

APRIL 14, 1975

TO: The members of the American Scientific Affiliation

FROM: ASA Executive Council

RE: The American Scientific Affiliation at the Crossroads

The ASA is at a critical juncture and needs your help now. Let us explain. Three years ago the ASA Executive Council was seeking a new executive secretary. Dr. H. Harold Hartzler, who had served so faithfully on a part-time basis for many years, had asked to be relieved. The Council was convinced that the ASA had reached the point where a full-time man was needed. There were many tasks that required more time and effort than even so energetic a person as H<sup>3</sup> could handle while serving in a full-time faculty position. Of course, this would mean a considerable increase in expense.

We calculated that these added expenses would be met if the number of ASA members could be doubled. With an intensive and sustained recruitment we felt that this goal could be attained in approximately three years. To cover the anticipated deficit in this interim, a matching grant from a well-known Christian foundation, and increased donations from the members were to be sought. Under these circumstances we employed Mr. Bill Sisterson to serve as the first full-time Executive Secretary for ASA, beginning in August 1972.

Certainly those of you who have been ASA members for some time have noted the positive benefits to the organization that have come during the nearly three years Bill has served us. First of all, our matching grant was awarded and the membership responded with donations most generously. This funded an intensive membership growth program which has resulted in a significant increase in the number of members in all categories. Several new local sections have been established and existing sections have been strengthened. The annual meetings have been sharply improved. Our book service has been expanded considerably. The Canadian Scientific and Christian Affiliation was organized for the benefit of members in Canada. Of greater importance, the ASA has gained a greatly enhanced identity and national visibility. We are now in a position to be of greater service to the Christian community than ever before.

Despite these gains there is a dark side to the picture. We have fallen considerably short of our membership goal. Instead of doubling the number of members, we have experienced a net increase of about 40%. The foundation grant funds have been expended in the process and we now have no financial reserves to help us. In retrospect, we obviously overestimated our potential for growth (despite the valiant efforts of many of you). Unfortunately, we also seriously underestimated the added expenses that would be incurred with a full-time position. Some of this was due to our lack of experience in budgeting for a full-time person, but much was caused by the galloping inflation of the past two years. Aggravating the situation further, we have purposely held off on sharp dues increases during this period to avoid a negative effort on the recruitment of new members.

At the recent Executive Council meeting we spent many hours reviewing the financial situation of the ASA. We trimmed the current year's budget mercilessly, but still found that anticipated income will fall short of expenses by \$10,000 to \$12,000. An increase in dues for all categories of members was passed (to be voted on by the membership later this spring),

but this will have little effect on the current budget. Finally, Bill Sisterson, himself, quietly suggested that the only further significant reduction in expense would be the termination of his position. We unanimously and strongly rejected that suggestion. In view of the significant gains for the ASA his service has brought, we feel that it would be tragically shortsighted to give up such an effective Executive Secretary now.

We are, therefore, turning to you, the members of the ASA, for help at this critical juncture. Donations from members have always been needed to make up the modest difference between dues income and operating expenses. With a part-time Executive Secretary this difference was only a matter of \$2-3 thousand each year. Obviously, that is no longer the case. Had we succeeded in doubling our membership, we would have placed the ASA on a nearly self-sustaining basis by the end of this year. That is still our goal, but we cannot now set a firm timetable for attaining it. In the interim, and particularly this summer, your generous support is needed to bridge the gap.

During the past three years approximately 60 members have comprised a "100 Club," quietly donating \$100 each year to the ASA. We herewith express our warmest appreciation to those who have helped in this important manner. Some of you who have not previously been approached might feel willing to make a similar large gift now. Others have contributed an additional \$5-10 annually. We hope that most of you can do at least that before summer. One action that will cost little, but produce important results is recruiting one or more new members this year. We still calculate that the dues from a total membership of about 3,500 will virtually cover all operating expenses on a sustaining basis. (We now have 2,400 members.)

You will now see that the title of this memo is appropriate. The ASA is quite literally at the crossroads. Either we meet our current deficit and push on with growth in membership or we shall be forced to terminate our most effective executive secretary and return to a part-time situation. This would mean a tragic loss of momentum for the ASA and a greatly diminished outreach to both the Christian and the scientific communities. Thus, we ask from each of you a donation within the next three months to cover the immediate deficit and a renewed recruitment effort to make the ASA virtually self-sustaining for the future. Since the anticipated deficit will be \$10,000 to \$12,000, we will need an average gift of about \$5 from each of our 2,400 members. We trust that the ASA is important enough to you that you will be willing to contribute at this critical time.

*David L. Willis* *Council*  
Dr. David L. Willis, President

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*Dewey K. Carpenter*  
Dr. Dewey K. Carpenter, Secretary-Treasurer

*Claude E. Stipe*  
Dr. Claude E. Stipe,  
Council Member

*James O. Buswell III*  
Dr. James O. Buswell III,  
Council Member

TO ASA EXECUTIVE COUNCIL,

I want to see the ASA continue its full-time ministry.  
I will help in the following way(s):

Enclosed is my gift for \$\_\_\_\_\_.

I will recruit a new member. Send materials for \_\_\_\_\_ persons.

I pledge \$\_\_\_\_\_ to be given later this year.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

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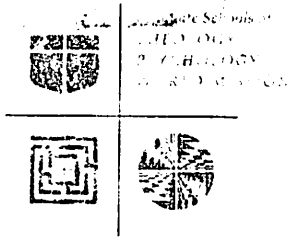
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History of Revival

April 28, 1975

Dr. David L. Willis, President  
Oregon State University  
Corvallis, OR 97331

Dear David:

I have received the plaintive note "The ASA At the Cross-roads" and I am torn in my heart about the possibility that this campaign has not been successful. I guess I would be willing, if it were absolutely necessary to join the 100 Club, but there is another thought that comes to my mind.

As you may know, we have been involved in a rather extensive publication program down here. We have now published 80 books and we are publishing the Journal of the American Society of Missiology, which you may or may not know about. We have had some considerable experience in operating on minimum expense in both the publication of journals and books and newsletters. I am wondering if it could be a small contribution that I could make to the society, simply to look over the financial structure of your publishing operations and see if there could possibly be any suggestions that I would make that could save the society money, hopefully a lot more than \$100.

I am sending this rather bizarre suggestion to you since I know you know me personally and might be willing in a confidential way to tell me whether you think the idea is reasonable or not. If you think it is a good idea, you would also be in a position to suggest it possibly to the right people.

On the other hand, if the idea is not worth suggesting, please don't feel that you even have to answer this letter!

Most cordially in Christ,

*Ralph D. Winter*  
Ralph D. Winter. *per JK.*

RDW/jk