed the church building and Don's personal library had been lost in the flames. Editor Word wrote, "Here is hoping that a great group of individuals as well as churches will be liberal with gifts to help this group to get back on its feet again."⁶ He urged his readers (nearly 10,000 by this time) to send gifts directly to the Dunsmuir congregation. He would not be a "middleman," even in a humanitarian relief effort. In May he ran another appeal, this time on the front page of *The Church Speaks*, to raise money to buy a motorcycle for A.R.A. Hepburn, a poor preacher in Jamaica he had met a year earlier. Word again appealed for direct support, saying, "I wish he could come to this country and speak for himself to your hearts." Archie Word had a great heart of sympathy for truly needy causes in the kingdom.

FIGHTING THE OREGON "COMPROMISE" CONVENTION

But Archie Word had no sympathy in his heart for the Disciples of Christ in 1949. Several squabbles

between the Disciples' hierarchy and local churches (one in Sheridan, Oregon, and one in Laurens, Iowa) were reported in *The Church Speaks* in May and December, the editor siding with the local churches.

The annual summertime Oregon Christian Convention in Turner, Oregon, also came in for its share of criticism. Archie called it the Oregon "Compromise" Convention because the program featured speakers from the Disciples of Christ and the "Independent" Christian Churches. Word felt that the convention was controlled by the liberal Disciples. An editorial cartoon in the March 1949 *The Church Speaks* depicted a large ox yoked with a small donkey pulling an ox cart labeled "Oregon Compromise Convention." The snorting ox was branded "UCMS," and the little donkey (Word would have called it a "jackass") carried the "ICMS" brand. "ICMS" was a phrase coined by Archie Word meaning "Independent Christian Missionary Society," another way of getting in a lick against "middleman" approaches to mission support, like the C.R.A. In the September 4, 1949 *The Church Speaks* he called the Turner convention "the 50-50 Oregon Convention" (with the first "50" in large numbers and the second "50" in smaller numbers). In other words, the Oregon Christian Convention, in his estimation was a 50-50 compromise, but in reality it was "controlled lock, stock and barrel by the U.C.M.S."⁸ He then proceeded to take "independents" J. Frank Cunningham and Willie White to task for "leading the hopelessly blind Innocents into the 'Mixed Convention,'"⁹ and, on the other side of the fence, waded into State Secretary Charles Addleman and old friend Elery Parrish as leaders for the U.C.M.S.

(In the summer of 1949 Archie Word agreed to a

proposal from his new son-in-law Donald Hunt to start a new summertime rally in Oregon, a gathering that would have neither "Disciples" or "Independents" on the program. The first "Troutdale Gathering" would be held in the summer of 1950.)

EARTHQUAKE!

Joe Louis, the legendary "Brown Bomber," hung up his boxing gloves in March. Archie Word, the ex-pugilist, was not about to hang up his gloves. In March he returned to Coos Bay, Oregon, for his seventh campaign in that seaport town. Melvin Traxler reported that Archie Word still preaches "with power from on high."

A month of inspirational Gospel preaching has just closed here at Coos Bay, Oregon. Brother Archie Word was our evangelist. Mrs. Word led singing during the latter part of the meeting. There were thirty responses to the Gospel plus four candidates for the ministry. . . . Brother Word works at his job. He calls all day, plays in the orchestra, sings and preaches with power from on high.¹⁰

"Power from on high" of another kind met Archie and the citizens of Portland on April 13, 1949. Archie was working in his study when the earthquake hit the Rose City.

As I sat here just today, April 13, 1949, at 11:55 a.m., this old building began to shake like it had Buck ague. My chair began to roll around on the office floor. The building began to creak, squeak and crack. It was an earthquake. The first thing I thought of was, 'Isn't it grand to KNOW the Lord and be obedient to Him?' After it was all over, I went down to find white-faced neighbors gesturing wildly and talking quite loudly. In

an earthquake, one feels his own helplessness. God is running that. At the Judgment, we will be just as helpless, for God will be running that too.¹¹

A few weeks later the earthquake survivor had another birthday. Florence wrote a special poem to mark the occasion, "Daddy's 48th Birthday."

This world has been peopled with created beings
That God in His wisdom has made.
He gave to each human the duty, the job
To write in life's history a page.

Some write with an eloquent style and great words,
And some with the flourish of rhyme.
Some with the sweetness and song of the birds.
Deeds that last as long as time.

The page you are writing is easy to read,
The type is bold and clear.
Yours preaches a message to men in need,
That they their Creator may fear.

Your life is nearing the half-century mark.
I pray the years yet be many.
For of all I have met in this world below,
I love you the best of any.

I'm glad that God gave me the page He did,
For your page is next to mine.
The years we have spent so close in touch,
Have been blest with love divine.

What matter the birthdays that come and go?
What matter the flight of years?
So long as God grants His blessing to you,
As we mingle our joys and tears.

I wish for you blessings old and new,
Peace, happiness, health and joy.
The strength of a man, the wisdom of years
And always the heart of a boy—

To enjoy the simple things of life,
 To be young in heart and soul.
 To preach and to live God's message to man
 And reach heaven's eternal goal.¹²

If anyone in this world knew Archie Word best, it was Florence. She saw him, not as an eloquent orator, but as a bold spokesman for God. To her, he had the "strength of a man, the wisdom of years and always the heart of a boy." His page in history was next to hers, and for that she was eternally glad. Indeed, Archie and Florence were as close as the pages of a book throughout their marriage. Nothing but death would separate them.

LONG HOT SUMMER

On July 3, 1949 Donald G. Hunt began a revival meeting at Montavilla that went on for five weeks. Hunt had preached in Archie's pulpit only once before (the Sunday before he married Margaret Word). Hunt, in his fourth year as editor of *The Voice of Evangelism*, a weekly publication whose mailing included many in the Pacific Northwest, was greeted by many visitors during the meeting. There were 39 responses to the invitation, including the conversion of a Multnomah County deputy sheriff. The large turnout of visitors from near and far encouraged Hunt to propose "an outdoor encampment summer rally in the Portland area."¹³ Hunt says that Archie Word was at first somewhat "dubious" that such a gathering would "take," but finally consented to the idea and gave it his blessing. The first "Troutdale Gathering" would be held the following summer, greatly strengthening the Word-Hunt connection. Through their publications

(*The Church Speaks* and *The Voice of Evangelism*), the new school in Ottumwa, Iowa, and Archie's quasi-connection with it and the burgeoning "large scale" rallies — as Hunt liked to call them — in Iowa and Oregon, a new fellowship in the "Independent" movement was being slowly but surely formed.

In August — traditionally the hottest month of the year in Iowa — Archie Word returned to Cincinnati to appear on the annual preaching rally along with Hunt, Melvin Traxler and Marion McKee, a converted Los Angeles night club entertainer. About 500 people attended the daily sessions in the High School athletic fieldhouse. The night sessions were broadcast live over radio station KCOG in nearby Centerville. Hunt reported that brethren around the nation who could not attend were "praying daily for the gathering."¹⁴

Yet, despite his seeming new alliance with the "Ottumwa brethren," as they came to be known, Archie Word had not completely cut himself off from others in the "Independent" movement. Following the Cincinnati rally he traveled to Lincoln Bible Institute for a speaking engagement. He called the school "a free and independent" school, with "some of the most able men in the United States" on the faculty.¹⁵ He was still submitting material to the *Christian Standard* as late as 1950. In the fall of 1949 the Words sent their daughter Janelle to Bible college, not to Midwestern School of Evangelism but to Boise Bible College. J. Willis Hale recalls that Archie Word's association with the college, camps and churches in the Boise area was quite amiable.

He brought several to the Lord in a meeting he conducted in Boise, Idaho. There were no converts during

the first week. That was a big disappointment to him and he suggested we close the meeting. I urged him to continue on and we had several converts after that. Brother Word helped us in our Christian service camp also—just out of Boise. I had a wonderful time and experience during the camp with him and with evangelistic meetings later.¹⁶

A “HEARTACHE” TO THE BROTHERHOOD

But others, unlike the kind and venerable Hale, were beginning to call Archie Word a “heartache to the brotherhood.”¹⁷ Others were not as charitable, calling him a “radical” and those who agreed with his views “Wordites.”¹⁸ In November 1949 Archie responded to these charges stating that he was just trying to be a Christian only: not a “Missionary Society Christian” or a “Ministerial Association Christian” or a “State Secretary or Disciples Christian.” He then made a Luther-like statement:

Here I stand, my Bible and I. I dare not add to it in either large or small things. It is the divine Word of God equipping the man of God for all things. If a thing is in the Bible I will live for it and if needs be, die for it. But if it is not in the Bible I will fight it with all the God given strength I have. Who will meet me on this ground? I can meet you on no other!¹⁹

“THE TALK OF THE TOWN” IN HAMBURG, IOWA

Archie Word was best known for his revival preaching, so it was altogether fitting that the fighting revivalist close out the decade of the 40s with an unforgettable revival meeting with Hugh M. Olson and the Church of Christ in Hamburg, Iowa. The church, one of the oldest in Southwest Iowa (begun in 1866) had for years been a Disciples’ church, but was now a

strong “Independent” church under Olson, who had rededicated his life under Word’s “chapel revival” at Minnesota Bible College in 1946. After the first day of the meeting word got around town that this Mr. Word was “different” than any other evangelist who had ever preached in Hamburg. Within a few nights members and visitors packed the newly remodeled auditorium and balcony. By the end of the first week, according to Olson, “the first rumors” began to be heard. The criticisms came from two groups: a minority of the members, “determined to continue to live in sin,” quit the meeting and the church. Another group, nonattenders of the revival, spread all kinds of stories about the West Coast preacher.

(In one sermon, “A Greater than Solomon Is Here,” Archie had quoted Matthew 12:42. He then proceeded to name a number of prominent people, both historical and contemporary, saying that one greater (Jesus) than any of them was now here. One of the luminaries he mentioned was General Dwight D. Eisenhower, a national hero after World War II. “Incredibly, word got back to me that it was being circulated that Archie has said Ike was a ‘yellow belly,’ ” said Olson. Members of the local American Legion bristled at the false charge and were preparing to run Archie Word out of town. That night Archie mounted the pulpit and declared to a packed house, “They might carry me out of town, but nobody runs me out.”²² Archie stayed on three more weeks to a full house, night after night.)

On November 13, the second Sunday of the meeting, he brought a message entitled “Suppose,” in which he preached on what could happen if one was saved or lost. Olson says,

There was rapt attention. As the first words of the invitation were sung, Frances Beam came down the aisle in tears. I greeted her and then realized that others were following her from both side aisles and center aisle. By the time the last verse of the invitation song was sung, twenty seven men and women were lined up across the front of the sanctuary. Many said afterward that it was the greatest service they had ever witnessed in the Hamburg church. From the 27 responses, nine were baptized that morning and eighteen came in consecration of their lives to Christ. It's a service I'll never cease to cherish in my memory.²³

As the meeting moved into the second week, extra chairs became necessary to accommodate the crowds. Representatives of all denominations in town were attending and responding to the gospel invitation. "At the final Sunday night service, standing room only attendance was in evidence. At the conclusion, as the goodbyes were being said, there were many embraces and tears."²⁴ The Hamburg revival ended with 59 decisions for Christ: 27 consecrations, 19 baptisms, nine added by statement and four dedications to full-time service to Christ. Among those converted were "members of the Baptist, Methodist, Lutheran, Evangelical, and Reformed churches. We are all now worshipping together and working together in true Christian unity. . . . Throughout the congregation there is a greater depth of spirituality, more interest in and study of God's Word, more prayer and sweet fellowship."²⁵

Years later Olson fondly recalled the preaching of Archie Word in the Hamburg revival.

Granted, his style of preaching was unique; some would even say crude and abrasive. To such I would say that the results achieved for the kingdom of God should be the final criteria. Archie probably won more

people to Christ in some of his evangelistic campaigns than some of his preacher critics have won in their entire ministries. He possessed the rare ability to reach the hearts and minds of individuals, especially men, that I'm confident could not have been reached by any other person.²⁶

Olson also observed that some admiring young preachers, attempting to pattern their pulpit styles after him, were "invariably pitifully unproductive or counter-productive."²⁷ You could criticize Archie Word, and many did. You could try to imitate him, and a few tried, only to fail. But you could never duplicate another Archie Word. Few men have ever had his strange but wonderful combination of conviction and compassion.

ARCHIE JOINS CALL FOR A 'NEW NATIONAL CONVENTION'

On January 21, 1950 Archie was delighted to pick up his copy of the *Christian Standard* and read an editorial by Burris Butler calling for "a convention or gathering of national importance to be supported by all who are concerned with undenominational Christianity." Butler was not pleased with the preaching at the 1948 North American Christian Convention in Springfield, Illinois (the same one Archie had attended), calling it "pale and anemic." Nor was he pleased with what he saw as catering to the Disciples and the denominations. Butler was taken to task by several readers in the February 11, 1950 *Christian Standard*, among them C. Willis Schnelle, president of Nebraska Christian College and James Van Buren of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. But Butler received hearty support from Stewart L. Rodgers, Minister of First

Christian Church in Joliet, Illinois, and Archie Word of Portland, Oregon. Here follows Word's letter to Burriss Butler, as it appeared in the February 11, 1950 *Christian Standard*:

Proclaim the Gospel "in Jerusalem"

Editor, CHRISTIAN STANDARD

DEAR SIR: After reading my STANDARD this morning, I feel constrained to write you saying I am heartily in sympathy with you, concerning your stand and regard for the "North American Christian Convention."

If it is, each year, what it was the year I attended it, I am sure it can never answer as a national gathering place for those who firmly believe in the tenets of the Restoration movement. Why, oh, why can not preachers, when they are given a little elevation among their brethren, remain true to their doctrines that made them respected? Why do they seem almost always to think that they must "muffle" their message, side-step issues, court the friendship of their worst enemies, and go down, finally, to utter defeat?

If it is the will of the Lord that we as a people have a place of national gathering, I hope it will come, and the sooner the better, but, above all, I pray that each local congregation will fulfill its duty to this old muddled-up world in proclaiming "in Jerusalem" the New Testament church, and, if enough of them will, it will affect our nation.

PORTLAND, Ore.

A. WORD, Minister

"ANOTHER DAMN CAMPBELLITE PREACHER!"

The world of Archie Word as the 50s were ushered in was an increasingly hostile one. The new decade began with Great Britain (to the outrage of the United States) recognizing the People's Republic of China. On January 25 Alger Hiss was sentenced to prison for passing government secrets to Whittaker Chambers, a

Communist agent. Trouble was beginning to brew in a faraway country known as Vietnam. A little known Senator from Wisconsin, Joseph McCarthy, accused the State Department of harboring over 200 members of the Communist party. On June 25 North Korean forces crossed the 38th parallel, invading South Korea, setting off the "Korean Conflict." Two days later President Truman sent U. S. troops to Seoul.

Back in Portland, Archie and the Montavilla church did some sending of their own. First it was Leo Yoder who left for six weeks of revival meetings. When he returned it was Archie's turn to leave. This time he headed for Inglewood, California, and the Christ for the World Conference sponsored by the embattled First Christian Church and its ministers, Morris Butler Book and Norval Campbell. Archie appeared on the five-day program (Feb. 28-Mar. 3) with Owen Still, Sr., Woodrow Perry (President of Cincinnati Bible Seminary), Harvey Beard, Sam Hurley, P.H. Canary, Lloyd Taylor, Earl Chambers, L.G. Tomlinson, A.W. Morey, Harold Hossom, Bob Ogan, E.R. Tolin, Orvel Crowder, Melvin Traxler, F.W. Strong and Dale V. Knowles, a last-minute replacement for Max Ward Randall. Knowles, then living in Whiting, Iowa, took his five-year-old son, Victor, on the trip to California. All I remember of the conference is the big balconies and the booming "amens" reverberating around the auditorium. After his sermon, Dale Knowles said, "Brother Word complimented me on a good outline, saying he was going to use it to make a real sermon out of it. If he ever did, it no doubt turned out just that way."²⁸

On April 21 Archie and Florence received a phone call from Iowa with welcome news — Margaret had presented them with their first grandchild, a boy,

Donald Gerald Hunt, Jr., born on Archie's birthday! Archie was delighted to hear the news, but great grandfather Luther Word only snorted, "Just what we need. Another damn Campbellite preacher!"

On May 22 Harold Reyman resigned as Archie's associate minister and moved to Warrenton, Oregon. The congregation continued to support Warren Bell in Gresham and Lee Turner in Vancouver in addition to their preacher of 15 years, Archie Word.

THE TROUTDALE YEARS BEGIN

Fourteen miles east of Portland on the banks of the Sandy River is the town of Troutdale, the site of what was to become an annual summertime rally known as the "Troutdale Gathering." The gathering was largely the brainchild of Donald G. Hunt, who advertised the new rally as a "great soul winning gathering in the Pacific Northwest" in his *Voice of Evangelism* (May 20, 1950). Strangely enough, no advance publicity of the rally was carried in *The Church Speaks*. Hunt later explained,

Brother Word was dubious that such would work there, but was the first to recognize his mistaken judgment when people from all over the Northwest began arriving for the first Troutdale Gathering.³⁰

About 200 came to hear Donald Hunt, Burton Barber and Archie Word preach the word. Each evening Archie spoke on "Things I've Learned in the Service of God." (In 1952 the five messages were released in a booklet published by *The Voice of Evangelism*.) Hunt's report of the inaugural meeting included these words:

So enraptured were the audiences with the messages that people eagerly listened attentively for better than an hour and a half at a time, hardly believing that so much time had elapsed.³¹

As a result of the Troutdale Gathering, five of Montavilla's young people made the 2,000 mile trip back to Iowa to enroll in Midwestern School of Evangelism. By this time the Standard Publishing flag that hung over the pulpit at Montavilla could contain no more crosses, so Mrs. William Weideman, a member at Montavilla, made a new flag bearing red stars on a white background.³² One could get "starry-eyed" looking at all the stars which represented all the young people going off to Bible college. The Montavilla church continued to lead the nation in this category.

(Although no one knew it at the time, the Montavilla church would soon open a Bible college of its own. During the winter of 1950-1951 several classes were taught on Tuesday and Thursday nights. Sixteen men took Homiletics under Warren Bell and others attended Lee Turner's Life of Christ class. Bell and Turner would join Archie Word in founding "Churches of Christ School of Evangelists" in 1952.)

"CUT SHORT" IN CROWLEY

Following the Troutdale Gathering, Archie was gone from Portland for six straight months of rallies and revivals. Along with Bell, Marion McKee and Malburt Prater, he spoke at Cincinnati, Iowa, August 22-24. Then he was off for a series of meetings which took him to Del Paso Heights (a district of Sacramento) and San Luis Obispo in California and Crowley, Louisiana.

The Crowley church was made up mostly of French Acadians (Nova Scotians who migrated down the Mississippi River to Louisiana). The women in the congregations were taught not to cut their hair (the conviction being based on their understanding of I Cor. 11:1-16). Archie Word did not share this conviction — although he had just appeared on a rally with Malburt Prater who *did* believe, at that time, that a Christian woman should have long hair. More than that, he made several "cutting" remarks during the revival about the hair question. The men of the Crowley church took it for a while; then took him aside one night and told him to cease mentioning the subject once and for all. Archie would not cease and was abruptly told to go back home. Years later Archie would say that it was the only meeting he never finished, but he said it was because the meeting was going nowhere. The Cajuns have another story!

Here is Archie's account of the story, as he remembered it in 1988:

I was preaching in Louisiana and old Mr. Hebert (Evarista Hebert — Author) came over — I think it was a Sunday night — and I told him I thought there was something better to preach on than long hair. Down there in the Roman Catholic community if a woman cuts the ends of her hair she was going to hell for sure. Well, I said the wrong thing!

He (Hebert) went around among the crowd and the next night there were about 150 there — had been preaching to about 200. So I just left — no need to stay and be run out. . . .

That's the most ignorant place I have ever been around. I wanted a commentary and I called every preacher in that town and there wasn't a one that had a commentary. I called an old preacher's wife and she

said, "Yes, my husband had some commentaries, but he gave them to a little Baptist school in a town about 40 miles away." I drove over there to get the commentary on I Corinthians, took it, and showed it to them.³³

THE "BEAM" IN ARCHIE'S EYE

To be an American in 1951 was to be in a world rapidly changing by the threat of Communism and war. Tests for atomic bombs were being conducted in the deserts of Nevada; watery mushrooms were being created above the Pacific Ocean with hydrogen bomb tests. 1951 was the year that the Rosenbergs were found guilty of selling A-bomb secrets to the Soviets. They were sentenced to death. Twenty-one Communists in New York were charged with conspiracy to overthrow the government of the United States. While fighting raged on near the 38th parallel in Korea, President Truman fired General Douglas MacArthur, setting off a firestorm in America. About the only bright spot in 1951 was a balmy afternoon on October 3 when Bobby Thompson hit the "shot heard round the world" and New York Giant's radio announcer Russ Hodges went crazy: "The Giants win the pennant! The Giants win the pennant! The Giants win the pennant!"

Archie Word set off his own bomb and created his own firestorm on January 7 when he printed another editorial cartoon on the front page of *The Church Speaks*. The cartoon pictured two men — Ernest Beam and Bill Jessup — trying to get into a pair of pants that had many legs. Beneath the cartoon Archie ran his article, "Just Too Much Pants."

Ernest Beam was a judge in Long Beach, California, and also served as minister of the Central Church of Christ (a capella). Bill Jessup, Archie's old classmate at

Eugene Bible University, was serving as president of San Jose Bible College. Beam and Jessup had developed a warm friendship, one that would last for over 20 years. Archie Word had never met Ernest Beam, but when he heard that Jessup had held a meeting for Beam in Long Beach – and that Beam had spoken in chapel at San Jose Bible College, and on the Conference on Evangelism – he was disturbed. In “Just Too Much Pants,” he wrote:

A combination of all the splits, breaks, divisions and heresies among the ‘progressives’, ‘Digressives’ and ‘Anti’s’ would no more be the Church of Christ than a combination of other ‘Disobedient’ denominational ‘bodies’ would comprise ‘The Church of Christ.’³⁴

Beam and Jessup, however, believed that Christ’s prayer for unity in John 17 must begin with the divided church. In Visalia, California, a three-day unity meeting arranged by the two men drew over 1,000 interested brethren. Other meetings soon followed in the Los Angeles and San Jose areas. Historian James DeForest Murch called these efforts “most significant.”³⁵ Beam and Jessup also issued a small booklet setting forth their views on Christian unity, *We Are One in Christ/The Task Before Us*. All of this was just too much for Archie Word who summarily wrote both men off, saying, “It will mean only the birth of another ‘united Division.’ ” (The Beam-Jessup efforts at unity were also, in fairness, lambasted by the Disciples and the noninstrumental churches. Beam and Jessup were publicly called “braying jackasses” by State Secretary Milo J. Smith and “heretics” by the *Firm Foundation*.³⁷ But it especially hurt Jessup when “some of our long time friends among our instrumen-

tal churches turned against us, among whom was Archie Word through *The Church Speaks*.”³⁸) When Beam died, in 1957, Jessup said the toll of this controversy cost Beam his life. “I knew the man and the sincerity of his heart. The sectarian spirit of his brethren sent him to an early grave.”³⁹ To this day Bill Jessup believes Ernest Beam “died from a broken heart.”⁴⁰ (If W.S. Lemmon, the man who discovered” Archie Word, knew of these things, it must have grieved his heart too. Lemmon died Jan. 30, 1951, in Riverside, California.)

One result of Archie Word’s opposition to the unity efforts of Bill Jessup and Ernest Beam was a number of students at San Jose transferring to Ottumwa. Donald Hunt explains:

Some of the older students at San Jose (those influenced by Archie Word and his preaching) seriously questioned some of the unity principles being espoused because they were to them disregarding some of the laws God had laid down in the Scriptures. At that very time Burton Barber was conducting a weekly column in *The Voice of Evangelism* called “The Querist’s page” . . . Barber devoted several columns to such questions from California. As a result several students transferred from San Jose to Ottumwa. In time Archie Word removed his support from San Jose and gave it to Ottumwa.⁴¹

Alton Danielson was the cartoonist of “Just Too Many Pants.” He was not aware of the controversy the cartoon created.

I was still living at home in Sacramento, and in high school, when Brother Word asked me to draw three or four cartoons for him. Specifically, I remember three: the big pants, some men in a brawl, and two cats with

their tails tied together. The reason for them was unclear, except that he wanted to use them in *The Church Speaks*. I drew them, but the caption and the other words were added by him or someone else. So, I drew them, and they had a lot more meaning than I knew about. Today, I don't even have a copy of them, and I'm hazy on what they said.⁴²

HELPING OTHERS

On January 21, 1951, Archie took on a new associate minister, Lester Deal of Bayard, Nebraska (where Archie had once held a revival meeting). Deal, along with Warren Bell, Chester Stewart, F.J. Winder, Floyd Hughes and Melvin Traxler, were speakers on a preaching rally at Montavilla February 12. In April the congregation began helping a new church, the Bonney Slope church.

In the summer of 1950 Dave DeWelt had attempted to start a church in Cedar Mill (his brother, Don, conducted a revival for him that summer). Soon the Montavilla church began sending financial aid to the struggling congregation. Property was purchased in the Bonney Slope district of Portland. Dave DeWelt continued with the church until 1959 when Ray Weideman, another Montavilla preacher boy, took over the work. Bonney Slope became the third church Montavilla had helped to start (Gresham, 1944, and Vancouver, 1947, being the others).

The Montavilla church was also good at sending their evangelists to help other churches throughout the country. Each year Archie or Leo Yoder would be gone as many as six months at a time in revivals while the other stayed home and tended to the Portland flock. A new twist developed from April to July in 1951 when the Eastside church in San Jose, California,

sent a call to Portland for help. The California congregation had been experiencing some internal difficulties and needed some leadership. Montavilla's elders sent their evangelists (one at a time!) to the troubled church over a period of four months. Afterwards one of the San Jose elders, Vernon C. Watkins, wrote the Portland elders, thanking them for sharing their leadership with them.

We are keenly aware of the sacrifices you have made. . . . The calibre of men that you have sent in our behalf was, in our judgment, the finest. . . . The church here was torn with division and strife at the beginning of the meeting, but after several months of sound preaching and teaching it has become united and harmonious.⁴³

Here was something odd. Archie Word, a man who had espoused a philosophy of "Preach the word and let 'er split," helping in the healing of a church "torn with division and strife." Charges of being a "church splitter" may have been based more on his unwise philosophy than his actual "practice." He addressed the criticism in the Dec. 23, 1951 *The Church Speaks*:

Every time a church 'splits' . . . if I have ever held a meeting there . . . though it be five years back; immediately the blame for the church splitting is laid on me. So far as I know I have never split a church yet. I have held only three 'pastorates' and neither (sic) of them split while I was there. I have held about 100 meetings of from three weeks to thirteen in duration . . . and as far as I know I have never split a church yet.⁴⁴

Archie went on to blame women (or men with a woman's complex) for the accusations. He also did not appreciate a critic who cautioned someone, "Now

let us be careful that we don't go off and be a Wordite."⁴⁵ Another detractor once said, "Oh, Word does not belong to the Christian Church; he belongs to the Apostles' Church."⁴⁶ Archie replied to this bit of sarcasm, "Praise the Lord! The Apostles were simply in Jesus Christ's church. . . . Another 'Praise the Lord,' and more lustily than the first! At least some people know where I belong!"⁴⁷

THE CONVERSION OF FELIX FREEDMAN

One of the many conversions at Eastside in San Jose while Archie Word was working with the church was a Jew named Felix Freedman. Charles and Lois Dailey, students at San Jose Bible College, attended one night of Archie's meeting. Charles recalls the memorable evening.

The building was full. We had to take a seat at the very back of the auditorium. There was conviction and responses to the invitation almost every night. On one of those nights, aged Felix Freedman, uncle of Miriam Engel, came to accept Christ as his Messiah, fulfilling the dream of Judaism to spend the final brief time in life as one of the true remnant of God. Brother Word handled the response as few men could. It was a memorable scene.⁴⁸

THE GREAT HOLY SPIRIT CONTROVERSY AT SAN JOSE

From June 10 to July 8, 1951, Archie was joined in the gospel yoke with Marion McKee in a great revival at Montavilla. The last week of the meeting went head-to-head with the second annual Troutdale Gathering, where the three editors of *The Voice of Evangelism* were holding forth. One of them, Burton Barber, saw

the "Gatherings" as "God-called." "God has used us to call for and sponsor many preaching rallies, but these above-mentioned (Ottumwa, Portland and Sacramento — Author) . . . differ from the regular daily preaching rally." When Barber returned to Iowa after a nine-week tour of the West Coast that summer of 1951, he expressed "shock" over the great Holy Spirit controversy at San Jose Bible College.

The "Conference on the Holy Spirit" was the talk of many in the summer of 1951. T.R. Applebury, a member of the faculty of San Jose Bible College, believed that the Holy Spirit resided only in the written word of God, the Bible. Don DeWelt, a fellow faculty member, believed in the personal indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit in the life of every true believer. Many students (a good number of them Archie Word converts) were torn by the controversy — so much so that the special "Conference on the Holy Spirit" was called April 2-3, 1951. V.K. Allison came from Oregon to buttress Applebury. Archie Word, who shared DeWelt's view, also came from Oregon, not to speak, but to listen to the open discussion. Other notables who attended were Bill Jessup, Roy Shaw, O.L. Mankamyer, Earl Chambers, Lewis Mick, Hal Martin, and Rodney Reyman. One result of the conference was that more students transferred from San Jose to Ottumwa. In August the Montavilla church sent eight more young people off to Bible college (seven to Ottumwa and one, Bob Ballard, to Boise).

OVER 100 RESPONSES IN ONE NIGHT

Archie appeared on the inaugural program of the "Sacramento Gathering" June 18-22 with Donald Hunt

and Burton Barber. One of the musicians was Patricia Estes, a black student from Midwestern School of Evangelism. Her little brother, Simon, would some day become an internationally known baritone singer. Tragically, Patricia took her life not long after this rally. On a happier note, the Word's second grandson, Ronald James Hunt, was born August 15.

Archie returned to Gering, Nebraska, and Streator, Illinois, for repeat meetings in 1951. He also conducted an unforgettable meeting in Sweet Home, Oregon. Among the many converts, the noted author Dr. Charles Crane, who remembers the night he surrendered his life to Christ under the powerful preaching of Archie Word.

I became a Christian Dec. 13, 1951, during one of Brother Word's revival meetings at Sweet Home, Oregon. When the invitation hymn was sung that night, following a very powerful sermon, I was the second person to step out. There followed over 100 other people who came to make decisions for the Lord.⁵⁰

What a way to "close out the old year" and greet the new year!

Notes

1. Letter to author from Bill Jessup, Jan. 1, 1990
2. Letter to author from Dorothy Shaw, April 24, 1989
3. *Ibid*
4. Author's interview with Woodrow Phillips, July 13, 1990
5. *Ibid*
6. *The Church Speaks*, Feb. 6, 1949
7. *Ibid*, May 1, 1949
8. *Ibid*, Sept. 4, 1949
9. *Ibid*
10. *The Church Speaks*, April 3, 1949

11. *The Voice of Evangelism*, Aug. 20, 1949
12. *The Church Speaks*, May 1, 1949
13. *Montavilla Memories*, p. 55
14. *The Voice of Evangelism*, Sept. 3, 1949
15. *The Church Speaks*, Feb. 17, 1952
16. Letter to author from J. Willis Hale, May 12, 1989
17. *The Church Speaks*, Sept. 4, 1949
18. *Ibid*, April 2, 1949
19. *Ibid*, Nov. 6, 1949
20. *Ibid*, Feb. 5, 1950
21. Letter to author from Hugh M. Olson, Nov. 6, 1990
22. *Ibid*
23. *Ibid*
24. *Ibid*
25. *The Church Speaks*, Feb. 51 1950
26. Letter to author from Hugh M. Olson, Nov. 6, 1990
27. *Ibid*
28. *The Life Story of Archie Word*, p. 127
29. Author's interview with Donald G. Hunt, Aug. 7, 1990
30. Unpublished notes of Donald G. Hunt, p. 3
31. *The Voice of Evangelism*, July 22, 1950
32. *Montavilla Memories*, p. 59
33. Interview with Archie Word by Don Hunt Jr., Feb., 1988
34. *The Church Speaks*, Jan. 7, 1951
35. *Adventuring for Christ in Changing Times*, p. 130
36. *The Church Speaks*, Jan. 7, 1951
37. *One Body*, Spring 1991
38. *Ibid*
39. Letter from Bill Jessup to Galen Farnsworth, Jan. 5, 1990
40. *One Body*, Spring 1991
41. Unpublished notes of Donald G. Hunt, pp. 4,5
42. Letter to author from Alton Danielson, Oct. 24, 1990
43. *The Church Speaks*, Aug. 12, 1951
44. *Ibid*, Dec. 23, 1951
45. *Ibid*, June 10, 1951
46. *Ibid*, Dec. 23, 1951
47. *Ibid*
48. Letter to author from J. Charles Dailey, Sept. 18, 1989
49. *The Voice of Evangelism*, July 21, 1951
50. *The Life Story of Archie Word*, p. 116

19

“WE’D RATHER HAVE THE DEVIL!” (1952-1957)

I believe the hour is ripe for the greatest Christian revival that has ever been known. . . . If this great awakening is to come, it must be backed by churches, who are made up of members who are saved themselves.

—Archie Word, April 27, 1952

In some ways 1952 marked the end of one way of life and the beginning of another in the United States. Democratic control of the presidency came to an end with Republican candidate Dwight D. Eisenhower, the former Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers in Europe, winning in a landslide Nov. 4 over Democratic opponent Adlai Stevenson. Business boomed. Unemployment was at a record low. “Ike,” as he liked

to be called, built up a record \$42 billion defense budget. The world's first atomic-powered submarine was built. Fifty-eight percent of the American public belonged to a local church — up from 49% in 1949. The average Protestant gave \$34 to his church (far below the median contribution of \$80 for each member at Montavilla).

But with the boom of good times there was also a proliferation of sin. The twenty-five cent paperback, complete with lurid covers, uncovered forbidden topics. In the same issue of *The Church Speaks* in which Archie Word wrote of an hour that was ripe for evangelism, he railed on the lifestyles of Rita Hayworth and Tallulah Bankhead (except he called her Tallulah Hullabaloo) and other Hollywood personalities. The newest sex goddess, blond bombshell Marilyn Monroe, would make five pictures in 1952. CBS introduced color television. And George Jorgenson became Christine Jorgenson. George — a former G.I. — traveled to Copenhagen and came back to America as Christine. Changing times indeed!

"A DAY WITH YOUR DAD IS BETTER"

Fresh off a revival that had seen over 100 conversions (Sweet Home, Oregon), Archie was determined to do his part in converting America in 1952. He soon had the priceless privilege of baptizing his own namesake, Archie Word Jr., into Christ. Young Arch was 12 at the time of his conversion. He recalls a day when his illustrious father wanted him to spend the day with him, rather than going to school. The principal, a Mr. Thompson, told Arch, "Sure. A day with your Dad is better education than we give here in school!"¹

One day in January Archie received a phone call

from Lindsay with sad news. His father — the man who had said "I'd rather see you dead!" when Archie told him he was going off to Bible college — had died. A few days later, as Archie looked upon the still form of Luther Word, he remembered the early days of his youth; the hard work, the conflicts, the whippings, the day he ran away from home. Still, he must have shed tears for his father that bitter day. Years later he told a grandson, "Dad died from alcohol. His dad was a distiller back in Kentucky, so he was raised right in it. But he didn't start drinking until he was past 50, when the war (World War II) was on. When they (the government) cut off the imports to Italy, he started drinking. The olive oil brought a big price. He could stand being poor, but he could not stand making money. He started drinking. Mother had to take it, as she had married him 'till death'." And now Luther Word, 75, a "hardshell Baptist all his life," was dead.

Life goes on. On April 25 Archie performed the marriage ceremony for his daughter Barbara and Loren Brink. The wedding was held in the living room of the house on Glisan Street. Florence dabbed her eyes with a lace handkerchief while Arch Jr., waited impatiently for a piece of wedding cake.

"CHURCHES OF CHRIST SCHOOL OF EVANGELISTS" BEGINS

Two days after pronouncing Loren and Barbara Brink as husband and wife, Archie made another important announcement: he, along with Warren Bell and Lee Turner, was going to open a Bible college in Portland. The news came as a big surprise to many. Archie Word, an outspoken critic of Bible colleges, starting a Bible college? But the new Bible college was

not called a "Bible college," at least by Archie Word. The top-to-bottom back-page ad in the April 27, 1952 *The Church Speaks* read:

SOMETHING NEW—
In A
PREACHERS' PREPARATORY SCHOOL!

At this point in time the school had no name other than the description "preachers' preparatory school." The announcement said that the school's three instructors (Word, Bell and Turner) would be "getting back to THE CHURCH doing its God given task of training its preachers;" that they would be cutting out " 'college' beggars (field men), 'college' elected boards, pleasing supporters, big extra buildings, and extra salaries;" that "no dorms, jobs or scholarships" would be furnished; that the three Portland area preachers would "teach preachers how to live, as well as how to preach."³

The new school, which would open in September 1952, made it a practice to describe its forthcoming features in the negative, rather than in the positive. For example:

No Dormitories (. . . each [student] will be expected to be mature enough to meet and solve his needs for board and room.)

No School Spirit (each student will become a part of one of the local congregations . . .)

No "Professors." (We are pleased to call Bible Things by Bible Names — Evangelists are to recruit and train other evangelists . . .)

No Campaign for Funds (. . . each congregation fellowshiping in this work shall provide for its evangelist).⁴

Classes would be held at the Montavilla church building.

Some people started to give Archie a rough time for starting a new school. In July Archie responded:

I can remember when the San Jose Bible College first started, some of the "Sister Seminaries" gave them a rough time of it. They called them Pentecostals . . . accused them of being "Holier than thou" . . . refused to pay any attention to them. . . .

It was no different when the Midwestern School of Evangelism commenced. There were many plain lies that were told on the "Boys" as they chose to call the faculty of the new school. They were accused of making things a test of fellowship that were unheard of, simply because they were emphasizing holiness of life. . . .⁵

(But in the same article Archie took San Jose to task for having, in his words, "arrived," for having "a commodious auditorium and well equipped classrooms," and being invited to "sit in with the 'Big Wigs' of the brotherhood.")⁶

Nevertheless, when word reached San Jose about the proposed new school in Portland, Roy Shaw sent his best wishes: "May the Lord bless you and your co-workers as you open the school this fall. It is my personal prayer that God will aid you mightily. Know this, no opposition from us, only prayers."⁷

Russell Boatman, president of Minnesota Bible College, wrote: "Glad you are starting a school there at last. I pray for its success."⁸

Donald Hunt, co-founder of Midwestern School of Evangelism, added: "We rejoice in this great stride forward in the great Northwest where we of the faculty have done much preaching in revival meetings and

coastal gatherings during the past four years."⁹

(The Ottumwa brethren had been urging Archie Word to start a school in Portland for some time. During the 1951-52 school year at Northwestern, no fewer than 39 students had come from Oregon and California, mostly due to Archie Word's support being shifted from San Jose to Ottumwa.)

On September 8 "Churches of Christ School of Evangelists" opened its doors to 22 eager and zealous students. Loren Brink, Archie's newest son-in-law, had the distinction of being the first student to enroll from the Montavilla congregation. Today Brink is in his 21st year on the faculty of the school (now known as Northwest College of the Bible).

NORTH TO ALASKA — AGAIN!

In 1946 Archie had traveled by boat and train to Alaska for a revival with Hal Watkins. Now, in July of 1952, after preaching on the annual summertime gatherings in Sacramento and Troutdale, Archie left for a five-week campaign in Anchorage which saw 76 decisions for Christ. One person who remembers the meeting was William Payne, then a sergeant in the Air Force. He described Archie as "a man about 6 feet tall and around 200 pounds." He recalled him saying, "I didn't get this nose in this shape from teaching Sunday School" (as he pressed his nose down against his face). Payne's account of the ex-boxer's preaching style: "Compromise was not in his vocabulary. After he would announce his title, read a scripture, give an introduction, he (would) continue at a pace that made time go by very fast. Before you realized it, the message was delivered and the closing illustration that brought tears to your eyes was demanding a

decision."¹⁰

(Archie Word, who always had a special place in his heart for a service boy, would preach Payne's ordination sermon five years later.)

WORD'S DAILY ROUTINE

The next 15 years of Archie Word's life saw the added responsibilities of administrating and teaching in the new Bible college. The first school semester found him teaching Christian Evidences, the Scheme of Redemption, and the Preacher's Work. The second semester, which began in the winter of 1953, was devoted to his class on Hermeneutics. Florence joined the faculty, teaching English and Speech.

Each school morning Archie would arise at 4:30 to begin his day with prayer and Bible reading. He then would grade papers, prepare tests, and ready himself mentally for another morning of teaching. After breakfast he would mount his bicycle and peddle his way to the Montavilla church building. There he would meet briefly with the rest of the faculty. Chapel was conducted every day, Tuesday through Friday, with the faculty alternating in the preaching duties. Classes ran until noon. After a quick lunch and a short nap, he would spend the rest of the day in pastoral and evangelistic visitation. He would normally be home for supper with the family and then work till late at night on local church projects.

The Church Speaks took considerable amounts of time in Archie's busy life. Not having a secretary (probably by choice), he answered every letter — regardless of the disposition of the writer. He took on many controversial subjects in his paper; indeed, some only remember him for his fire-breathing essays.

But he could also write on scholarly subjects when he chose to. For example, "The Origin of Our Christian Bible" (April 19, 1953) shows much research in records of antiquity, but it was the controversial issues that caught most reader's attention. And there were many who were reading the fiery journal. A.T. De-Groot, then Dean of the graduate school at Texas Christian University, once wrote to *The Church Speaks*, asking readers to send him back issues for historical records.¹¹

(No complete set is known to me today. A nearly complete set rests in the archives of the Disciples of Christ Historical Society in Nashville, Tennessee, where I obtained photocopies for research for this biography.)

IMPACT AND INFLUENCE

For many years Archie Word had been influencing young men and women to go to Bible college in other parts of the United States. Now his influence was felt right at home. An early student, Dr. Bruce Oberst, remembers:

My first real interaction with him was when I attended the Montavilla congregation during the time I was a student at Pacific University in Forest Grove (1952-53), and then as a student and student-preacher while attending Churches of Christ School of Evangelists in Portland (1953-58). His impact and influence upon my life during these years was tremendous and immeasurable. Many of his sayings and exhortations still ring in my ears! With the exception of my father and perhaps Melvin Traxler (who led me to the Lord) no man has influenced my life more than he.¹²

Dr. Oberst (author of several commentaries published by College Press) testified that during 1953 he

was challenged to enter the preaching ministry by Archie Word, who, he said, "had an absolute conviction regarding the authority and power of the Word of God." Oberst continued, "He therefore preached and lived it as such. He still influences me day by day."

PACIFISM AND CHURCH PLANTING

On March 5, 1953, Joseph Stalin died, the blood of untold millions on his hands. In May President Eisenhower and Congress gave \$60 million in military aid for the French effort in Vietnam. Later, on June 21, Soviet tanks crushed an uprising in East Berlin. Violence and war, though far away, would soon involve American lives. Archie Word, a confirmed pacifist, published two articles in *The Church Speaks* in 1953 on Christian pacifism: "Can a Christian Go to War?" (July 12) and "The Will to Have Peace" (Oct. 11). The latter was his graduation oration that he had delivered at Eugene Bible University in 1925. In it he stated:

"If men can be taught to love war and hate their fellowmen, they can also be taught to hate war and love their fellowmen. . . . Arouse to the cry of the hour and let us face this hideous monster with our minds made up and a will to have no more wars. . . . We must . . . win the love of our sister nations as we have won the hearts of their millions of immigrants who have come to our shore, and then shall 'The will to have peace' reign forever in the lives of men."¹⁴

On the home front it was time to start another church in Portland; this time southeast Portland was chosen. Archie Word and Warren Bell located a vacant lot on Crystal Springs Boulevard and pitched an old Navy tent. On June 9, 1953, the mission effort began

and lasted through the summer until the first Sunday in September when Archie announced from the Montavilla pulpit, "All those willing to help start a new congregation in southeast Portland, please stand!" (When Archie Word said, "Stand," you stood!) Enough people stood for the new church to begin. Montavilla loaned the new church \$1000 and thus the Duke Street Church of Christ was born.

Another church (the fifth begun by Montavilla since Archie Word had come to Portland) was soon established on 64th Street in Portland. Students Loren Brink and Bruce Oberst were instrumental in helping this new church get started. Once again the mother church at Montavilla loaned a beginning congregation money; this time the loan was \$1600 to help buy a building.

A baby of another sort came into Archie's and Florence's lives on November 25, 1953, when Loren and Barbara Brink presented them with another grandchild, a son named David. (David Brink today ministers to the Duke Street church in Portland.)

THE SHRINKING CIRCLE

In 1954 Archie Word made a change in *The Church Speaks* — going from tabloid to a small monthly magazine format. But that was about the only change he made. In an editorial directed at Bible colleges and unity meetings, Archie asked and answered the question, "What Is Our Business?"

We started out, at least I did, to try to build the Lord's church as it was in the sacred Scriptures. . . . In the process of time there has arisen among the 'Brethren' many ideas that are not in the Scriptures. . . . I would

like to make myself clear on this subject. . . . I am trying to build the Lord's church as it was in the Bible, minus nothing and plus nothing. . . . We will not have to be writing editorials to daily papers trying to show that we are part of the 'Restoration Movement' along with a factious sect that has divided the Lord's church. . . . Personally, I don't have time to run down and see how the 'No Sunday School' branch is getting along; nor how the 'One Cuppers' are progressing. . . .¹⁵

While the Supreme Court was outlawing segregation in southern schools in 1954, Archie Word was still opposing "integration" efforts like the Beam-Jessup unity meetings in the Restoration Movement. The above reference to "writing editorials to daily papers" was a direct shot at Bill Jessup, who had written a letter to the *San Jose Evening News* explaining that the noninstrumental churches of Christ did not make up the total "Church of Christ." Archie Word did not even see them as being part of the Church of Christ, period! He felt that those who opposed instrumental music in worship were no better than "Jesuits or Dominicans." Furthermore, he saw those in the instrumental churches — both Disciples and Independents, — who advocated such extrabiblical things as state conventions, pension funds, and missionary societies as "factious sects," fit only to be "marked and avoided."¹⁶

Archie Word's circle of fellowship was becoming smaller and smaller. To be sure, he was invited to speak on a number of programs (Centerville, Troutdale, and Sacramento); but these were mostly sponsored by the Ottumwa brethren (who believed "it is better to fellowship too few than too many" — Burton Barber, *Fellowship, The Issue of Our Times*).

In the summer of 1954, however, the fledgling rally in Sacramento was shifted to San Jose — not at San Jose Bible College, but at the Eastside church where Archie was well known and loved. These rallies, especially the one in Centerville, would draw as many as six or seven hundred people. Critics viewed them as “radical,” but Archie saw them as a place where “strong meat” was served up. He covered the 1954 Troutdale Gathering for *The Voice of Evangelism*, and reported:

The general theme of the whole camp was from the negative side of the questions, which in itself is a rare thing in our day . . . churches over the land are in need of a good sound warning before they drift into absolute and irretrievable apostacy. . . . Almost all of the so-called Rallies and Conferences I have been on or visited have had along the line somewhere a ‘Weak Sister’, but this rally . . . was ‘Strong Meat’.¹⁷

(Archie’s rally-closing sermon at San Jose was “Returning To A Vigorous Stand Against Sin!”)

“WE’D RATHER HAVE THE DEVIL!”

All across America congregations that had once had Archie Word for a revival meeting — even though they had been successful — would no longer invite him back. A member from one of these churches told Archie one day, “They would rather have the Devil to hold them a meeting than you, Brother Word.” Archie thought about that remark for awhile before replying in *The Church Speaks*:

That statement did not register with me for quite some time, and then, all of a sudden, I got the full impact of

it. Here was a church in which I had preached several ‘meetings;’ a church where I have seen over two hundred people profess faith in the Lord . . . but now they would rather listen to the Devil than they would to the preacher who has retained his high standards of Holiness and Christian ideals.¹⁸

After declaring that “apostates” have always preferred the preaching of the devil to the man of God, Archie went on to magnify his ministry at Montavilla, which, he admitted, was being “soundly cursed and renounced” by many.

‘ We have an entire congregation in which there is not one user of the weed; not one who openly attends the theater; very few, if any, who have invited the Devil into their front room through TV; no card players nor dancers; very little gossip, and two-thirds of the membership are regular attenders at prayer meeting. We have kept a full time evangelist in the field helping other churches for over ten years and now have a fine seminary with over 35 enrolled last year. . . . I pray God that those who are the enemies of Righteousness . . . will always hate me for what I stand for, and let it be known to the world that they would rather have the Devil preach for them, than me.’¹⁹

Still, there were some churches who wanted Archie Word back for another meeting. In November he returned to Del Paso Heights, California, for a return meeting (Nov. 23–Dec. 17). The preacher, Rodney Reyman, recalls that the meeting was humanitarian as well as salvational in nature. “It was a very productive meeting, in spite of the fact that it was the year of the big flood in Sacramento. We helped people clean up their houses and picked up stranded people to bring to the meeting.”²⁰

"A FEARLESS PROPHET"

Two grandsons of Archie and Florence were born in 1955, a year that saw increasing tension on the international scene. Ho Chi Minh was now in full power in a land that would some day become a thorn in the side of the United States – Vietnam. The Warsaw Pact, a military compact between Communist Eastern bloc nations, was signed in May. One of the grandsons, Donald Thomas Rodda, Jr., lived only two days. But the Word's sorrow was eased in June when a second grandson, Jonathan Lee Brink, was born.

Archie Word was now in his 20th year with the historic "Church at 550" in the Montavilla district of Portland. In the fall the Bible college began its fourth year: "Evangelists, using the church property, under the Eldership, to train other evangelists how to preach." *The Church Speaks* was now going out to over 10,000 readers. An appreciative preacher in Oklahoma City thought Archie reminded him of an old-time prophet:

I admire your fearlessness. . . . It reminds me of God's prophets. I am trying to get to that place in my own preaching, which is another reason for my taking your paper. There are not many publications among us which take such a clear cut stand, nor preachers either. I have heard many speak of you, your methods of doing things and of preaching, and although they seem very reluctant to have you on their convention programs, I think they have a secret longing to have some of the boldness which you possess and have the ability to get things done the way you do.²²

The voice of Archie Word was no longer heard on certain conferences and conventions; nor were the works of his pen found in the columns of certain

brotherhood journals that he had contributed to since 1932. But in Ottumwa, Iowa, where his son-in-law Donald Hunt edited *The Voice of Evangelism*, he had free reign. One day in 1955, while at home nursing a bad cold, Archie wrote an article for that journal in which he looked back on his embattled career.

"I have tried to fight a good fight against all forms of denominational machinery that have sprung up amidst the men who started out to restore the Lord's church as it was given to us fresh from the hand of God," he wrote. He then recounted his stand against any and all "encroachments" of "outside organizations" upon something very dear to him – the local church. He thought about the church for a moment, then continued. "I have tried to keep the 'body' clean from worldliness." He cited Billy Sunday – a bold preacher "cussed and discussed by both the cowardly clergy and sinning membership" – and stated, "I have found that worldly members of both the preaching profession and the congregations of the so-called Churches of Christ hate the preacher who opposes them and openly condemns them in their sins." He then reeled off a list of sins that he had opposed in his ministry: the liquor traffic, tobacco, movies ("Hollywood's passion pits"), card playing, and dancing.

"Someone may ask, 'Why do you emphasize those things, Brother Word?' My answer is quick and to the point: 'Because so few other preachers ever say anything about them.'" He did not stop with sins of the flesh but proceeded to reel off a list of sins of the spirit that he opposed as well: gossip, hatred, jealousy, covetousness, enmity, strife, division, slander and the like. After describing other battles against liberalism and modernism, the Portland prophet concluded:

Oh, may God grant that when the time comes for me to finish the course, I can look back on upon a life spent in service to my fellowman and for my God, sincerely desirous of being well pleasing to *Him*, and helpful to those to whom He has sent me to minister.²³

A DAY ON THE BEACH

The summer of 1955 found Archie preaching on rallies at Troutdale and San Jose. At San Jose he was assigned the topic, "Why I Have Been Disfellowshipped (by 'Non-Disfellowshippers')". After the San Jose rally evangelist A.G. McCown conducted a three-week revival at Montavilla. Word admired McCown, a former sidekick of Will Rogers. Faded revival handbills show McCown on a bucking bronco, cowboy hat in hand. Archie would print a number of McCown's articles in *The Church Speaks* in the years that followed.

Archie had lost his associate of seven years, Leo Yoder, in the fall of 1954. Now, nearly a year later, he took on a new man, Lee Fiksdal, a former radio announcer in Anchorage, Alaska, who had been converted under Archie's preaching in a San Jose meeting. Fiksdal did a live talk show on KVAN, a station over which Archie had been preaching. It was the first radio talk show in Portland and provided the church with many opportunities to spread the gospel.

Although Archie had quit the field of full-time revival meetings in 1935 — largely due to the fact that his children were constantly being moved from pillar to post — he continued with his "first love" of revivals, sometimes being gone for as long as six months at a time. Florence and the children, Arch Jr. and Esther, naturally stayed home. But in July 1956 Archie took Florence and the children along for a three-week

revival with Rodney Reyman and the church in Morro Bay, California.

Archie's mother, Maggie, came over from Lindsay. Longtime friends from Los Angeles, Don and Ruth Jessup and their children joined the Words in Morro Bay. The Word children and Jessup children enjoyed jellyfish fights on the beach. Esther, 13 at the time, remembers one special day.

That was the time that Dad and I decided we would walk to church from the little house where we were staying. We walked along the beach until we got to where we figured the church building was, and then turned inland. We scrambled through all kinds of undergrowth, got muddy and scratched up getting over to the highway, and then had to finish the trek to the building. The worst part was that we were dressed for church with Dad in his suit and all.²⁴

Then, this poignant footnote: "That is the only time I remember doing anything special with Dad — just one-on-one."²⁵

PROTECTIVE LOVE

One of the reasons Archie Word did not want to have a television set in his home was because of his love for children — his own, those in his church and in his community. He stated his position in April 1956:

I do know that I have some fine children in my home and I have the respect of all young people who know me. . . . I know I have been here in this one church for 21 years, and I do not want to do anything to jeopardize my Christian standing in the community, nor to cause any one of these youngsters . . . to stumble. TV might do just that, so I will not have one.²⁶

Television showed many things in 1956: the Negro bus boycott in Montgomery, Alabama; Nikita Khrushchev's denouncement of Stalin; the Suez Canal war; brave Hungarian youths facing Soviet tanks in Budapest — and on September 9, Elvis Presley. But Archie said, "The answer to a good home life lies in the Family Altar, instead of the TV." He was adamantly opposed to television because of the advertising and programming. "As long as it is run by the money interests in advertising every kind of evil, and while Hollywood's sex stimulators and murder thrillers make up most of the programs," he wrote, "no Christian has any business with a set in his home for his children to view."²⁷

(But while Archie Word would not have a T.V. in his home, a lady in Washington would not have a religious magazine in her home that had an article in it by Archie Word! In January 1956 she wrote to *The Voice of Evangelism*, cancelling her subscription because of her intense dislike of the Portland preacher.)²⁸

OLD BLIND JOHN

As the Word family continued to grow (two more grandchildren in 1956), so did the church family. During the previous summer one of the students from the Bible college, Tony LaSalle, a Puerto Rican from New York City, had taught and baptized a young black man, Eugene Mitchell, who lived in north Portland. Archie saw this conversion as the time to start another church. Students from the college provided the leadership for the new church that met at North Williams Avenue and Knott Street. The church later relocated on North Borthwick, near Jefferson High School. Today the Mitchells remain a strong Christian family in

the Portland area.

By this time the college had grown to a record 41 full time students. And Archie wanted every single one to be a soul winner. One day in chapel he told them the story of "Old Blind John."

Do you know old John, here in Portland, old blind John? He always walks down Glisan Street. He walks like all blind people do, with his feet ahead of him. . . .

I saw him, one day, walking right straight toward a little bit of a child in a perambulator. The mother had left it and . . . if he had fallen over it . . . with his big 250 pounds of weight, it would have crushed that little child. . . .

A man reached out and put his hand on his arm and tried to turn him. John turned around and started to curse him. The man said . . . 'John, if you had walked straight ahead you would have walked over a tiny child.' Old John is rough and tough (but) from his sightless eyes the tears began to come.²⁹

When Archie Word told a story like this, there were usually tears in everyone's eyes, including his own. Then he made the application: "What about the death of possibly many souls that you could have prevented? . . . You watched them walking toward the deep abyss . . . toward everlasting destruction . . . right over the abyss and into eternity."³⁰

One day Archie called the bakery shop and asked to talk to Harold Reyman, his associate, who lived next door to the bakery. The baker, known well to Archie, said, "I will go over and get him for you, Mr. Word." What follows reveals the love Archie Word had for lost souls.

Little did I know that when I spoke to that baker over the telephone that it would be the last time that

I'd ever hear his voice. That night, on his way home from work, just as he went to turn into his own driveway . . . he ran straight into a tree right in the corner of the driveway. They found him slumped over the wheel. A heart attack. He was dead. The last chance I ever had to speak to him was on the telephone, and I muffed it. I had talked to him at the bakery about his soul, but the last opportunity to ever talk to that man, the last warning that I ever had a chance to give him, I missed it.³¹

Illustrations like this never failed to move his audience to a greater desire to win souls.

In July he traveled to California to preach on the annual summertime rally that had been moved yet again; this time to San Luis Obispo where Earl Chambers preached. August found him back in the Midwest for the annual Centerville Rally. In September Lee Fiksdal ended his work with the church but continued his popular radio show on KVAN. Calvin Parks, a married student from Anchorage, Alaska, became Archie's new assistant in October. Parks would later be killed in a tragic airplane accident.

TAKING ON THE ENEMY

In the spring of 1957 faith healer A.A. Allen came to Portland's Civic Auditorium for a series of healing and deliverance services. Archie printed a small tract, "Are Mr. Allen's Miracles from God?" which was handed out in front of the auditorium by students from the college and young people from the Montavilla church, some of whom were "verbally and physically abused" by Allen's strongmen.³²

William Randolph Hearst and Billy Graham also received criticism from Archie Word in 1957. Graham

held an extended crusade in New York City (May 15 - August 10), drawing a record 100,000 in Yankee Stadium the final night. On the West Coast Archie observed:

Many people think that just because the audiences run into the thousands that the message is of God, but they do not know Hearst and his newspapers are behind the astounding publicity given to Billy Graham.³³

(Archie had no quarrel with Billy on preaching repentance; it was the Baptist's failure to preach baptism for the remission of sins and the one church that aroused Archie's ire.)

For many years a favorite target of Archie's preaching and writing was smoking. A grim smile of satisfaction must have creased his face on March 22 when the American Heart Association and American Cancer Society issued a joint report linking smoking with lung disease. Archie had been relentless for years in his preaching against the killer weed.

To counteract the popular newspaper advertisements of the Knights of Columbus in 1957, Archie wrote a small booklet, *How, When and Where We Got Our Bible*. In the preface, he wrote, "The Roman Catholic church did not give us our Bible but they have done more to stop its translation than any other organization on the earth." Thousands of copies of the booklet were distributed in Portland and throughout the United States.

PRESSING ON

For many years *The Church Speaks* had been printed by Cosby Printers in Portland, but in 1957

Archie Word bought a press and began doing his own printing of his paper, tracts, and booklets. The story behind the securing the new press carries a note of irony. In 1957 Howard Hutchins, Walter Stram and Don Stram (Walter's son) formed Global Gospel Services, a nonprofit corporation in the state of Oregon that would publish gospel literature. They bought a small multi-printing press, but it soon proved to be inadequate for their needs. Archie Word, who had "written off" Hutchins and Stram, bought it from them and moved it to Montavilla.³⁴

Printing aside, preaching was still the number one love in Archie Word's life. In July he preached on the 8th annual Troutdale Gathering. Appearing on the program with him were Donald Hunt, Burton Barber, Richard Ellis (all from Ottumwa), Melvin Traxler, and Warren Bell. Hunt stayed on to conduct a four-week revival at Montavilla. By this time Florence had given up her work of directing the choir. From July 21 to August 10 Archie was in a revival with Barber and the church he had helped start 11 years previously in Centerville, Iowa. He appeared on the Centerville Rally program and traveled east to speak on the latest "large scale" rally begun by the Ottumwa brethren in Rushville, Indiana.

CHAMPION OF THE LOCAL CHURCH

Archie Word returned to Portland just in time for the opening of another school year. While Federal troops were being sent to assist nine black high school students in attaining their education in Little Rock, Arkansas, Archie Word and the faculty were greeting 40 eager students in the Montavilla church building.

It was about this time that Archie responded to what he viewed as a "putdown" of their local church training efforts. In the October 20, 1957 *The Church Speaks* he took Manhattan Bible College to task, then explained his view of how preachers should be trained.

Let us pray God that the men and women over the land who plead for the Restoration of the church as it was in the New Testament in the first century will endeavor to do their training of their ministers in the same way Paul and his successors did; hand picked men, privately tutored and sent out by the church.³⁵

In the same article, "Answering Some Bible College Questions," he stated that usually the graduate from a Bible college was ordained by the college instead of the local elders. A Professor Burks of Cincinnati Bible Seminary wrote to Archie, explaining that the practice of colleges ordaining graduates rather than churches only happened "sometimes" rather than "usually."³⁶ In December Archie ran an apology of sorts: "Thanks to Professor Burks of Cincinnati Bible Seminary for calling this to my attention. The 'Bible College Corporational setup' has enough wrong with it without any false accusations."³⁷

A cartoon in the December 22, 1957 *The Church Speaks* (drawn by Archie) pictured a small dachshund dog wagging a grossly oversize tail. The dog was the local church, but "the tail that wags the dog" carried a number of labels: state conventions, missionary societies, unity movements, etc. Russ Martin, a preacher in Miami, Oklahoma, thought the cartoon was "quite terrific" and asked for extra copies.³⁸ But another reader, from Valparaiso, Indiana, was not amused. "Do

not send any more *The Church Speaks*. I don't want to be bothered tossing (it) into (the) wastebasket."

In November Archie traveled to Phoenix, Arizona, where he conducted a meeting for a former student, Milton Hare, and a small Spanish church in south Phoenix.

In spite of his opposition to the "unity movement" in southern California, Archie Word wanted to see a united church for the sake of converting a lost world. Toward the end of 1957 he wrote an article in *The Voice of Evangelism*, "What Should the Church Be Preaching Today?" He suggested a simple agenda:

The church today ought to be preaching the unity of the people of God. . . . This is what we need right now! Let the Bible be substituted for all human creeds, facts for definitions, things for words, faith for speculation, unity of faith for unity of opinion, the positive commands of God for human legislation and tradition, piety for ceremony, morality for partisan zeal, the practice of religion for the mere profession of it, and the work is done.

We know there will never be a converted world until there is a united church. Unity is set forth in the New Testament as a fundamental conception of the church. Christ prayed for it. The apostles strove to preserve it. Don't you think we should ever keep it before us and that the church today should preach the unity of God's people on the Word of God? ⁴⁰

This, essentially, is what he was still advocating 27 years later when he set forth an 8-point plan, "How To Have Christian Unity," in the inaugural issue of *One Body* (February 1984), published by Don DeWalt and edited by myself. He concluded that article by saying,

Our God-given Christian unity was destroyed by men lowering the standard of church members' lives;

making organizations and traditions matter of standards that must be accepted, which are not only UNscriptural but Anti-scriptural. . . . Let us return to a 'Thus saith the Lord,' and once more be united.⁴¹

Notes

1. Letter to author from Arch Word, Jr., Dec. 4, 1989
2. Interview with Archie Word by Don Hunt, Jr., Oct. 5, 1985
3. *The Church Speaks*, April 27, 1952
4. *Ibid*, July 20, 1952
5. *Ibid*
6. *Ibid*
7. *The Church Speaks*, Oct. 12, 1952
8. *Ibid*
9. *Ibid*
10. *The Life Story of Archie Word*, p. 121
11. *The Church Speaks*, April 19, 1953
12. *The Life Story of Archie Word*, p. 118
13. *Ibid*
14. *The Church Speaks*, Oct. 11, 1953
15. *Ibid*, May 30, 1954
16. *Ibid*
17. *The Voice of Evangelism*, July 31, 1954
18. *The Church Speaks*, Oct. 31, 1954
19. *Ibid*
20. Letter to author from Rodney Reyman, July 25, 1990
21. *The Church Speaks*, Aug. 14, 1955
22. *Ibid*, Nov. 6, 1955
23. *The Voice of Evangelism*, Sept. 24, 1955
24. Letter to author from Esther Word Burgess, Nov 29, 1989
25. *Ibid*
26. *The Church Speaks*, April 29, 1956
27. *Ibid*
28. *The Voice of Evangelism*, Jan 21, 1956
29. *The Church Speaks*, Sept. 30, 1956
30. *Ibid*
31. *Ibid*
32. *Montavilla Memories*, p. 75
33. *The Church Speaks*, Dec 22, 1957
34. Letter to author from Don Stram, Mar. 20, 1989
35. *The Church Speaks*, Oct. 20, 1957
36. *Ibid*

- 37. *The Church Speaks*, Dec. 22, 1957
- 38. *Ibid*
- 39. *The Church Speaks*, Mar. 1958
- 40. *The Voice of Evangelism* Nov. 2, 1957
- 41. *One Body*, Feb. 1984

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LAMBASTING SINNERS (1958-1962)

"I accept the accusation (of being an "Isolationist") and, in the light of the Scripture by which I try to measure every deed of my life, I am delighted."

—A. Word, November 1958

The North American Christian Convention came to Portland, Oregon, in the summer of 1958. Host Restoration churches in the Portland area cooperated to help make the convention's first visit to the scenic Pacific Northwest a success. Bill Jessup served as registration chairman and managed to register a record 4,034 people. Another of Archie's old classmates at Eugene Bible University, Ard Hoven, was one of the speakers who helped develop the theme, "God's Word for God's World." But the man whose name was

synonymous with preaching the Word, A. Word, would have nothing in the world to do with the Portland convention.

It had now been an even 10 years since he had attended his first (and last) North American Christian Convention in Springfield, Illinois. He continued to believe that the convention was controlled by politics and contaminated by weak preaching. In the September 1958 *The Church Speaks* he explained:

Any man who stands true to the Original plea of the churches of Christ, to restore the Church as it is patterned in the Bible, refusing to compromise with modern innovations and traditions of the so-called Christian church, will be an unwelcome guest in the NACC. Once in a great while a man of that calibre gets on the program, but ONLY ONCE, you can rely on that. . . . If he preaches on a life of separation from the sins that are eating on the very vitals of the church membership, he is shunned as if he had leprosy. . . . The only way a man can get along with the 'Continuation Committee' . . . is to COMPROMISE, KEEP QUIET ON BIBLE CHRISTIANITY, shut up on SIN . . . or be 'Conventionally isolated' We need, NOT A NATIONAL CONVENTION OF COMPROMISERS, but we do need a NATIONAL AROUSING OF INDIVIDUAL PREACHERS TO BE FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT.¹

Without Archie's support or presence the convention was held July 9-13. Just prior to the North American Christian Convention the 9th annual Troutdale Gathering was held June 30 through July 6 with Warren Bell, Charles Dailey, Donald Hunt, and Burton Barber preaching 17 sermons in a tabernacle that was filled for the first time, the overflow crowds forced to stand outside the building. Archie Word helped conduct the song services.

ACCUSED OF BEING AN "ISOLATIONIST"

In the November 1958 *The Church Speaks* Archie ran a front-page article, "I Am Accused of Being an Isolationist." The charge did not seem to bother him.

I accept the accusation and, in the light of the Scripture by which I try to measure every deed of my life, I am delighted with the 'Religious Leaders, appellative, as wrapped up in 'Isolationist.'²

Fellow preachers, apparently, had hung the tag on Archie for his refusal to have anything to do with the recent North American Christian Convention or even local organizations. Archie replied that if he were an isolationist then he was in good company because men like John the Baptist "would not be bothered by being on the 'Continuation Committee' or being elected to the presidency of the Ministerial Association." He based his strict separatism stand on II Corinthians 6:14-7:1, stating that God's people should be a "SET APART" people.

Some may have felt that Archie Word was crying "sour grapes" because he had not been asked to serve or preach on the convention, while some of his old classmates were rising to national prominence, but that may only be speculation. In his own words Archie Word felt that he was being "shunned" like a "leper" because of his strong convictions.

"PAKISTAN? YOU WON'T EVEN GET TO PHILADELPHIA!"

Archie Word was a man who viewed everything in life through his perception of the Scriptures and history. He was opposed to the Bible college setup of his

day because of his recollection of what had happened to his old alma mater and other Restoration colleges with which he had been associated in recent years. He had a growing conviction on the local church training program arrangement because, in his opinion, it was a more Biblical and workable approach to preparing preachers. In the summer of 1958 he had offered a suggestion for the "over-crowded Bible college situation":

My suggestion . . . is simply have these faithful men . . . put their scholarly attainments to work in the local church where they can give personal attention to the young men who are in earnest about becoming preachers. . . . The local field is the practical 'Proving Ground' for the preaching qualities of the man seeking to become a preacher. . . . This will take away the glamour of 'going away to college' . . . but it will give the local church some real respectable material to use while they are learning to be full-fledged preachers.⁴

Then the man who had been responsible for sending more young men to Bible college than any other preacher among the "Independents" listed a number of advantages of having a Bible college sponsored by the local church: more efficient use of the church building; opening up of new fields of evangelism and planting new churches; utilizing the knowledge of those who have been college educated in training young men; preparing married men at home for evangelism elsewhere, etc. The Portland school, Churches of Christ School of Evangelists, was held up as an example of how this idea could work. For the most part, however, the plea fell on deaf ears.

It was about this time that one of the school's co-founders, Lee Turner, felt that the Lord was leading

him to study the Urdu language at the University of Philadelphia in order to prepare himself to go to Pakistan as the first missionary from the "Independent" churches. When he told Archie of his plans, Archie was not at all impressed. "Pakistan!" he thundered. "You won't even get to Philadelphia!" Turner recalls the occasion.

Essentially, brother Word was against foreign evangelism. He used to say, 'Why should we try to go out to foreign countries until everybody in Oregon has had the opportunity to hear?' There were some exceptions; he felt that brother Hale was a great missionary. But that was largely because brother Hale was one of his class fellows back at Eugene Bible University.⁵

(To his credit, however, Archie Word finally gave Lee Turner his blessing and even traveled from Portland to Philadelphia in 1960 to conduct a revival at the church Turner was starting during his days at the university. He corresponded with Turner in Pakistan and once offered an apology over his misjudgment of Turner: "If it would help matters I would willingly kiss your feet, even with dusty Pakistani dirt on them. I admit the mistake in judgment."⁶)

LAMBASTING SINNERS

Preaching, as always, was the heart and soul of Archie Word's life. Each week he would preach at least four messages: Sunday morning and night, Wednesday night, and at least one weekday morning chapel message. In 1958 he conducted revivals in Hamburg and Council Bluffs, Iowa, Manteca, California, Coos Bay, Oregon, and appeared on rallies in Centerville, Iowa, and Rushville, Indiana. In July he had

Earl Chambers come to Montavilla for three weeks of revival preaching.

He believed in “lambasting sinners” and published a front-page article by that title in the May 1958 *The Church Speaks* in which he said:

I am afraid that when the retribution comes upon some sinners, they will CURSE THE PREACHER WHO DID NOT WARN THEM and possibly, in hell they will nurse their wounds together. . . . A preacher must fight SIN like he would fight poisonous snakes. . . . No sinner will ever be converted unless he is CONVICTED OF HIS SIN! . . . The preacher must make his choice, whether he will lambaste sinners until they repent, or please sinners until they both get into hell together, to fight it out in the flames. . . . I would rather have the commendation of the Lord Jesus for lambasting sinners . . . than to have the commendation of the Pulpit supply Committee for being diplomatic, suave and well-pleasing to sinners.⁷

If there was one aspect of his ministry that brought him more criticism than anything else it was his choice of words when he was describing sin and sinners from the pulpit. He called call girls “whores” and illegitimate children “bastards.” He was quick to explain that these were Bible words, therefore he could use them in preaching. If someone had used the word “damn” or “hell” in a conversation with him, he would repeat their conversation word for word. But he also called dancing “belly rubbing” and declared that women who wore low-cut dresses had their “lungs hanging out.” In later years, Archie liked to call Hollywood “Hellywood” and H.B.O — Home Box Office — “Hell’s Body Odor.” In a sermon at the Centerville Rally in the 60s he once described — graphi-

cally — his visit with a man dying of a sexually transmitted disease. Stepping to the side of the pulpit he grabbed his groin and shrieked, “RED ANTS! RED ANTS! OH, GOD! THEY’RE EATING ME ALIVE!” “Jack-ass” and “jackassified” were particular favorites. He once called the elders of the Lindsay church “a bunch of long-eared jackasses,” but later apologized from the pulpit for his choice of words.⁸

Archie Word justified his colorful (and sometimes off-color) preaching in 1958 as follows:

Preachers have to speak the language of the people if the people are to understand . . . it is our business to awaken them, even if we have to STAB THEM INTO WAKEFULNESS WITH WORDS THAT THEY CAN UNDERSTAND. Of course we will have to take their disapproval in their accusations of being ‘worldly in our language,’ but I ask you one simple question: ‘How can you describe their AWFUL UNGODLINESS AND WORLDLINESS without using language they can understand?’

No one can argue that Archie Word’s style of preaching brought thousands of people to Christ; but neither can one refute the fact that many were “turned off” — therefore, turned away from Christ — by the same. Such “plain language” did convert many — like a woman in Dayton, Ohio, who wrote:

I cannot truthfully say that we have ALWAYS enjoyed your paper *The Church Speaks*. I can remember when it made us both MAD to read it! However, since we’ve been converted we have read every issue we could lay our hands on with gladness. In this day with so much wickedness on every hand there is a crying need for publications which set forth TRUTH AND RIGHTEOUSNESS IN PLAIN LANGUAGE.¹⁰

But others, like a brand-new convert in Hamburg, Iowa hearing Archie Word say, "If you smoke, you stink!" in his 1958 revival in that church, never returned to church again. However, he was not alone in being considered opinionated and offensive. "He was very opinionated. He preached just what he believed, and would have offended many today. However, he was very consistent and you never doubted where he stood." A. Word? No, P.H. Welshimer (as evaluated in the *Canton Christian* Sept. 27, 1991).

William E. Paul, author of *A Christian View of Warfare* (in which Archie wrote the foreword in 1969), recounts two incidents in the life of the outspoken evangelist that reflect both the abrasive and softer sides of Archie Word. The first incident took place in the mid-30s, when Archie was holding a meeting in Corbett, Oregon. One night one of the girls from the Corbett Christian Church was able to bring a girlfriend to the services. Her mother had told the girl, "Be sure you're home by 9 o'clock." As the service drew to a close, the girl, worried about the lateness of the hour, reached over to look at her friend's watch. Word witnessed the move and misjudged the motive. "That's all right, girls," he boomed. "Your boyfriends will wait for you!" Paul states, "Needless to say, that was the end of the girlfriend's coming to church there!"

The second incident, revealing the gentle side of Word, took place in the early 60s. Paul was suffering from cataracts on his eyes and could hardly see to do anything. Knowing that, Archie Word wrote the Florida preacher a letter of encouragement on six sheets of paper in giant print, so that Paul could read his letter. Paul never forgot this act of thoughtfulness. (Archie was to have surgery for cataracts on his own

eyes some years later.)

Sometimes Brother Word could make a rather rough "First Impression." In 1967, when my fiancée, Evelyn, was introduced to Archie, it was explained to him that she was raised in the branch of the a capella churches of Christ that use only one cup in the Lord's Supper service. "Hmph!" snorted Archie. "They must have used a bathtub in Jerusalem!" And with that abrupt "greeting" he stalked off, leaving Evelyn speechless. In years to come, however, she called him — affectionately — "Old Jerusalem Bathtub!"

THE TELEVISION TEMPEST

By 1959 there were over 47 million television sets in American homes. In the Midwest the brethren in Ottumwa had come to the conclusion that the ownership of a television set was off limits for any Christian. Burton Barber wrote a 64-page booklet, *TV and the Christian*, in which he stated that TV was being condemned as a danger, even by worldly people; condoned as a "benefit" by some religious people, and should be convicted as an enemy by all spiritual people. Barber's conclusion was:

Our only course of action is:

- (1) REFRAIN from watching TV.
- (2) REFUSE to own a set, even if given one.
- (3) REPROVE religious people who defend it.¹⁰

The booklet, published by *The Voice of Evangelism*, sold like wildfire among the fellowship of churches in the Word-Hunt connection. It was a best-seller at the annual Troutdale Gathering in Portland in the summer of 1959. Back in Pennsylvania, Lee Turner issued a 16-page booklet, *Toward a New Testament Position on the Television Problem*, addressed to all

Churches of Christ in the United States, in which he reasoned

We know of no command, principle, approved example, or necessary inference in the New Testament which classifies the ownership of a television set, in itself, a sin. Obviously, the ownership of the device is not a duty enjoined by God. We conclude, therefore, that the ownership of television properly falls under the category of Christian liberty and should be treated by the teachings of the New Testament regarding matters of Christian liberty.¹²

Barber's position, however, won the day and the Ottumwa brethren put Turner (who has never had a TV, to this day), as the saying went back then, "on the shelf" for many years. Archie Word, of course, had been preaching and writing against television for many years, but in 1959 he added his voice to those who were saying that even the ownership of a TV was not possible for a Christian. In July he wrote,

I would not have a TV set in my home because it is a detriment to Spiritual growth. . . . It most assuredly keeps our minds off the things above. It is not a promoter of Heavenly things.¹³

In the same issue of *The Church Speaks* but in a different article, he wrote that those who tried to equate TV with radio were fools:

The 'eye-gate' remembers four times as much as the things that we hear. . . . Don't be a fool . . . by trying to say there is as much harm via Radio as there is by TV. All you have to do is go to any BAR in the country, and see what it is the fellows are sitting in front of . . . IT IS NOT A RADIO.¹⁴

By September he was calling TV a "pipeline from hell to the home." He warned, "If you don't have one, for the Lord's sake, don't allow this blood-sucking leech to become fastened on you. . . . If you DO have one, before God, brother, get rid of it before it undermines your whole spiritual life."¹⁵

The question of television eventually became a "test of fellowship" with many of the churches in the Word-Hunt connection, much like the question of instrumental music was a "test of fellowship" among the Churches of Christ (a capella). In fact, the Ottumwa-Portland fellowship was called by some "the Churches of Christ (Anti-TV)." Vernon Newland, president of Iowa Christian College, claimed that there were actually *four* heirs of the Restoration Movement: Christian Churches (Disciples of Christ); Christian Churches and Churches of Christ; Churches of Christ (Anti-Piano); and Churches of Christ (Anti-TV). Concerning the latter, he wrote:

A new movement, sometimes called 'Anti-TV Churches of Christ,' or here in (the) Midwest more commonly 'Ottumwa churches' is steadily developing among us. . . . Basically they protest: 'worldliness in the churches, 'agencies' (a Bible College is an 'agency'), use of name 'Christian Church,' women's use or abuse of cosmetics, etc. Their strong opposition to television in Christian homes gives them their nickname.¹⁶

Newland (who nearly as can be determined was the one who gave the nick-name) went on to call them a "sect":

This group may be said to have had its beginning in the Portland, Ore. area, later spreading rather

vigorously to Ottumwa, Iowa. . . . Nationally . . . the movement seems to be spreading. Their strong denunciation of 'worldliness' in the churches meets hearty approval of some, but their severe attitudes repel many. . . . An Anti-TV Church of Christ has no fellowship with others not Anti-TV. . . . Like the Anti-Instrument churches, the Anti-TV churches seem destined to be another sect among the heirs of the Restoration Movement.¹⁷

For all his faults Archie Word certainly did not see himself as the founder of a "new movement" or a "sect" nicknamed "the Churches of Christ (Anti-TV)." He believed in the plea and principles of the Restoration Movement and saw himself as a "voice crying in the wilderness" calling for others to join him in restoring the neglected aspect of Christian holiness as he saw it taught in the Scriptures. If he was anti-anything he was anti-Roman Catholicism.

As the presidential elections drew near in 1960 he devoted much column space in *The Church Speaks* to the subject of Catholicism, publishing over one million pieces of literature written by Mrs. F. M. Standish, an ardent foe of Catholicism. Archie believed that Catholicism and Communism were the twin enemies of America in the near future. By 1960 the Soviets had put Sputnik in the sky, Castro had controlled Cuba, and Richard Nixon was punching out Nikita Khrushchev in the famous White House kitchen debate.

As 1959 drew to an end Stewart Baker became Archie Word's new associate at Montavilla and also assumed duties as co-editor of *The Church Speaks*. For many years Baker would write a popular Question and Answer column. Eventually he would become editor when Archie left Portland in 1967.

In the fall of 1959 Archie Word, Jr., enrolled at Churches of Christ School of Evangelists. He had gone to Portland State University and had encountered a terrific assault on his Christian faith. Shaken, he transferred to his father's school where he received reassuring evidences from the Scriptures as to the reliability of the Christian faith. The same solid truths that had convinced Archie Word in 1925 were now doing their good work in the life of his son, nearly 35 years later.

OPPOSING JFK

On January 31, 1960, Senator John F., Kennedy, a Democrat from Massachusetts, threw his top hat into the presidential ring. For many years Archie Word had been running articles in *The Church Speaks* on what he perceived to be a great enemy of the United States—Roman Catholicism. Now that Kennedy, a staunch Catholic, was running for president, Archie Word pulled out the stops in his opposition to Catholicism. Nor was he alone in his fight against a Catholic president. Nearly every Protestant preacher in America rose up in protest. Among the most vocal on the East Coast was Norman Vincent Peale, the Father of Positive Thinking, who was positively against having a Catholic President in the White House. Nor was Archie the only editor of a Christian publication to take on Kennedy. Daniel F. Poling, venerable editor of the *Christian Herald*, was among scores of Protestant writers who assailed the Kennedy bid for the White House.

On the West Coast Archie Word mounted a campaign to enlighten voters as to what might happen if Kennedy won the presidency. He pointed to what had

happened to citizens in countries controlled by Catholicism:

Roman Catholicism has largely made Italy, Spain and Central America what they are: degenerated, uneducated, unsound economically, and persecutors of everybody who is not a Roman Catholic. There is no such thing as RELIGIOUS FREEDOM WHEREVER ROME HAS POWER POLITICALLY. Do we want that sort of 'set-up' here in America, under a Roman Catholic president?¹⁸

Word also charged that in Spain Protestants could not obtain marriage licenses or burial permits, that they were discriminated against in housing and employment, that Bibles were seized by the Spanish police. He reprinted numerous articles from anti-Catholic publications substantiating these charges. In an article he wrote, "Where Catholicism Rules," he declared,

Just think what will happen to our freedoms if the Roman Catholic church, with its Pope, HOLY FATHER, INFALLIBLE DICTATOR over his subjects comes into the White House in the Supreme Commander of our Army and Navy, subject to the Pope. THAT IS WHAT A ROMAN CATHOLIC PRESIDENT WILL BE.¹⁹

Kennedy, hearing many charges like this all over America, delivered a speech in West Virginia on April 18 in which he stated, "I don't think my religion is anyone's business." But preachers like Archie Word were going to make it their business. Throughout 1960 he devoted much of his time and energies to warning people about the potential dangers of a Catholic presidency. The September *The Church*

Speaks was a special "Roman Catholic Issue" which included a warning from a Brigadier General of the U.S. Army who claimed to have evidence of a Roman Catholic plot to destroy the Constitution of the United States.

Archie Word's campaign against Kennedy soon caught the attention of the Portland media. Newspaper, radio and television people (KGW-TV) interviewed him on his views. Thanks to the media coverage the phone began ringing in the house on Glisan Street — late at night. After enduring several nights of this harassment it became necessary to take the phone off the hook before retiring for bed. One year later Archie commented on the price he paid for his involvement in the anti-Kennedy crusade:

One would think I have the right to use my rights; but not so during an election year when a major party was running a Catholic. If anyone raised his voice . . . he was immediately branded by the TV, local press and labor union papers as a BIGOT. His name was printed in all of these papers and his photograph shown on TV and then, in order to give the scoundrels an opportunity to harass him day and night, his telephone number was given prominent display. To what end? That he might be branded, publically exposed, as a BIGOT! . . . There is no name known to man that is evil, that I have not been called, either by telephone or mail or both.²⁰

Death threats were taken seriously by Archie. On Aug. 16, 1960, he asked a friend, "Please pray that if I have to, I may die like a real witness for Christ."²¹

"HE IS MY PRESIDENT"

All of Archie's work was for nought. After winning

the nomination of his party in July, Kennedy managed to barely win over Richard Nixon in the November elections, winning by the smallest popular vote ever — only 119,450 votes, 78% of the Catholic vote going to JFK. It was a dark day in America for many Protestants. Nearly a year after the bitter campaign Archie wrote to those who had supported his efforts to defeat Kennedy:

No one will ever know how much your encouragement has meant to us throughout the years past! In the midst of the 'Rotten Tomatoes' the Catholics have been throwing at me, I have appreciated your prayers and commendations. When POLITICIANS could see only that I was striking at the defeat of their candidate, not realizing that I was 'defending the faith' and crying out against man's oldest enemy in the field of religion, it was a joy to my heart that some of you who understood history and the Bible knew what I was trying to do. . . . God bless each of your hearts.²²

In May, 1961, he asked the question, "What Shall We Do Now That We Have a Catholic President?"

As the president of our nation, I must love John F. Kennedy. He is my president. He is president of both Catholic and Protestant, and we must, as Christians, be obedient to him so long as he does not ask us to deny our religious convictions, or to break our vows to God. We must honor and pray for him as our president. . . . Now that we have a Catholic president, what shall we do? We must continue to be CHRISTIANS and plead for what we know to be RIGHT, no matter what price we must pay for that stand.²³

Although the Kennedy affair took up much of Archie Word's time in 1960, he did manage to somehow keep up with his daily duties at the church and

college: studying, teaching, preaching at home and away (Philadelphia, Phoenix, Eugene and Bandon, Oregon), and planning revivals for the Montavilla church (Rodney Reyman in the spring and Carol Lankford in the winter). He wrote 19 articles for *The Voice of Evangelism*, including a 9-part series, "What God's Word Says a Preacher Ought To Do," in which he listed no less than 72 things from the books of I and II Timothy and Titus. Weddings and funerals were always a part of his work as a minister of the gospel. On June 27, 1960 he conducted the wedding ceremony for Arch Word, Jr. and Judy Wells. Earlier in the year he had conducted the funeral service for longtime associate, Leo Yoder, who had died rather suddenly. It was the largest crowd ever to assemble in the Montavilla church building — a fitting tribute to a fallen soldier of Christ.

GOING LIKE 60

On April 21, 1961, Archie Word turned 60. His new associate, Stewart Baker, said, "I have known him for over 20 years and have grown to love and admire him more with each passing year." The May *The Church Speaks* carried Baker's sketch of Archie's 16-hour days — a 60-year-old man still going like 60!

Brother Word is teaching four mornings each week in the school, which means that his day begins about five o'clock in the morning and ends at about nine at night. Besides the teaching program of the school, he keeps up with all the correspondence of the paper and the Church. He edits the paper, reading many articles in order to choose those to be printed. Also, he writes many of the articles himself besides preaching two sermons on the Lord's Day, teaching a class, and

calling in the afternoon. He prepares and delivers a sermon each Wednesday evening at prayer meeting, and two sermons are prepared and preached over the radio each week. He also plans to hold one or two evangelistic meetings each year, besides preaching at several rallies and conventions. I have reached the conclusion that he is a busy man.²⁴

Baker concluded with this observation: "Even with all the load he is carrying and the pressing obligations that he must face continually, I find that he always has time to stop and help those who come to him for assistance, or to go to someone who is in need of help."²⁵

One who remembered the spiritual help Archie Word had been to him was Don DeWelt, who dedicated a book to the Portland preacher in 1961. The dedication page of *Paul's Letters to Timothy and Titus* read, "To the one who first brought me the message of life — Archie Word." Archie Word wrote the foreword to this book.

HIS MINISTRY METHODS

In 1961 Archie Word shared some of his ministry methods in the areas of counseling, visiting the sick, and conducting funerals.

Archie Word, believe it or not, believed that personal counseling was superior to public preaching, in some aspects!

Most of the men whom I know in the gospel ministry place proper emphasis upon pulpit work, but very little on that of counseling. But I believe a man who deprives the people of his counsel is only doing half a job. There are phases of an individual's life into which the pulpit cannot delve! . . . Personal problems are to

be helped by personal help. Generally, the shooting at sinners like one shoots at a covey of quail does not work so well. . . . Instead of talking TO people, as we do from the pulpit, we talk WITH the person involved. Counseling has a DEPTH aspect too, which is superior to public address, being more thorough.²⁶

He also had good advice on visiting the sick:

Do let the patient know you are really interested in his welfare, and that you are desirous of his quick recovery. All of us want to know we are remembered and loved, and this is especially so in a sick room . . . they will often appreciate it if you will read a short passage of Scripture and then pray a brief prayer with them, especially remembering that they are needing the Lord's healing hand on their behalf. Pray for their comfort and recovery as well as for their courage and the power of the Holy Spirit to make them a good testimony for Christ in the hospital.²⁷

Few men could equal Archie's tender touch in hospital visitation.

He believed that a funeral service was a time in which to offer sympathy, comfort and hope.

When we have funerals, it is our duty above everything else to comfort the family, extend sincere sympathy to those who mourn, and by a decent service impress upon the minds of all assembled that there is LIFE FOREVERMORE, IMMORTALITY, AND REUNION with those who die in the Lord. . . . I do not believe the funeral service is just exactly the proper place to give a gospel invitation, but it is the most impressive place to preach Life beyond the grave IN CHRIST, and in so doing you will have comforted the bereaved Christians and have given hope to the ones who have time left in which they can accept Christ.²⁸

Archie Word's rough exterior melted away at

funerals. Anyone who ever saw him conduct a funeral, even for the worst of sinners, remembers his tears, touch and tenderness.

HAPPY HOMES

Archie and Florence saw their daughter Jenelle married to Earl Montross in Loveland, Colorado, March 16, 1961. Jenelle's marriage left only Esther at home with daddy and momma. The house on Glisan Street, in which had been heard so many shouts of laughter in the past, was strangely silent, with only Esther's occasional piano playing breaking the silence. How very quickly the years had flown by.

The home was one of Archie's favorite subjects about which he loved to preach and write. In a 1961 article, "Happy Marriage," he wrote in his characteristic style:

If we want HAPPY HOMES, with obedient children, and a settled, orderly household which brings in full and abundant happiness, we must repent and be converted; with YIELDED HEARTS TO GOD.

But most people have rejected the GOD who ORDAINED the HOME. A return to His set of ABSOLUTE LAWS for the home will return HAPPINESS to the HOME. When those laws are broken, unhappiness and divorce follow. BROKEN LAWS DEMAND A PENALTY. The penalty is EMOTIONAL TURMOIL and UNHAPPINESS. There is ONE and ONLY ONE WAY to have a HAPPY HOME. Return to God's law for it: Dad as respected Christian Leader and Mother as his HELP-MEET.²⁹

THE MORMON SCHOLARS

Nine days before Archie Word's 60th birthday, the Soviets put a man in space; on May 25 the Americans

countered with a man of their own in orbit. 1961 was the year of the "space race" with the Soviet Union. The threat of Communism was on nearly every American's mind. On August 31 the Communists began erecting the Berlin Wall in East Germany. Late in December Burton Barber began a series of anti-Communism lectures in the Midwest. In Portland Stewart Baker charged that the Catholics were taking over local school boards: "soon we will be conquered as other countries have been unless we do something now."³⁰

Strong preaching was Archie Word's antidote to every evil – be it Communism, Catholicism or the collapse of the American family. Wherever he preached in 1961 – Dayton, Ohio, San Jose and Bakersfield, California, Boise, Idaho – he stated the need: repentance, conversion, holiness of life. Returning from summer rallies in the Midwest, he was greeted by 36 students ready to enroll in the Portland school. Churches of Christ School of Evangelists was beginning to turn out some genuine scholars, including Larry Jonas (whose graduation thesis on Mormonism was published by Baker Book House) and Charles Crane (who would build large churches in the heart of Mormon country, Utah and Idaho, and become an established authority on Mormonism).

WORLD WAR III?

The prospect of an all-out war with the U.S.S.R. was very real in 1962, the year of the Cuban missile crisis. Archie Word led off the year by publishing a front-page article splashed in blood-red ink: **WAR! THE MADNESS WHICH WORLDLINGS DEEM WISDOM.** The article was accompanied by another

front-page piece taken from *Christian Economics*, **WORLD WAR III: It Has Already Started, and We Are in Grave Peril**. The confirmed pacifist carried one of his famous "crying babies" photos on the front page, with the caption, "I don't want to turn the other cheek."

Again he stated his opposition to war:

Before a nation can accommodate itself to war, there must be a whole and different education in false philosophy and specious sophistry. Reason must submit to a thousand twists and turns. All laws of social life are suspended, and ties of home are violated, and the idea so deeply planted in us that every man is a member of one great family, must be denied. The obligation is laid upon husbands and fathers to slay other husbands and fathers, and thus destroy the producers of civilization, the home.³¹

Archie's answer to war was simple: the gospel of Christ. In the same Issue of *The Church Speaks* he decried the efforts of Khrushchev and the Pope to rule the souls of millions of earth's citizens.

We know that between these two despicables, they are holding three-fourths of the world in literal slavery of body and mind. They both resort to force, barbed wire, ammunition, rebellion, war and intrigue. As Christians and Americans, there should rise up within each of us the desire to see these men freed, even if it takes all the money we possess, and our very lives given in Jesus' service. . . . Those chains must be snapped and forever loosened, and the only thing that makes men FREE, AND FREE INDEED is the TRUTH. . . . If these poor, bound slaves of communism and Catholicism can be given the salvation and freedom that Jesus alone gives, it will bring them the same blessings It has brought us.³²

"A ONE BOOK MAN"

In 1962 College Press published a 145-page book by Archie Word, *61 Soul-Winning Sermon Outlines From Hebrews*. In addition to the sermon outlines, Archie included over 60 illustrations — "windows to lighten" the outlines. For example, his message on Hebrews 2:3, "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great a salvation?"

One April night a mammoth ocean liner went crashing upon the coast of Nova Scotia. There was all the confusion of a wreck at sea, the hopeless cries of men, women, and children, the hurrying to and fro, the frantic shouts of officers; and added to all this turmoil and bewilderment was the hoarse cry of the tempest, the surging of the giant waves, and the roar of the breakers. Between the rocks where the vessel struck and the shore of safety, was a chasm about one hundred yards wide. A rope was shot from the shore by the coast guard to span the chasm of death, and by this line many of the stranded souls successfully struggled to the shore.

It was their *only* means of salvation. Had they neglected that one rope, there was absolutely no hope.

Dear friend, had you been there, would you not have pressed aside all possibilities of danger and cried, 'Let me grasp it'? There was no escape except by the rope. There is no escape except by Christ!³³

Don DeWelt, who was converted under preaching like this, had been urging Archie to put some of his sermons and illustrations into print. Archie dedicated the book to Florence: "To my beloved wife of thirty-six years — Florence Belle Word. In appreciation of her faithfulness, wisdom and virtue and the blessing she has been to our family and to my life. It has been

her strong faith that has been a source of blessing in many times of stress and open battle. I pray that this book will be used of God to raise up men and women of enduring faith in the High Priest of Hebrews."³⁴

In spite of the success of *61 Soul-Winning Sermon Outlines From Hebrews*, which soon sold out, the book Archie Word was really sold on was the Bible. In a September 1962 article in *The Church Speaks*, "A One Book Man," he remembered that the great John Wesley was a "one book Man."

Preachers should be men of ONE BOOK and they should read the Bible in the church services, preach it, and expound it, and let it out to defend itself. None of our ministries are too long, they will be all over too soon, and then nothing will matter but the WORD of God that we have preached into the very souls of our people.³⁵

(The man from Montavilla could not have known that he had but a half-dozen years left to preach the Word of God into the souls of his beloved congregation in Portland.)

On July 9, 1962, Archie and Florence said good-bye to their last child when Esther was united in marriage to Tom Burgess, a student in the Bible college, who liked to say that he was the one who got "the last Word."

Notes

1. *The Church Speaks*, Sept. 1958
2. *Ibid*, Nov. 1958
3. *Ibid*
4. *The Church Speaks*, July 1958
5. Letter to author from Lee Turner, Feb. 27, 1989
6. Letter to Lee Turner from Archie Word, May 7, 1962

7. *The Church Speaks*, May 1958
8. Author's interview with Alpha Engleking, April 22, 1990
9. *The Church Speaks*, May 1958
10. *Ibid*, Oct. 20, 1957
11. *TV and the Christian*, p. 64
12. *Toward A New Testament Position on the Television Problem*, p. 2
13. *The Church Speaks*, July 1959
14. *Ibid*
15. *The Church Speaks*, Sept. 1959
16. *Iowa Christian College News*, Feb. 1974
17. *Ibid*
18. *The Church Speaks*, Nov. 1960
19. *Ibid*, Sept. 1960
20. *Ibid*, May 1961
21. Letter to William E. Paul from Archie Word, Aug. 16, 1960
22. *Ibid*, Sept. 1961
23. *Ibid*, May 1961
24. *Ibid*
25. *Ibid*
26. *The Voice of Evangelism*, Feb. 4, 1961
27. *Ibid*, July 8, 1961
28. *Ibid*, April 15, 1961
29. *The Church Speaks*, Mar. 1961
30. *Ibid*, Jan. 1961
31. *The Church Speaks*, Jan. 1962
32. *Ibid*
33. *61 Soul Winning Sermon Outlines From Hebrews*, p. 17
34. *Ibid*, dedication page
35. *The Church Speaks*, Sept. 1962

21

THE FLAMES OF HELL (1963-1967)

God is giving us our last chance! Judgment is on us.
Are we going to wait until we see the flames of hell
searing our faces before we will turn?

—A. Word, "The American Crisis," 1965

A man begins to feel a grim sense of his own mortality when he stands beside the bed of one who was his teacher when he himself was but a student. A cold wave had struck the nation in 1963, leaving 150 souls in its wake, but Archie Word felt a different kind of coldness one day when he visited one of his old professors from Eugene Bible University, Rose Guiley.

As I looked down upon a form that had once been vigorous and keen, I was seeing eyes that could not see

me, shaking a hand that could not shake mine, standing in the presence of one whose legs could not bear his weight. The vigorous nervous energy of years gone by was now stopped, and in its place I saw the ravages of paralysis. It was so pitiful! He had been my professor in the University. He had been the evangelist with whom I had held my first meeting. How I had admired his fine voice and limitless energy! Now he was inhabiting a living dead body.¹

ARCHIE AUTHORS ANOTHER BOOK

In just a few more months Archie Word would turn 62. How many more years of life would God give him to use his own vigorous energy and fine voice in the work he loved so dearly? The paralysis of a fellow laborer has a way of making us number our days so as to make them count for Christ. Every true Christian wants to leave something of his work behind for the benefit of others in the future. And so it was that in 1963, at the urging of Don DeWelt, Archie Word completed another book for College Press, *53 Soul-Winning Outlines on First Corinthians*. The 140-page book included sermons like "Preaching Because I Must," "Cosmological Deity," "An InterWorld Spectacle," and "Christians in the Courts of the Land." In the opening sermon, "Every Preacher's Great Desire," he posed this question: "What sort of church did Paul seek to build?" He answered the question in four points: a church built on Christ, built out of saved sinners, striving unto perfection, built on the hope of the resurrection. Archie Word wanted to build the same kind of church in the 20th century that Paul had built in the first century.

Each of the 53 sermon outlines contained a heart-stirring illustration at the conclusion. For example, at

the conclusion of a message on "The One True Foundation of Christianity," he told the story of a heroic bugler who was killed at his post of duty in Cracow, Poland:

Every preacher is like the bugler sounding the warning. From the steeple of St. Mary's church in Cracow, Poland, a bugle has been sounded every day for the last seven hundred years. The last note on the bugle is always muted and broken, as if some disaster had befallen the bugler. The seven hundred year commemoration is in memory of a heroic bugler who one night sounded a blast on his bugle and summoned the people to defend their city against the hordes of the invading Tartars.

As he was sounding the last blast on his bugle, an arrow from one of the Tartars struck him in the neck and killed him.

Every preacher is like that bugler, if he is a faithful man of God. Some day the last note of his warning blast will be blown and then he will stand before the great Captain of our salvation to receive his reward. Then he will be glad that he hewed to the line and brought men and women into the Kingdom genuinely converted.²

It should be remembered that Archie Word himself served as a bugler in World War I. He saw himself as sounding a warning blast to the church against the invading army of worldliness. In another illustration he likened faithful preachers to pile drivers which he had observed at work in the rugged country of the Pacific Northwest. This illustration came from the sermon "The Weak Preacher's Source of Strength."

In driving piles, a machine is used by which a huge weight is lifted up and then made to fall upon the head of the pile. Of course the higher the weight is

lifted the more powerful is the blow when it descends. Now, if we would . . . come down upon those around us with ponderous blows, we must see to it that we are lifted as near to God as possible.

All of our power depends upon the elevation of our spirits to the source of power, our God. Prayer, meditation, and communion, are like windlasses to wind us aloft. It is not lost time spent in these sacred exercises, for we are thus accumulating force, so that when we come down to our actual labor for God, we shall descend with an energy unknown to those to whom communion is unknown.

Oh, my friend, if you would have the power that moved and blest the Apostle Paul, let Jesus come into your heart and reign there.³

Archie Word believed that the higher one was drawn to God in his personal devotional life the harder he would come down on the sins that separated men from God.

STICKING BY HIS FRIENDS

There is no doubt that Archie Word appreciated Don DeWalt publishing two of his books when many others in the brotherhood saw him as an "isolationist" and a "radical." And Archie Word was true to his old friends as well. In March 1963 he had Hugh Olson come to Montavilla for a revival meeting. Olson's soul had been set on fire by Archie's famous "chapel revival" at Minnesota Bible College in 1946. Olson had Word for two meetings in Hamburg, Iowa; now it was Archie's turn to call Olson for a meeting. The March meeting took place while the Billie Sol Estes scandal was unfolding in Texas. Estes, a member of the noninstrumental Church of Christ, was found guilty of mail fraud on March 28. In June Archie had

Bob Chambers come for a three-week revival in which a good number of people were converted to the Lord.

On August 29, 1963, Roy Shaw died of a massive heart attack in Stockton, California. Ailing health had forced him to leave San Jose Bible College four years earlier. He and Dorothy had returned to the old Lindsay church, where Archie's aged mother still attended. When Archie received news of Roy's death he returned to California for the funeral. Bill Jessup delivered the message and Archie gave a tearful tribute to Roy. It was the first time Bill and Archie had seen each other for years.

Earlier in the year a controversy was brewing on the mission field in Jamaica. For many years Archie Word, contrary to the anti-missionary charge that some had hung on him, had been an ardent supporter of A.R.A. Hepburn and the Churches of Christ (instrumental) on the island of Jamaica. He had even traveled there at his own expense in 1947, conducting revivals that resulted in 88 decisions for Christ. Now, in 1963, Hepburn, along with four other Jamaican preachers and three American preachers (Harold Hill, Fred Hintz, and Harvey Bacus), who were working together under the auspices of Jamaica Christian Trust, Ltd., found themselves under fire from certain critics who were motivated by "personal hostilities" and "personal ambition." Archie Word came to the defense of the besieged Jamaica brethren, giving them a full page to defend themselves from the charges in his March 1963 *The Church Speaks*.

In spite of what some said, Archie Word's paper, *The Church Speaks*, was open to writers besides himself. In 1963 he published a piece on Communism by

Cecil Todd of Revival Fires, a front-page article on the priesthood of all believers by W. Carl Ketcherside (whom he continued to publish in the next two years), and a feature article on the dangers of smoking by Dr. Wayne Bigelow. As for himself, he continued to rail on Roman Catholicism, especially after the death of Pope John XXIII on June 3 and the subsequent election of Pope Paul VI on June 21, 1963. Warning his readers of the so-called "new Catholicism," he wrote,

There are in the U.S.A. right now, about 500 communities where the Roman Catholic Church's hierarchy has captured public schools, elected Catholic boards, and put nuns in as its teachers ON THE PUBLIC PAY-ROLL, while they claim to accept separation of church and state.⁴

"HE'S DEAD! HE'S DEAD!"

In the summer of 1963 Archie Word recalled the recent bitter battle he had fought against John F. Kennedy's election to the presidency of the United States.

All you have to do to feel the teeth and claws of the Catholic church, is oppose her program or one of her candidates. It takes what most people do not have, God-given courage to buck Rome. We had a little taste of it during the last election. We were called every name their ungodly hearts could remember or invent. We were kept awake all hours of the night by threatening phone calls, and outright cursings. We were threatened with every kind of reprisal, from burning the building, to our own demise. . . . Such is the "New Roman Catholicism" in reality.⁵

On June 26, 1963, President Kennedy visited West Berlin and was greeted by over a million cheering

enthusiasts when he delivered his famous line, "*Ich bin ein Berliner*" (I am a Berliner). In August of the same year Martin Luther King gave his soon-to-be famous "I Have a Dream" speech to a crowd of 200,000 in the Washington Mall. In November Kennedy made his fateful trip to Dallas, Texas.

Archie Word heard the news of the assassination attempt in his office, while classes were being held at Churches of Christ School of Evangelists in Portland. When chapel began, he sat down on the front row with a transistor radio held to his ear. From time to time he would interrupt the chapel speaker's message with a report from Parkland hospital. When the death announcement was made, Archie threw up his hand and cried, "He's dead! He's dead!" Student Tom Burgess recalls that it was a cry of pure anguish.

The death of a president notwithstanding, the camera-ready November issue of *The Church Speaks* went to press with Archie's front-page article, "The Purple Curtain," which, wrote the Portland editor, "shields one of the most powerful and most militant organizations on the earth today" — the Roman Catholic Church.

CHANGING TIMES

When the leader of a free democratic society can be shot down in cold blood in broad daylight, it does something to the soul of a nation. From November 23, 1963 on, anything was possible, no matter how shocking and repugnant. In March 1964 a young woman, Kitty Genovese, was attacked and repeatedly stabbed by an assailant in Queens, New York. Thirty-seven apartment dwellers heard her pitiful cries, saw the bloody horror, and did not so much as lift a finger to

call the police. America would never be the same again.

In Portland, after 29 years of happy family living in the house on Glisan Street, Archie and Florence sold their home where they had raised their six children and moved to a new house at 751 N.E. 95th Avenue. Home was not quite the same anymore with their children now in homes of their own. But at least Archie would not have to back out of the driveway onto a busy Glisan Street anymore — where he had been on the receiving end of several fender-benders!

Despite the changes taking place in America, Archie Word had a firm belief that God was still in control. In one of his finest sermons ever published, "Why I Believe in a Personal God" (*The Church Speaks*, May 1964), he listed three reasons why he continued to believe in a personal God. *Nature*. "Nature in the vast shows the work of God through the telescope, and nature in the minute shows God through the microscope." *The account of Jesus of Nazareth*. "Only God is adequate cause to account for the supernatural power of Jesus." Third, *his own personal experience*. Here he remembered what brought him to faith in the first place and what had kept him a believer in God:

Once upon a time, I was skeptical, and I drifted in my skepticism until I was almost an atheist. I was brought back to a faith in God. . . . I shall never cease to give thanks to the many people who helped me to see clearly the hand of God in all these, but now I have further corroboration; and to me it is still more unanswerable than the others — my own experience. . . .

Twenty-one years ago, we found that hole in the wall that men call 'PRAYER' . . . we have been living from hand to mouth — that is, from GOD'S HAND TO

OUR MOUTH. We have never missed a meal. I cannot get into my Navy uniform that I could wear quite comfortably in 1925. We have been cared for better than we could have asked for.⁶

During 1964 Archie Word collaborated with Marion McKee and Lafe Culver to review P.H. Welshimer's 100 bits of "Advice to Ministers" in James DeForest Murch's *Christian Minister's Manual*. These year-long reviews were carried in *The Voice of Evangelism*. In the same journal he wrote a piece entitled "Significant Changes in People's Thinking Since I Began Preaching." Among the positive changes the 63-year-old preacher saw were an improved system of financing the church (God's system of tithes and offerings), better church facilities (old church buildings were "built like a barn with no conveniences"), an improvement in "the DISUSE of tobacco and booze among church people and preachers," and the establishment of church-sponsored schools "where any earnest young man can go to receive training for the ministry."

(But early in 1964 he collided with faculty member Warren Bell over the television issue. Bell, who did not own a TV himself, preached in chapel one day presenting a similar position to that of Lee Turner, i.e., that it could not be made a test of fellowship. On January 17, 1964, Archie Word preached his chapel sermon, "My Position On Owning a T.V. Set," in which he said that although he would not disfellowship anyone over TV, he would certainly do everything in his power to discourage Christians from having one in their home.)

In May 1964 Churches of Christ School of Evange-

lists (which had now been in operation for 12 years) reached its apex, graduating four of her finest "earnest young men" ever: Tom Burgess, Graydon Jessup, Virgil Stonecypher, and Gary Strubhar. Today Burgess and Stonecypher serve as minister and elder of Crossroads Church of Christ (the old Montavilla church with a new name and location). They have recently completed a multi-million dollar building that seats over 1,000 people. Jessup, after a successful 20-year ministry in Anchorage, Alaska, has succeeded Ben Merold as the minister of the 3,000-member Eastside Christian Church in Fullerton, California. Strubhar has faithfully served as minister of two churches begun by Montavilla during the Word era: Duke Street Church of Christ in Portland and 4th Street Church of Christ in Gresham, Oregon, where he currently serves.

CHRISTMAS MEMORIES

1964 came to an inglorious end for Barry Goldwater, who was buried by "Landslide" Lyndon Johnson in the November presidential elections. Boyce Mouton brought the old year to an end and helped begin the new year with a revival meeting at Montavilla that overlapped the last week of 1964 and the first week of 1965. Mouton had been a kind and gracious minister to Maggie Word, Archie's mother, calling on her frequently in a nursing home in Los Gatos, California, while he was ministering to the nearby Curtner Avenue church in San Jose where Maggie attended when she was able.

The new Word home on 95th Avenue once again rang aloud with the laughter of children in December 1964 – the Mouton's four children. At first Boyce's

wife, Betty, did not want to accompany her husband on this meeting. She had heard things about this Archie Word! But a personal letter from Florence had won the day. The Moutons, as many others had experienced for themselves, found the Words to be warm and loving hosts. Each morning Florence would warm the children's plates in the oven – a thoughtful gesture she had learned from her mother. Archie "felt out" Boyce about celebrating Christmas. The brethren in Ottumwa frowned on Christmas but the Words loved to celebrate it. In particular Archie wanted to do something for the Mouton children. How delighted they were when it snowed during their stay in Portland – the first snow they had ever seen!

The Word's frugal lifestyle touched the Moutons. For example, there were candleholders on the mantel that year – but no candles. Betty bought some as a parting gift.

Boyce had "heard things" about Archie too, but he saw firsthand how tender his heart was in a calling episode one snowy afternoon. The two preachers were in a person's home and Archie was telling the story of his conversion to Christ. Suddenly he began to sob. "I'll never forget him weeping in that living room," said Mouton.

MOTHER MAGGIE DIES

A few weeks later, January 18, 1965, Archie received a phone call from his sister Nell in Los Gatos. Mother Maggie was dead. He immediately left for California, joining Nell and his brother Walter for the funeral service. Boyce Mouton preached Maggie's "coronation message." Later, when he had composed himself, Archie talked about his mother:

My mother, Mrs. Maggie Word, finished the course of her wonderfully fine life on Monday, Jan. 18th, at the close of the day. She had been in a nursing home, unable to walk, but still stalwart in the faith. Her mind, due to hardening of the arteries, had been undependable for quite a few months, but when someone would read the scripture to her, she would finish the verse from memory; and when it came time to pray, though her mind was bad in other fields, she could still pray a heart-felt and beautiful prayer. . . .

She had been away from her old home for nearly three years, and she was past her 85th year, yet the chapel was full of old neighbors and younger people whom she had taught in Sunday School. . . .

All three of her children were present for the memorial service, and many were the tears shed, in the breaking of the earthly bond – but happy were the faces that looked forward to meeting her in God's place, prepared for those who love Him.

She was one of God's best – wife, mother and Saint of God. . . .

At a Christian funeral, the sadness of parting mingles so closely with the hope of meeting where we will part no more, that there is a struggle for supremacy in every believer's breast.⁸

“SHOULD I RETIRE?”

Archie Word was now just a year away from retirement age. One day his son-in-law, Donald Hunt, asked him if he were going to retire. The 64-year-old preacher replied,

Personally, when I can no longer preach three times a week, teach sixteen hours and prepare a chapel lesson each week, and edit a paper, I plan to resign my ministry here and go out to hold meetings as often as my health will permit. I want to be able, God willing, to share my life's experiences with younger men in the ministry and help those churches who cannot afford

to hire the younger 'hot shot' evangelists. I plan to rest between meetings, but while I am resting to do some writing that I have always desired to do. I desire to be of use to my fellowmen as long as I live, getting tired for God, and looking forward to my reception in Heaven where the Lord, I trust, will mete out to me whatever retirement plan HE has for me and for those who have loved His appearing.⁹

(Four years later, when he stepped down from the pulpit at Montavilla, he did just as he had outlined in 1965.)

“THE AMERICAN CRISIS”

1965 was a year of turbulence and turmoil in the United States. Despite Lyndon Johnson's hopes for a “Great Society,” society was going to hell on a handcart. Blacks were being beaten to death in the Deep South. Race riots left 30 dead in the Watts section of Los Angeles, where Archie had once held a revival. College campuses were becoming the breeding grounds for anti-war protests. Some people even set themselves on fire to protest the war in Vietnam. Crime was on the increase. Archie Word addressed some of these issues in two articles in *The Church Speaks* in 1965: “The Cause and Cure of Crime” and “The American Crisis and How to Meet It.”

In the first essay he alluded to the aforementioned Kitty Genovese murder: “A young woman was attacked and killed while neighbors sat idly by and watched the murder, listening to the helpless lady crying for help.” He decried the widespread violence in the United States, but noted that it was not due to poverty since many of the gang leaders were from well-to-do homes. He also rejected the position of neo-

orthodox clergymen who blamed it merely on social maladjustments:

What is the cause? I believe it is just one thing; the fruit of an unregenerated heart. The natural man is an outlaw. Decent civilization has followed the teaching of Christ. . . . A return to the grand teaching of the Bible is our only hope. We either return to the high standards laid down by the Lord, or we go defunct as a nation.¹⁰

In "The American Crisis and How to Meet It," he recalled to mind former nations that had failed to squarely face their national crisis: the ante-diluvian world, Israel, Babylon, Greece, and Rome. "As a nation," he warned, "we have never faced a more critical situation nor a darker hour." The crisis, as he saw it in 1965, was philosophical in nature. "Paganism is in the saddle and riding hard. She has her roots sunk deep into two miasmatic marshes, Evolution and Naturalism." But the crisis was also a moral one. "Each man is a law unto himself and he does what is right in his own eyes. We have a nation of Moral Anarchists built on the Behavioristic Philosophy. Nothing is absolutely right and nothing is absolutely wrong." He then related a conversation with a college student.

A young university student said to me the other day, 'I am tired.'

'Tired of what?' I asked.

'Tired of expressing myself; tired of doing as I please. There is nothing to live for. I am tired of it.'¹¹

Word also saw a political crisis—an impending clash between East and West, a battle between "yellow and white" (here he cited figures of 100,000 Chinese

Christians martyred in China between 1948 and 1960).

And what could be done about "The American Crisis"?

There is only one cure — a return to God; a genuine, old time, Holy Spirit, Bible Revival of Christianity. . . . God is giving us our last chance! . . . Judgment is on us. . . . Are we going to wait until we see the flames of hell searing our faces before we will turn?¹²

Archie Word was an old-time prophet, calling America and the church to repentance in 1965. He called Malburt Prater for a three-week revival in June; he himself going out to conduct revivals that summer in Bandon, Oregon, Loveland, Colorado, and Reno, Nevada. (In "The American Crisis" he had thundered against places like Reno. "It would be God's blessing if He should rain hell-fire and brimstone on Reno and Las Vegas, as well as any other easy divorce-mill center; and I would include lawyers and judges who aid and abet in these national tragedies.")¹³

A natural disaster of another sort, however, wiped out the Troutdale campgrounds in January 1965 when the Sandy River went out of its banks. A new camp meeting place was rented at 108th and Holgate in Portland and from henceforth the annual summertime preaching rally was known simply as "Holgate."

By this time the circulation of *The Church Speaks* had grown to 20,000. It was mailed free to anyone who requested it — and many who had not made the request, like some U.S. Senators and Congressmen. A copy was even sent to the occupants at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, D.C.! Readers in all 50 states plus Africa, Japan, Pakistan, Sweden, Holland,

England, Mexico, Canada, and many small island countries were receiving *The Church Speaks*. One reader was converted from his life-long habit of card playing by reading "The Deck of Cards" in *The Church Speaks*. "Just to know the meaning of each card makes a real Christian shudder with fear. . . . God bless you and praise the name of Jesus for the preachers who have the courage to speak out for right, even though many will not appreciate it."¹⁴

Readers who happened to be Catholic, or at least sympathetic to Catholics, asked Archie to quit printing anti-Catholic articles. This provoked an appeal to his faithful readers:

What would you think of me if I lay down like a yellow dog and quit? . . . You would not expect me to quit. You cannot imagine me quitting. I cannot imagine myself quitting, either. I intend to buck Rome with all of her dirty political machines, as long as there is a heart-beat in me; as long as I have a thought in my head and a voice in my throat. I will speak and write the truth as long as I can see and hear, 'til the Lord closes my life. I will not be intimidated, character-crucified into submission, nor bowed before any political machine. Coercion and danger, I have avowed, will not turn me aside.¹⁵

LOVING THE LOST

At the heart of Archie Word's ministry was a love for the souls of lost men and women. He longed to see everyone brought to Christ through a genuine conversion experience. And once they were converted, he wanted them to grow in the grace and knowledge of their Saviour. In January 1966 he suggested 10 things that would help a new Christian mature in Christ. He began with a tender appeal:

Now, my dear young brother or sister in Christ, you have been born again, born into the family of God, and there are some very necessary and essential things with which I want to acquaint you relative to your growing up in the Lord's family.¹⁶

In condensed form, here follows Word's 10 instructions for a new convert:

1. Read your Bible every day.
2. Pray about everything that comes into your life.
3. Stay away from bad people.
4. Try to win some other soul to the Lord, and begin working at it right away.
5. Seek always to do those things which will glorify the Lord. Ask yourself, "What would Jesus do?"
6. Do not miss the Bible school period, the Lord's Supper, the preaching, or the prayer meeting.
7. Give regularly to the cause of Christ. Form a habit of systematically giving the tithe to the Lord, plus an offering.
8. Cooperate with the preachers, elders, and fellow Christians. In unity there is power.
9. Trust in the Lord and never become discouraged.
10. Keep in mind always that this is not our home, but that we are on our way to heaven. It is better to go to heaven from a shanty than to go to hell from a palace.¹⁷

Archie Word's great love for souls is what took him away from his own church and family for weeks and months on end (seven straight weeks in the summer of 1966). He also had a burden for those outside the continental United States. The March *The Church Speaks* carried another appeal for the work in Jamaica. He urged readers to send their "direct support" to Harold J. Hill, "a faithful brother . . . worthy of all our support." In the year 1966 alone the Montavilla

church was sending financial aid to Alaska, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Jamaica and Rhodesia (Dale Marshall went to Rhodesia that summer and has been supported by Montavilla/Crossroads ever since). In addition to helping the Marshalls get started in Rhodesia, Montavilla sent \$1500 to help plant a new church in Toppenish, Washington, the ninth church to be helped in such manner since Archie Word had come to Portland in 1935.

While Archie was gone in revivals in the summer of 1966, Lafe Culver came to Montavilla and conducted a three-week revival which resulted in 30 responses to the gospel.

TWO GREAT LOVES

If there were two subjects that Archie Word loved to talk about they were Christian evidences and the Christian home. In 1966 his fourth book was published, *Christian Evidences*. Archie wrote the book to counter the "very determined, well-organized and extensive propaganda" of the American Association for the Advancement of Atheism, whose purpose, according to Archie, was "to rid the world of the absurd idea of a personal God." In the Introduction to the 70-page book, he explained why he wrote *Christian Evidences*:

There was a time in my life when I was a skeptic, and I suppose most of the world would have called me an unbeliever. I was brought back to faith in God, in His Son and in the Divine revelation because of evidences, presented in the class room.

I was lost, not by what I knew but by what I did not know and what I did not know even existed. When I was converted it was because of the presentation of

facts, so I decided to just make a small booklet of digested factual evidences for the average person to have. . . .

I pray the Lord to use this effort to strengthen the faith of all those who see truth in these days of disbelief.¹⁸

The booklet was also written to answer the "God is dead" argument, which was even being preached in some American churches in the 60s.

Another great love that Archie Word had was for the sanctity of marriage and the home. He was at his best when he preached on the subject of the family. In the September 1966 *The Church Speaks* he wrote an article, "Rocks of Marriage Disaster." He mentioned seven rocks that would dash a marriage into pieces. The first rock was money. He was opposed to both the husband and wife holding down jobs. "The wedge is driven deeper by referring to their income as 'YOURS' and 'MINE' instead of 'OURS'." The second rock was "The Triangle" — extra-marital affairs. The third rock was insecurity. "The only way to avoid it is to say often and with genuine feeling and sincerity, 'I love you more than any other person in the whole world.' It is a wonderful formula and I have been trying it out for nearly forty years." Rock number four was drinking and dancing; the fifth rock, immaturity in judgment. The sixth rock of marriage disaster was religious differences. "There is not a marriage counselor, preacher, rabbi or priest, who will not tell you to marry in your own faith or expect unpleasant consequences." The seventh rock was courtships that were too short and impure. "If you want your marriage to grow sweeter with the passing years, build on a sure foundation of chastity and purity during

courtship.”¹⁹ (Mary Quant’s newest fashion design, the mini-skirt, came in for scathing denunciation.)

FIRE!

Early in the morning of October 15, 1966, the Montavilla church building caught fire. At about 5:20 a.m. faulty wiring in the attic started the blaze. At 5:30 a.m. 12-year-old Scott Spellman, a newspaper boy for the *Portland Oregonian*, spotted flames shooting from the upstairs offices of the church building. He dropped his bike to the ground and raced to report the fire. Eleven fire fighting units responded to the two-alarm fire. “Had they arrived even five minutes later the building would have been gone, but time was on their side and they were able to confine the blaze to the roof, attic, balcony, second floor offices and storage area. These were damaged extensively with only minor damage elsewhere, including water and smoke damage in the auditorium.”²⁰ The fire did about \$10,000 damage to the 50-year-old structure.

After being notified by the fire department, Archie got on the phone and called the janitor and other members of the church. “We will try to clean it up so we can hold services on the Lord’s Day.” (The fire occurred on a Saturday morning.) But when the men arrived they were shocked at the extent of the damage. The roof was completely ruined. Two offices were a complete loss and the church’s bookstore, Scripture Supply House, had lost about \$5,000 worth of books, music and tracts. Services were held that Sunday in the smoke-darkened, water-logged auditorium. It soon became apparent that to repair the damage to city code would take a complete rebuilding of the old structure – not the most practical thing to

do in the minds of many. On November 6 about 50 men met with Archie Word and the elders and selected a building committee. From there on there was a “mind to work” and the new building started to go up in the shadow of the old. “During the construction of the building a fellowship and closeness was enjoyed among all the Christians that had never been achieved before. . . . Men met for work each evening after their normal work and all day Saturdays, women fixed meals fit for kings, and young people helped in as many ways as they could!”²¹ The first services were held in the new “550” on May 12, 1968.

Because of the tremendous amount of time it took to build the new church building, the Montavilla congregation did not have a revival in 1967 – the first time since Archie Word had come in 1935 they went without one. Archie was gone for only two meetings that year: in nearby Vancouver and Eugene.

When the time came at last to tear down the old Montavilla tabernacle, Archie Word sat in his car in the parking lot and wept as the bulldozers went to work. Dump trucks driven by cigar-chomping men hauled away tons of Montavilla memories. An era had ended.

The fire destroyed more than the Montavilla church building. In a way, it brought to a close the ministry of Archie Word in Portland. Charles Dailey shares a painful and poignant moment in 1967:

The old Montavilla building had been damaged in a fire and a new one was under construction. Brother Word was teaching in the Churches of Christ School of Evangelists, handling the administration of the congregation and making decisions about the new construction. He felt that he should retire because of the

recurring pressure of his job. He also had a "standard prediction" that building a new building causes the preacher to leave. While he spoke openly of retirement, the faculty could not see that he was implementing his plan. The time to print next year's teaching schedule had arrived and we needed to know if Brother Word was to be included. The rest of the faculty asked me to ask him privately.

I went in after lunch one day when the building was empty of students and asked him as politely and directly as I could. His response was to put his head down in his hands and sob uncontrollably for about five minutes. Then I saw the question in its larger perspective. He was having to face a decision, not only about teaching in the school, but of preaching in a church where he had been for many years; of leaving his friends and the scenes that he knew so well. Without meaning to I had triggered great pain in someone I cherished. His decision was to leave at the end of the school year and he began setting matters within the church and his entire world in order so he could leave when school was out. And he did.²²

(When Charles Dailey first shared this story with Tom Burgess and myself in the summer of 1989, his voice broke with emotion and he could not bring himself to complete it. Hence, this letter.)

TROUBLED TIMES

America in 1967 was being torn apart by the Vietnam war. Anti-war rallies seemed to spring up everywhere. Mohammed Ali, the new heavyweight boxing champ, refused to serve in the Armed Forces. In San Francisco and New York "Be-Ins" were attended by thousands of hippies. Closer to home, in Multnomah County, Archie Word saw the effects of a world going crazy. In March he wrote,

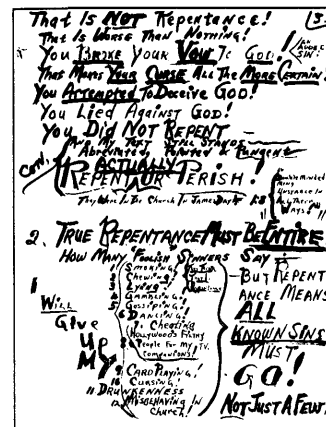
Right here in Multnomah County, beautiful city of Roses (Portland), we had a jail-break. . . . Hardened criminals, threatening death to the men we pay to protect us, stabbed a guard and held another one as hostage, robbed the medic of his pills. . . . Now comes the stickler! Instead of punishing the criminals, the papers are full of accusations against the jailers, doctors, etc. One of the criminals . . . took the pills and killed himself . . . and who is to blame? Not the thief, but the man who was legally carrying the medicine. . . . We have gone crazy, prosecuting the sheriff who is protector of society, and allowing the men who threaten our very existence to be turned loose, exonerated! . . . Crazy, man, crazy!²³

In the Middle East, the 6-Day War between Israel and the Arab world came and went in June 1967. The next month, not even commenting on the historic encounter, Archie again turned his guns on what he saw as a twin threat to America – Catholicism and Communism.

We are facing two great world Ideologies in politics in religion – Rome, which is politics with a religious face, and Communism, which is a religion with a political face. Both are vying for the hearts of the Christians of the world. . . . Russia could make livery stables and theaters out of the great buildings the Orthodox church has built in that sad land of darkness, but no government can make a livery stable or a theater out of the heart of a Christian where Christ abides. Rome could scatter the followers of Christ and drive them out of their cities, but they could not drive Christ out of their hearts. . . . CHRISTIANS DON'T NEED ARMIES TO KILL THEIR HEATHEN OPPONENTS; THEY NEED CHRIST WITHIN, TO CONVERT THEM!²⁴

Notes

1. *The Church Speaks*, Jan. 1963
2. *53 Soul Winning Sermon Outlines on First Corinthians*, pp. 51,52
3. *Ibid*, pp. 31,32
4. *The Church Speaks*, July 1963
5. *Ibid*
6. *The Church Speaks*, May 1964
7. *The Voice of Evangelism*, June 1964
8. *The Church Speaks*, March 1965
9. *The Voice of Evangelism*, June 1965
10. *The Church Speaks*, Jan., 1965
11. *Ibid*, Sept., 1965
12. *Ibid*
13. *Ibid*
14. *The Church Speaks*, July 1965
15. *Ibid*
16. *The Voice of Evangelism*, Jan. 1966
17. *Ibid*
18. *Christian Evidences*, Introductory page
19. *The Church Speaks*, Sept., 1966
20. *Montavilla Memories*, p. 89
21. *Ibid*, p. 92
22. Letter to author from Charles Dailey, Sept. 18, 1989
23. *The Church Speaks*, March 1967
24. *Ibid*, July 1967



Page from Archie's fiery
The Church Speaks (1951)

Page from Archie's red hot sermon, "Repent or Perish!"



Chart teaching always preceded the preaching