

## God Gives the Increase!

Elder's Conference—2019

Chauncey Normandin

**Fred Coulter—introduction:** I wanted to personally welcome Chauncey Normandin to tell us about himself. It shows that God is doing more than what we ever thought with many people in many places.

**Chauncey Normandin:** I would like to echo my brother Bob's comments, because it is absolutely, positively one of the most privileged things that I've ever done. Finding this group—and I will admit it was one of the latter groups of the original Worldwide Church of God—we have found online. But it was absolutely that God saved the best for last.

He let us look at these other groups and say, 'We can't do that.' or 'What do these people think that they call themselves the Church of God.' I think—I'm not trying to offend anyone—that because of the way we were chosen by God to do what we're doing and leading us the way that He is leading us—that we have kind of a better and easier ability to sit back and look over why the Worldwide Church kind of imploded, and the mistakes that were made there.

It allows us to take the best of each of these groups have to offer who are still following the Truth. As I told Fred, sometimes we'll use some UCG stuff, a little sermonette thing that they have on *Beyond Today*, a little fluff piece to get us in the mood. It's good information, but if you compare it with what you people are exposed to every single time you listen to one of Fred's sermons, it is a fluff piece. But it just gets us in the mood.

Then we'll look at some stuff the John Rittenbaugh may write. He has a good way of taking stuff, and generally what we will do is take Fred's stuff to get the technical end of it, and we listen to some of John's stuff. He puts it in makes it more easily to understand how to apply it to our daily lives.

I have a fellow from UCG talk to me and ask me how I can follow Fred Coulter, because he doesn't back anything up Biblically. He's a false prophet and this and that. This was after several exchanges, it became quite clear to me that all it was, was an attack piece and it had nothing to do with substance, God or anything. It had to do more with egos and other things.

I will tell you, having looked at dozens of former WCG sites, there is no one and no group that quotes Old Testament and New Testament—the

duality of Scripture—and documents it and applies it the way that Fred Coulter does. It doesn't happen! It's not there!

This kind of goes into what was said earlier about the tithing, where does the money go? We started doing some things and it was an e-mail that I sent out. We had talked about it before hand, because realized the gift that we have in our group with Pam and her ability to relate things to kids. We have some kids. We had seven at one point in time and she was dealing with things, and there were a couple that were being home schooled that were failing miserably. She kind of took them under her wing and three of the kids right now are on the honor roll—12, 14 and 16 year-olds—with straight 'A's on their report cards.

The oldest was the most valuable player on the soccer team and track team, and the most valuable sports person in school. Pam has given them motivation, this drive and ability—this God given talent—they all have. She's brought that out for them. That's her gift.

It's a little difficult for me to get up and speak because we don't have elders in our church, there are just 10-12 in our group. Bob and I, because of no doing of our own, have kind of been made the group leaders.

It's hard for me to be here, because usually he sits right here next to me and we do these things together. We bounce things off on one another, so I always have an element next to me to keep me going, and he has an element next to him to keep him going. It's a little awkward for me to be here by myself, because one thing that I've learned, I'll tell you a quick story.

I was asked to be Chief of Police in my city by the City Manager, and I declined because I didn't want it. The Assistant City Manager was a friend of mine and said, 'With you're ego you don't want to be the Chief?' I said to him, 'With my ego I don't need to be the chief.'

Everything that happens during the course of our lives, no matter who it is, has led us to this place right here, right now. That's what we have to look back on.

I requested of Fred to attend the services. My nieces and nephews live in Palmdale, CA. I figured, how far can it be? Fred said, 'You're quite a ways from here, about 5 hours away.' On a map it looks like an hour. He said, 'I'm going to Pasadena

next week, why don't you come there?' I said I wouldn't be there next week, and that 'I real can't come to California without meeting you.'

In our group we had already talked about all of this. One of things that I brought up was about the money thing. One of the things I noticed when you go on to any of these sites, what's the first thing that's on the site? *New buildings! These big multimillion dollar buildings with shiny glass walls and all this stuff!* A new fancy TV studio right across the river from here. It's beautiful, wonderful, but...

So, to get to Hollister I drive up from Bakersfield the back way so I could go through the country and it was beautiful. Fred had e-mailed me the address and I drove by this place, and in looking around I thought I must have made a mistake. I pulled over in Subway and it says that 'you have arrived.' I'm looking around and there's a variety store, a cleaners and Subway, and I'm...

So, I went to the hotel and stayed overnight and got down early the next morning and I'm sitting in the parking lot. I walked into the building and I saw that the room numbers were there and the address was good. I went back out to the parking lot. I'm sitting in the vehicle and I see this older SUV pull up and it parks two vehicles away from me and out steps Fred who I knew because we've watch his videos for a long time.

He's walks into the building and give him a minute and I walk in and upstairs to the room. I said to myself, 'I'm home.' If I blindfolded you and brought you into our Bible study room, it's not much different than Hollister. The people in Hollister were wonderful, Jonathan, Delores and the other people that were there. I felt like I was home.

I called back to our group and told them what was going on, because we share everything that is done. There's nothing that's done that all of us don't know about. Then I was going to Pasadena.

Fred put me in contact with Byron Norrod in Pasadena, the former headquarters of Worldwide Church of God, and thought that this has to be a neat place. He gives me the directions and I find it was a Holiday Inn Express and the woman at the desk directed me to this meeting room. I walked in.

When we get ready for the Sabbath—in Florida—a couple ladies are in there early getting the food ready and prepped—because we have a kitchen in our room—like Pasadena does and Fred does. Then Bob and I come in and we do what we have to do.

I walked in—in Pasadena—and 'Whoa! I'm home again.' Byron came up to me—and this sticks

in my mind—it was just the icing on the cake to show me how genuine these people that I have just met are. Byron walked up to me and shook my hand and said, 'Hi, my name is Byron and you must be Chauncey, I'm the group leader.'

I saying to myself that he could very easily have said, 'I'm the pastor.' But he said, 'I'm the group leader.' That meant so much, that he was so genuine that he said that.

Anybody that doesn't think that God is in our presence when we assemble—two or more—things have happened for us and things have happened here in these past few days, you should be reinforced today that God is in here with us. To prove that fact, look at the face of Eduardo when he was up here earlier with his children, and when he was ordained. Look at Andrew when he came up. Look at Byron; every time he stands at this podium and makes the announcement, look at his face. Then look at those children that are in this room. Look at them.

If you think that God is not in this room, you're in the wrong place. ***He is here amongst us!*** That kind of brings us into where our group has been blessed. That is that we have picked up this ability to write basic things so that it is easily understood by children, by people who are not highly educated, by putting those things out there and that are based on true Church of God writings.

If someone calls us because they've heard by word of mouth... Bob and I are both retired and live 300 feet apart. We bought 13 acres of land and split it down the middle. His house is on one side and my house is on the other side. We're together all the time; two old retired cops!

We have been so blessed with that property, with the people in our congregation that part of being an elder, as I see it, is not only taking a step back to serve the group, it's to take the members of the group and focus their abilities so that they can be better used as Christ and God would use them, being led by Christ.

That's what we've done with Pam. Bob and I did some Bible studies series that is on our website. This was done in a farming community in middle Florida, and migrant workers. We were at a Haitian church by invitation. We did a complete Bible study series. It's English, but also in French and Haitian Creole, because that's what we had to deal with. The best educated person there was the pastor, and probably his wife was the next best educated. After that it was probably about a third grade education, and some of the members could read or write.

We came up with a series doing the Ten Commandments, the Belief series based on the stuff

that Fred had done. Also, faith, baptism series, the Holy Days and Sabbath-keeping. Those are all on our website and it's under a section called *Building Our Foundation on The Rock*.

All of that elementary, basic stuff is there. It's not good for anyone in this room, because it's absolutely at an elementary level. But it is good for kids, and some people who don't have a good education. Pam just did a review with our kids and she used the stuff that we have that's on there, and they found it interesting and very easy to follow along with Church of God principles.

The other thing that Pam didn't realize, and none of us did, that Kidz Korner {<http://www.firstcenturyfellowship.org/kidz-korner/>} is going to be revised as soon as we get back. Monday morning we're going to be in touch with the computer people and get them there and we're going to revise it. As Bob said yesterday, one of the things we need to remember is:

Proverbs 22:6: "Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it."

I had eluded to that in a similar sense yesterday. No matter how well-educated any of us are—and there are a lot of highly educated people in this place—when you get down to basics, we want those basic instincts that the kids have and for that to be better than the instincts that I have had.

That's one of things that we're going to do. So, the first big change is when you see Kidz Korner and you click on it, it's going to come up Prov. 22:6. Just so that it reminds each of us every single time we go on it, why we're doing this.

I wanted to make sure that we touch on that basic stuff so that when you go onto the website that you notice that when it talks about foundation series, it's not something that kids can't use, it's something that was written basic for people of that level, kids or adults.

It's funny how through life you do these things and you don't realize what the consequences are at the time you do them. I talked a little bit about how I was prodded by God 17 or 18 years ago when I was on my motorcycle, and He kind of gave me a 'dope's slap' and let me know that everything I thought I had accomplished and that I was so good and arrogant (in audible)

Bob and I had parallel careers 1500 miles apart. We were talking one day and we both had the same plaque on our wall from Ronald Reagan: **It's amazing what you can accomplish when you don't care who gets the credit!**

We were sitting down talking about this last night and we need to add to that based on what was said yesterday. When we went over 1-Cor. 3:6-7, we need to add to Ronald Reagan's *when you don't care who gets the credit, but **God gives the increase!*** God says that twice in those two verses.

We have to acknowledge that; we don't have to take any credit for anything that we do. We're doing everything under the hand of God. Our group has been led by the hand of God. We came from another group; I was a Church of God member in the Miami/Homestead area on the east coast of Florida.

A deputy talked to Bob and all of us over the years about the Truth of God. I hardly talked about anything because I was raised Catholic, so it didn't go over well with friends and relatives who are Catholic. Being raised Catholic helped me with the voodoo in the Haitian community. They seem to be interrelated.

If you talk to someone with a voodoo background, they are Catholics, which I thought was kind of interesting. I directed them to the catechism, which believe it or not cannot lead you to God without the Bible, even though it says that it can.

Everything that we've learned and heard these past few days about helping one another and what the role of elders is—and we're doing the series on *The Seven Church Harvest* from the year 2000—and it talked about in parts two and three about the role of elders and what needed to be done.

God keeps intermixing and intertwining all of these things. It's just amazing!

The other thing that we've learned is that God is love, and we don't have love we really can't accomplish anything. You can say a lot of things. I have this favorite saying: **I can't hear what you're saying because you're actions speaks so loudly.** That's, unfortunately, too many people.

But here what we've heard is the *God is love*. We need to forgive those who have offended us and hurt us over the course of the years. I'm as guilty as anybody else. Here's what we need to think about:

All of these trials and tribulations, the bad times that we've had, the attacks that we've had—or the perceived attacks that we've had—from other people, every single one of those things has made us who we are today. Without any of those—if we miss one of them—we're not who we are today.

I'm kind of happy as to who I am today. I'm happy with my position. I'm happy with my family,

and our fellowship. I want you to think about this; I leave you with this thought:

***You can't love God than the person you love the least!***

**Fred:** Thank you very much Chauncey. It shows that God can work in many different people in many different places. Since it's the same God, the same Christ, *the results are the same!*

Thank you very much! Glad you had the opportunity to come up here. I'll just add a little thing that Chauncey didn't cover:

I gave him a tour of the office, and when we went down everything was functional to do what we do. We don't have lots of expense going into lots of expensive things, except the expense to go into all of the *spiritually* expensive *brethren!*

Scriptural References: Proverbs 22:6

Scripture referenced, not quoted: 1 Corinthians 3:6-7

Also referenced:

Kidz Korner {<http://www.firstcenturyfellowship.org/kidz-korner/>}

Sermon Series: *Seven Church Harvest*

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