

# THE RESTITUTION HERALD

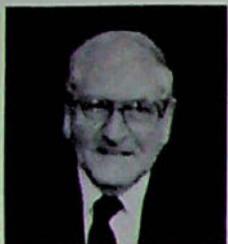
Vol. 82, No. 1  
October, November, 1992



## Christ Speaks to the Church Today As He Did to the Churches of Asia



Church of God General Conference History Newsletter included in this issue.



## In This Issue

**T**he major part of this issue of THE HERALD will focus on the seven churches in Asia (Rev. 2; 3). A different writer will expound on each of the messages of these seven historical congregations which were located in what is now Turkey. You will be richly blessed by their labor.

The human title given the last book in the Bible is "The Revelation of Saint John the Divine." A better title is found in the first line of the book: "The Revelation of Jesus Christ." The Greek title *Apocalypse* is taken from the first word in the Greek text *apokalypsis* which means an "unveiling" or "revealing." This fascinating book is not meant to be a secret, but a revelation. Unfortunately, today it is a synonym for chaos and catastrophe. Good expositors differ a great deal on the interpretation of Revelation.

The Father gave the revelation to the Son and the Son to "his servant John" "by his angel" (1:1). The plan and scope of the book are also given in the first verse: to show His servants things which must shortly come to pass. The thought seems to be that when the events in view start unfolding they will come rapidly (cf. 1:3b; 22:7, 12).

This final book in the canon of Scripture is a record of what John saw and heard. Its theme is the consummation of this age when God sums up all things in Christ. It unfolds the great events of bringing human history to a close including the second coming of Christ. Jesus is first pictured as Savior of the churches, then as Judge and King. We must acknowledge that the destiny of everyone is under the jurisdiction of Jesus Christ.

Beginning with chapter four, John the Revelator presents future events with principal attention given to the time of tribulation, the seventieth week of Daniel (Matt. 24:21, 22; Dan. 9:24-27). "The words of this prophecy" (Rev. 1:3) in the introduction reveal that it is a book focused on the future.

Revelation was written about A.D. 95 during the reign of Domitian (A.D. 81-96). John had been exiled to the island Patmos, lying off the coast of Asia Minor in the Aegean Sea (v. 9). It is only ten miles long and six miles wide. Domitian died A.D. 96, and John was probably allowed to return to Ephesus.

During his exile on Patmos, John received various visions and was commanded: "What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia..." (Rev. 1:11). Some have entitled the book, "The Patmos Vision." Patmos is "an island that owes its fame to its prisoner." Four times the aged author's name is inserted (1:1, 4, 9; 22:8). John wrote the last Gospel, the last epistle according to time, the last book of the New Testament, and was the last apostle to die.

**Revelation is the grand central station of Bible prophecy. All the themes of prophetic truth come into this magnificent book.**

# Contents

5 *A Letter to the Church at Ephesus*

David Cheatwood

7 *A Letter to the Church at Smyrna*

John T. Welch

9 *A Letter to the Church at Pergamos*

Gordon Landry

11 *A Letter to the Church at Thyatira*

Alan Cain

13 *A Letter to the Church at Sardis*

Jon Cheatwood

15 *A Letter to the Church at Philadelphia*

Hollis Partlowe

17 *A Letter to the Church at Laodicea*

David Wilsterman

20 *God Keep Our Land*

Stephen Bolhaus

21 *Changing Challenges*

Michael Hoffman

22 *The Doctrine of the Holy Trinity: Is It True or False?*

Brenda J. Swartz

25 *Forgive and Forget*

John Railton

28 *Stewardship*

S. O. Ross

"Do not be afraid.  
I am the First and the Last."

—Revelation 1:17c

## THE RESTITUTION HERALD

Vol. 82, No. 1  
October, November, 1992

Cover drawing by  
Marsha Behrens, Oregon, IL.

THE RESTITUTION HERALD is owned and published by the Church of God General Conference, a non-profit Christian corporation located at 131 N. Third St., Oregon, Illinois 61061. THE HERALD is mailed six times a year.

THE RESTITUTION HERALD advocates: the oneness of God (1 Cor. 8:6); the Holy Spirit is God's power (Acts 1:8); Jesus Christ is God's only begotten Son (Matt. 16:16), and is our Mediator (1 Tim. 2:5); the Bible is the inspired Word of God (2 Tim. 3:16); the mortality of man (Job 4:17; Psa. 146:4); the near return of Christ (Acts 1:11), and life only through him (Col. 3:3); the literal resurrection of the dead (John 5:28); the immortalization of those in Christ (1 Cor. 15:53, 54); the destruction of the wicked (Rev. 21:8); the final restoration of Israel as the Kingdom of God under the kingship of Christ (Luke 1:32), the church to be joint heirs with him (Rom. 8:17), and Israel to be made head over Gentile nations (Isa. 60:1-3); the "restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began" (Acts 3:21). It also firmly advocates repentance and immersion in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38), and a consecrated life as essential to salvation.

Editor: Hollis Partlowe  
Associate Editor: Gordon Landry  
Make-up Editor: Mark Cain  
Typesetter: Becky Hall  
Proofreader: Barbara Landry  
Contributing Editors: Richard Alcumbrack, Susan Lapp, Richard Eldred, Dr. Alva G. Huffer, Delbert Jones, Paula Kirkpatrick, Gordon Landry, Stan Ross  
Mailing and Subscriptions: Becky Hall, Terri Tschaenn, Judy Myers, Harry McMin

Address all correspondence to: THE RESTITUTION HERALD  
P.O. Box 100,000  
Morrow, GA 30260

### SUBSCRIPTIONS

One Year, \$12  
Two Years, \$21  
Three years, \$30

Most subscriptions begin with the February or August issue. Readers may begin full-year subscriptions at any time. Use the form on page 32 when corresponding concerning your subscription.

Revelation gives the necessary conclusion to God's message of redemption for earth and man. Without it, God's plan would be incomplete, left up in the air, would have ended on an unfinished note. It should be considered the book for the end time. The rebellious kings of Psalm 2 find themselves under the feet of Jesus Christ.

The second coming and the years immediately preceding it are revealed in Revelation more graphically than in any other book. Daniel describes the period from his time to Christ's first coming and speaks briefly of the tribulation and Christ's rule on earth. Revelation magnifies the great end-time events with many details culminating in the new heaven and new earth—eternity (chapters 21; 22).

John was "in the Spirit on the Lord's day" (1:10). That's neither Saturday nor Sunday. John had received the spirit of prophecy and had been transported prophetically into the future day of the Lord in a vision. The curtain was pulled aside and he saw the future day when God's judgments will be upon earth and His Kingdom established. It is most reasonable that the Bible should conclude with a book of prophecies, most of which will be fulfilled at the consummation of the church age. The visions are past but the prophetic fulfillments are future for the most part. This book is the work of a former Jew saturated with the Old Testament, although no quotes from it appear. At the same time, references to Old Testament events and prophecies abound.

Jesus is "the firstborn from the dead" (Rev. 1:5, NIV). He is the only One who has been resurrected from the dead to immortality—never to die again. He said of Himself: "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell [*hades*] and of death" (v. 18). "Keys" is an emblem of authority and access which God has given Jesus, who has conquered death and the grave. Jesus is "the head of the body, the church" (Col. 1:18). As in physical birth, the Head was born first.

### The key to the Book of Revelation is found in 1:19.

The Lord told John to write:

1. "The things which thou hast seen,"
2. "The things which are,"
3. "The things which shall be hereafter."

This is really a threefold outline of the book.

The angels of the seven churches (v. 20) apparently were the pastors of the churches. It would seem strange to have celestial angels pastoring churches. The word "angel" means "messenger" and may refer to a mortal man or an immortal angel.

John further informs us that the seven candlesticks (lampstands) are the seven churches. That would seem fitting indeed since the purpose of both is to give light (Matt. 5:14-16; John 8:12).

The word "church" (*ekklēsia*) is used 16 times in Revelation 1-3, but is not used at all in chapters 4 through 18.

Common to the message to each church is the admonition: "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." We would assume that that is equal to Christ speaking through His Spirit.

Like the Old Testament books of Daniel and Ezekiel, Revelation uses apocalyptic and symbolic forms of revelation extensively. Most students acknowledge that it is a difficult book.

Many diverse interpretations have emerged because the symbols must be interpreted. One authority has observed 50 different interpretations of this intriguing book.

Revelation, the only apocalyptic book of the New

Testament, claims to unfold the future—beginning as it does with *apokalypsis*. The first-century church was under intense persecution. Perhaps that's the main reason much of the book is symbolic. The message wouldn't be understood by the Roman authorities.

There is no indication until the end of the book that the kings of the earth acknowledge Christ as King of Kings. In order to rightly understand Revelation, one needs a working knowledge of all parts of the Bible. Revelation is the

## Some have entitled the book,

grand central station of Bible prophecy. All the themes of prophetic truth come into this magnificent book.

Revelation 21 and 22 constitute the final revelation given to us in Scripture. It

## "The Patmos Vision."

is a glorious climax of all that God has inspired men to write. Here we move from time to eternity (10:6). Here we, with John, get a glimpse of our eternal home—the new heavens and new earth. All that was begun in Genesis, the book of beginnings, is consummated here in Revelation. Our prayer with John's is, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus" (22:20).

### Suggested Outline to the Book of Revelation

- Chapter 1 — Introduction
- 2, 3 — Seven Letters to Seven Churches
- 4-18 — The Day of the Lord, with God's Wrath Beginning in 6:16, 17
- 19 — The Second Coming of Christ to Set up the Kingdom
- 20 — The Millennium
- 21, 22 — New Heavens and New Earth—Eternity

# A Letter to the Church at Ephesus

## Revelation 2:1-7

by Pastor David W. Cheatwood  
Rockford, IL

**W**HAT IS WRONG with the Church today? John F. Walvoord says, "Many of the evils and shortcomings which exist in the church today are a direct outgrowth of neglect of the solemn instruction given to these seven churches."<sup>1</sup>

"The messenger of the church at Ephesus, which at that time was a large metropolitan city, was undoubtedly an important person and a leader in Christian testimony at that time. When the book of Revelation was written, Ephesus, the most prominent city in the Roman province of Asia, had already had a long history of Christian witness. Paul had ministered there for three years as recorded in Acts 19. The effectiveness of his ministry is stated in Acts 19:10: 'All they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.' The preaching of the gospel had affected the worship of Diana, in whose honor the temple of Diana had been built in Ephesus, a structure considered one of the seven wonders of the world. The reduction in the sale of idols of Diana and the Christian teaching that these idols were

not worthy of worship resulted in the riot recorded in Acts 19:23-41."<sup>2</sup>

"After Paul's ministry at Ephesus came to a close, evidence indicates that Timothy for many years led the work as superintendent of the churches in the area. There is reason to believe that the Apostle John himself, now exiled on Patmos, had succeeded Timothy as the pastor at large in Ephesus. It was to this church and to Christians living in Ephesus at the close of the first century, some thirty years after Paul, that the first of the seven messages is addressed."<sup>3</sup>

So, what did Jesus have to say to the church at Ephesus?

The seven stars were probably the seven pastors, and the seven lampstands represented the seven churches of Asia. So we can see that Christ holds up His leadership and observes the churches with His presence. The word for "hold" in this case means "to hold authoritatively." If Christ is this involved with the church, we might want to consider our own relationship with the church and the pastor.

Christ is not only watching the church, He is taking notes. He has noticed their hard work, their endurance, and their

deeds. It drew His special attention that they hated evil. As a group of believers they had stayed on target. They checked out their leaders to see if what they had to say was truth or another fabrication of man. They were on their toes. It was also observed that they kept to the task and did not become weary. It can also be noted that they worked for the cause of Christ and His name.

Things were sounding pretty good until . . . Jesus started talking about the faults

## The church of Ephesus

of the church. The church had lost its way. He tells it to get back on track and return to the old ways. What were those ways? Ephesians 1:15, 16 gives us a good clue: "For this reason, ever since I heard

### was praised for her hatred.

of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all God's people, I have not stopped giving thanks to God for you. I remember you in my prayers" (TEV). The church at Ephesus had been known for her faith and her love for the brethren. Had she lost these important elements of the Christian walk?

Unless the church repented and returned to the ways of God she was destined to fail and be removed from her place of influence.

What were the Nicolaitans? "A group of persons whose works both the church at Ephesus and our Lord hated (Rev. 2:6) and whose doctrine was held by some in the Pergamene church (v. 15). Nothing else factual is known about them, but some have guessed that they were the followers of Nicolas of Antioch, one of the first so-called 'deacons' (Acts 6:5), but there is no evidence for this. Their doctrine was similar to that of Balaam through whose influence the Israelites ate things sacrificed to idols and committed fornication (Rev. 2:14, 15). A sect of Nicolaitans existed among the Gnostics in the third century, as is known from

church fathers of the time (Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, etc.). It probably had its origin in the group condemned in Revelation."<sup>4</sup>

The church of Ephesus was praised for her hatred. Does that surprise you? There is a time for hate in the life of the church. They understood that the Nicolaitans taught those things that were in opposition to God and therefore they hated them.

What now? Christ has some more good news for the church. If you overcome you will have a place in the paradise of God. Overcome what? Their weaknesses

and sin. Here we see a preview to Revelation 22:14-16: "Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life and that they may enter the city by the gates. Outside are the dogs and sorcerers and fornicators and murderers and idolaters, and

every one who loves and practices falsehood. I, Jesus, have sent my angel to you with this testimony for the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright morning star" (TEV).

It needs to be understood that the Kingdom of God is only for the overcomer. Unless sin is overcome and defeated by the blood of Jesus Christ, we are without hope. The tree of life is the same tree mentioned in Genesis 2:9: "And out of the ground the LORD God made grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil" (TEV).

Paradise will be restored. What God intended in the beginning will be put back together and we can be a part of it. The early church was given this opportunity and it is also ours.

Where do we fit in the big picture? Christ still holds up His messengers with the truth and His word. The church rises and falls in direct relationship to its faithfulness to Christ and the Word. We can either decide to follow Christ and His

ways, or follow the wide path to destruction that the world places before us day by day.

What does Jesus know about us? What are our deeds? What kind of work are we doing for Him and the church? Are we staying faithful to the work He has given to us? Do we really hate that which is evil? Are we willing to question our leadership and check them out? Does the Word of God have its rightful place in our hearts?

There is much hardship for the child of God to endure. He talks about perseverance because Christianity isn't easy. It requires faithfulness, devotion, commitment, and action. It is not for the faint of heart.

What have you suffered for the name of Christ? Maybe you aren't invited to some of the office get-togethers because of your stand for Christ. Maybe your honesty has kept you from being the yes man your boss is looking for. Maybe you have stood for the unpopular cause because it is also Christ's cause. The important thing is that we stand with the Christ, not against Him. We must make that decision every day of our lives.

Do you love all the brethren? Is your faith planted in the Christ and taking root? This is not an option. We must follow Christ or we are drifting away from Him and His influence.

Repent of your sins and get right with God. Place your faith in His Son and walk the ways of the Lord. Overcome sin and its influence in your life. Hate evil and its influence in the world in which we live.

Listen to the Christ, the Word of God, and the Spirit of God. Hear what Christ says to all the churches. If we overcome He will give us a place in the paradise of God and will let us eat from the tree of life. That's what I want; what about you?

<sup>1</sup>John F. Walvoord, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, p. 51.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 53, 54.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 54.

<sup>4</sup>Merrill C. Tenney, *The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary*, p. 586.

# A Letter to the Church at Smyrna

## Revelation 2:8-11

Pastor John T. Welch  
Sarasburg, VA

### Being Fitted for the Crown

**T**HE MIGHTY NIAGARA River plummets some 180 feet at the American and Horseshoe Falls. Before the falls, there are violent, and turbulent rapids. Farther upstream, however, where the river's current flows more gently, boats are able to navigate. Just before the Welland River empties into the Niagara, a pedestrian walkway spans the river. Posted on this bridge's pylons is a warning sign for all boaters: DO YOU HAVE AN ANCHOR? followed by DO YOU KNOW HOW TO USE IT?

"Faith, like the capacity to anchor a boat, is something we need to develop and use before a cataclysm."<sup>1</sup>

In His message through John to the Christians at Smyrna (Rev. 2:8-11), Christ encouraged His believers to "be faithful" even if it meant their lives. How can we as individuals and as a church develop such a faith in our own lives? To find out, let's look at this unique message to a unique church.

### The City

The city of Smyrna is present-day

Izmir and is the second largest city in Asiatic Turkey (approx. 250,000 people). If one looks at a map, he would find Biblical Smyrna about 35 miles north of the city of Ephesus. The city itself had a fine harbor which made it a great trade city<sup>2</sup> full of great wealth and commercial greatness. The city's tremendous beauty<sup>3</sup> gave it the title "The Glory of Asia." Not only was Smyrna beautiful, but it was also a politically important city.<sup>4</sup>

### The Church

No one knows for sure just when the gospel first reached Smyrna, but it's probable that it came from Ephesus (Acts 19:10). However, we do know that there was a group of believers faithfully meeting in that city. Christ's followers at Smyrna did not have it easy, either. At least two characteristics of the city made the life of a Christian difficult in Smyrna: 1) it was a great center for the worship of Caesar<sup>5</sup>; 2) there was a very large Jewish population there.<sup>6</sup>

### The Message

The difficulties the Christians faced in Smyrna are what Christ addressed in His message to them. In His commenda-

tion to the church at Smyrna Christ said, "I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich), and the blasphemy by those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan" (Rev. 2:9, NASB).

The church at Smyrna faced pressures from various directions. First, because of the idol worship that took place in the city the Christians faced the pressures of conforming to society's heathenistic rituals. One form of idolatry was that of the worship of Caesar. Each person was to sprinkle incense in a fire that was burning before a bust of the emperor and call Caesar Lord. Obviously the Christians

their enemies used against them (death) could not rob them of what Christ promised them (the crown of life) if they stayed faithful.

Finally, Christ challenges the believers at Smyrna by saying, "He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death" (Rev. 2:11b, NASB). Christ reiterates His counsel to them. "If you overcome the trials and tribulations facing you, the second death, the lake of fire, cannot hurt you."

### The Lesson

What words of encouragement! There are so many demands for the church to

## The Christians faced the pressures of

wouldn't do that so they were under fire and faced tribulation.

Second, they faced the pressure of financial poverty. However, in His commendation Christ contrasts their lack of

## conforming to society's heathenistic rituals.

material wealth to their abundance of spiritual wealth. They may not have been financially rich, but they were spiritually stable.

Third and final, Christ mentions the pressure of blasphemy the church at Smyrna faced from the Jewish population. The Jews were doing their best to destroy the church at Smyrna. This is why Christ called them "a synagogue of Satan."

Amidst the troubles the church faced, Christ counseled them with these words: "Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life" (Rev. 2:10, NASB). Some sort of tribulation was facing them, but Christ said not to be afraid. If they stayed faithful to Him (even if it cost them their lives) they would receive "the crown of life." What

conform to and accept the images of the world (homosexuality, abortion, illicit cohabitation, fornication, adultery, prestige, power, materialism, just to name a few). We as churches and individuals

may even face tribulations as a result of these pressures to conform. If we do, praise the Lord! Unfortunately, this is not often the case.

I was challenged by the words of John Stott in his book, *What Christ Thinks of the Church*. He wrote,

Supposing we raised our standards and stopped our compromises? Supposing we proclaimed our message and tightened our discipline with love but without fear? I will tell you the result: the church would suffer. There would be an outcry. We should be called puritanical, Victorian, old-fashioned, unpractical, rigid. Indeed, every imaginable derogatory epithet would be called into service of the unbelieving world, and the Church would again find itself where it belongs—outside the gate, and in the wilderness.

I am not advocating a harsh lovelessness towards the weak, the sinful or the penitent. Nor am I recommending that

we court opposition with rash and foolish indiscretion. I am simply suggesting that we should not compromise on clear, moral and spiritual issues. I am just saying that we should face this fact, namely, that if we do not suffer it is probably because we compromise and that if we do not compromise we certainly shall suffer.<sup>7</sup>

The question we must face then is this: "Are we as individuals, churches, and a denomination suffering, or are we compromising?" Christians are not promised an easy life. As a matter of fact, we are promised the opposite (John 15:20). We need to realize that suffering is a part of the life of a Christian (1 Pet. 4:12-19). I believe this realization will lead us to the proper attitude towards suffering—joy (Jas. 1:2-4).

When we face the pressures of the world, we must stand up against them. The reward is too great to pass up if we do not. The wonderful thing about overcoming these pressures is that Jesus has already done the fighting for us. He said in John 16:33, "These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulations, but take courage; I have overcome the world." Let us take courage in Jesus Christ no matter what we face in life.

Again, Jesus promised, "Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life." Are you being fitted for your crown today?

<sup>1</sup>Paul Adams, *Leadership*, Summer 1992, Vol. VII, No. 3 (Carol Stream, IL: Christianity Today, Inc.), p. 47.

<sup>2</sup>William Barclay, *Letters to the Seven Churches*, (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1957), p. 29.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 30.

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 31.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 35.

<sup>7</sup>John R. W. Stott, *What Christ Thinks of the Church* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1958), pp. 44, 45.



# A Letter to the Church at Pergamos

## Revelation 2:12-17

by Pastor Gordon Landry  
Oregon, IL

**T**HE THIRD MESSAGE of the risen Christ to the churches of Asia was addressed to "the angel of the church in Pergamos." Little is known of the origin of this church. Though Paul, on his third missionary journey, traveled in the vicinity, there is no indication that he went through Pergamos.

The town of Bergama, Turkey, is near the site of the old village of Pergamos. It's about 20 miles inland from the Aegean Sea, and is situated just to the north of the Bakir River. An old tradition says that parchment (sheep and goat skins prepared to be used as writing material) was perfected here, and given the name *pergamena*. The town library is said to have contained 200,000 volumes, so it seems to have been a place given to education. But the education must have been largely liberal, for idolatry abounded, as did sexual sins, and the townspeople (and evidently many in the church) accepted this behavior as normal.

Jesus was pictured in the first chapter of Revelation as having a number of rather strange attributes, and from these attributes at least one is chosen to show to each of the seven churches. To the church at Pergamos He is shown as having a mouth out of which proceeded a sharp sword with two edges. And this reminds us immediately of Hebrews 4:12: "The word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even

to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." A twoedged sword cuts two ways: it can pare off any unproductive branches so the others can produce more fruit, or it can simply destroy.

Verse 13 of our text shows that Jesus is aware of everything going on in this church (as well as in the other churches). Though Satan's seat was in Pergamos, and Satan dwelled there (depicting the utter depravity of the influences abounding within the society), there were still some good things that could be said for the church itself. Its works were good, Jesus' name was held fast, and His faith was not denied. One member, Antipas, had been martyred, and that's as much as we know. Speculation is that he was killed by a mob that was upset with him for some reason (perhaps as an earlier mob was upset with Stephen, Acts 7:51-60), but nothing in Holy Writ explains the reasons for his martyrdom.

"But I have a few things against thee" (v. 14) shows the other side of the coin. "A few things" may possibly indicate to us that the problems were not too severe, but the opposite is true. There may not have been a great number of "things" Jesus had against this church, but those He did see were outrageous. He threatened retribution if the church did not improve its spirituality. "The doctrine of Balaam" (v. 14) and "the doctrine of the Nicolaitans" (v. 15) may have been the same doctrine.

In other words, the Nicolaitans may have been following and promoting the doctrine of Balaam.

Balaam was a prophet, evidently, but not an Israelite. He was probably a Midianite (Num. 31:7, 8), a descendant of Abraham from his wife Keturah (Gen. 25:1, 2). Balaam was contacted by Balak, king of Moab, to curse the tribes of Israel who were nearing the Jordan River on their trek to the Promised Land. The elders of Moab and Midian who approached Balaam with Balak's proposition brought with them "the rewards of divination" (Num. 22:7). To Balaam's credit, he said to the emissaries, "I'll have to check with God before I can give you an answer." And God said, "No."

But Balak was a persistent king, and he sent several princes back to Balaam with a counter offer: "I will promote thee unto very great honour, and I will do whatsoever thou sayest unto me: come therefore, I pray thee, curse me this people" (v. 17).

(24:11). After Balaam left the presence of Balak and returned home, Balak's words must have galled him. He finally hit on a solution. Loving "the wages of unrighteousness," he decided to counsel Balak to get the women of Moab and Midian to tempt the men of Israel "with their wives" (25:18), which they obediently did. Those whom God would not allow Balaam to curse because they were His people submitted to the intrigues of the flesh, and not only did they "commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab," but they also "bowed down to their gods" (vv. 1, 2). As a result 24,000 Israelites died in a plague sent upon them by their forsaken God. In a later battle with Midian, Israel's warriors "slew all the males. And they slew the kings of Midian . . . : Balaam also the son of Beor they slew with the sword. And the children of Israel took all the women of Midian captives, and their little ones. . . . And Moses said unto them, Have ye saved all the women alive? Behold, these caused

The culmination of the story for the indulgent would be that Jesus will fight them with the sword of His mouth—perhaps a quick retribution at the time the words were spoken, and the judgment to eternal death at the great judgment day. "With the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked" (Isa. 11:4).

Jesus' final message to the church at Pergamos, as to the other six churches, was an encouragement to continue faithful and a reward will be forthcoming. The "hidden manna" shows that Jesus, because God's power rests upon Him, can give life eternal to the faithful. The "white stone" may refer to acceptance or a judgment to "let live," as sometimes occurred, whereas a black stone would mean condemnation and death. The name written on the stone presents a puzzle, since everyone who receives a stone seems to have a name on it known only to him. It has been suggested that the name could be that of Jesus which was never used of Him

## It was no little sin to hold to the doctrine of Balaam.

We'll not go through the whole story, but it was in the course of Balaam's trying to balance his greed with obeying God's Word that Peter said he "loved the wages of unrighteousness; but was rebuked for his iniquity: the dumb ass speaking with man's voice forbad the madness of the prophet" (2 Pet. 2:15, 16). During the time Balak was insisting that Balaam curse Israel, the prophet uttered these marvelous prophetic words, "I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel. . . . Out of Jacob shall come he that shall have dominion" (Num. 24:17-19). Also in the context of seeking to curse Israel are these words of Balaam which unfortunately did not come to pass: "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!" (23:10.)

When Balak saw that Balaam would not (could not) curse Israel, he tried to send him home, and said to him: "I thought to promote thee unto great honour; but, lo, the LORD hath kept thee back from honour"

the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to commit trespass against the LORD in the matter of Peor, and there was a plague among the congregation of the LORD. Now therefore kill every male among the little ones, and kill every woman that hath known man by lying with him" (31:7-17).

It was no little sin on the part of the congregation at Pergamos to hold to the doctrine of Balaam. Idolatry and fornication (which often went hand in hand) resulted from that doctrine which, in our modern lingo, would demand, "If it feels good, do it!" (Rev. 2:14.) This was the stumbling-block, the doctrine, if you will, of Balaam. The Nicolaitans may have been causing havoc among the members of the church by telling them that the old ways of idolatry and temple prostitution weren't so bad after all; they could still be good church members and indulge themselves with the other citizens of the city. Did Antipas denounce those sins? Is that why he was slain? Whatever the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, Jesus said of it, "I hate it" (v. 15).

after His birth—"Emmanuel" (Matt. 1:23)—but this would be unlikely if each name is different.

"Christians" today are not very different from those of the world. We all want our share of this world's goods, as did Balaam and those of Pergamos who adhered to his doctrine that the end justifies the means. When Balaam's advice took hold and fornication raged out of control in the camp of Israel, Phinehas, grandson of Aaron, grabbed a javelin, followed Zimri and Cozbi into a tent, and thrust them through while they were engaged in unlawful intercourse. Zimri was an Israelite; Cozbi was a Midianite woman. This sad story is recorded in Numbers 25. We need to remember that Jesus has a sharp sword that cuts in two directions, and we can use that same sword—the Word of God—to slice through the spiritual fornication that rages 'round the church today, and too often lodges therein. We need more people like Phinehas, of whom God said, "Phinehas . . . hath turned my wrath

*(Please turn to page 12)*

# A Letter to the Church at Thyatira

## Revelation 2:18-29

by Pastor Alan Cain  
Pelzer, SC

**A**S WE MAKE OUR WAY down the path through the seven churches of Revelation we come across one of the least-known cities of all, Thyatira. Yet, we find the longest letter written to this unfamiliar church and city. This lack of knowledge makes the interpretation a little more difficult, but the truths that are clearly evident are of great significance to the church today. For in this church we find not external persecution but internal decay, brought on by a desire to fit in better with the world.

Some information about the city of Thyatira is needed in order to better understand this lesson. Thyatira is a city in Asia situated between the Caicus and Hermus valleys. This city was on the road from Pergamum to Sardis and, because of its location, was a trading center. One of the important bits of background about Thyatira is that it had a great number of unions or guilds, some of these were in wool, leather, linen, bronze, dyers, potters, bakers, and slave dealers. These workers' guilds basically controlled the economy in Thyatira.

I always marvel, when reading Scripture, to see the delicate balance between judgment and grace, and this passage is no different. We find in the introductory statement to the church of Thyatira a description of Jesus that has inherent in it a warning, "... the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and whose

feet are like burnished bronze" (Rev. 2:18b, RSV). This phrase tips us off immediately that this will be no joy ride for this church. The eyes of flaming fire are symbols of Christ's ability to see exactly what is taking place, and His ability to pierce them with their sin. The feet like bronze show that the Lord has no intention of being moved or swayed from what He is about to do. Yet, we also see that Jesus gave the opportunity to repent (v. 21).

We find, then, in verse 19 a bit of praise to the church in general about its good works. This type of praise should not be overlooked too quickly. Works of love, faith, service, and patience had increased from the time of the origin of this church. That type of growth is greatly to be desired, for too often a church will be content to stay where it started.

But the praise quickly turns to condemnation toward a particular group of people within the church—those who tolerate the teaching of one called Jezebel. I feel it is safe to assume that this woman's name is actually not Jezebel, but is an apt title that the Lord ascribes to her because of her actions. The original Jezebel in 1 Kings 18 was the evil wife of Ahab who brought to their marriage and country the worship of Baal. Ahab's wife would have been content to have the worship of Jehovah as well as Baal until she realized that the followers of Jehovah would not allow

that, and she had many of them slain.

We find the same taking place with this woman entitled Jezebel, who claimed to be in the Christian fellowship. She apparently encouraged combining the worship of God with that of false Greek gods. Jezebel was beguiling the servants

## On the surface this church

of Christ to do two things: 1) to practice immorality, and 2) to eat meat offered to idols. This is where our background material comes into play.

Again, because of the sparse informa-

## tion about this church and city, this is the best assumption that can be made about the problem of the church at Thyatira. These guilds controlled most of the possible employment in the area, so it was very difficult to find work. Hence, the means to survive without joining a guild was practically nil, and this is where the moral dilemma would begin. Part of the participation involved in these guilds was to partake of common meals. Most of the meals were held in pagan temples, and even if they weren't they all started and ended with a sacrifice to pagan gods, and the meat was then eaten. Along with false worship, these meals were also occasions for drunkenness and gross immorality, so you can see the dilemma. The question was simple: Can a Christian take part in such goings-on? If not, it meant giving up almost all opportunity for commerce.might have appealed to a newcomer.

In the midst of this situation, a woman arises proclaiming a compromise with God's standards in a desire to improve business, and commercial and financial success. This teaching was coming from inside the church and, no doubt—as in all heresy—she was telling part truths. I'm sure she seduced them by saying, "We have to be in the world, don't we? Christ's grace covers sin, doesn't it?" But the Lord's answer is plain, "I will throw her on a sickbed, and those who

commit adultery with her I will throw into great tribulation" (v. 22, RSV). What we have is the internal decay of some of the believers in Thyatira, because they brought into what the Lord later calls "the deep things of Satan" (v. 24, RSV). Yet as you find in most church situations there are those who know God's Word well enough to divide truth from error, and Jesus commends those in Thyatira also. To those "who do not hold this teaching, . . . to you I say . . . hold fast what you have, until I come. He who conquers and who keeps

my works until the end, I will give him power over the nations" (v. 24-26, RSV). There are a number of valuable applications for today's church.

On the surface this church might have been appealing to a newcomer because of its general good works (v. 19), although warmth and activity do not necessarily mean it is a spirit-filled place. I am sure there are churches like Thyatira that have a lot of interest because they tickle the ears of the attenders and do not emphasize the obedience of Christ's

my works until the end, I will give him power over the nations" (v. 24-26, RSV).

There are a number of valuable applications for today's church.

On the surface this church might have been appealing to a newcomer because of its general good works (v. 19), although warmth and activity do not necessarily mean it is a spirit-filled place. I am sure there are churches like Thyatira that have a lot of interest because they tickle the ears of the attenders and do not emphasize the obedience of Christ's

away from the children of Israel, while he was zealous for my sake among them, that I consumed not the children of Israel in my jealousy" (Num. 25:11).

Satan's seat—whatever you may deem that to be—is among us today. The temptation to idolatry is more toward the "almighty dollar" than to images of wood and stone, but it is there nonetheless. Fornication is a constant temptation, with sexual diseases all-too-often being the inhibiting factor to indulgence rather than the Word of God and the desire to follow Jesus' life of purity. Potiphar's wife gave an open invitation to Joseph to commit

teachings. What Thyatira in part was offering was a place with a Christian name, but actions like those of the world.

We also find in here an extremely valuable lesson concerning Christian ethics. If it was possible then for Christians to convince themselves that they could take part in the sins of the world in order to get financial gain, and still remain faithful, it is possible now; in fact it happens all the time. Jesus warned that one pitfall to the Christian walk was the seduction of wealth. Many Christians fool themselves into believing that they can get involved in the underhanded dealings of business and not have that affect their walk with Christ. They also end up worshiping the idols of work, money, and possessions, to the exclusion of God. Yet, Christ says that doesn't cut it.

The question to us is, Do we have enough faith in God's provision for His people to stand strong on God's standards? The second group of believers in Thyatira did, even if it seemed to mean financial ruin. Do we think God is big enough to provide for those who honor Him outside the world's system? I hope so. Even if the result was poverty and starvation, I would rather be financially impoverished and rich in Christ than to be rich in wealth and spiritually poor.

"If we endure, we shall also reign with him" (2 Timothy 2:12a).

---

## Pergamos

(Continued from page 10)

fornication with her. How many "Christian" men would jump at the chance? But Joseph said to her, "How . . . can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" (Gen. 39:9.) Oh, that we had more men with the stamina of Joseph!

We must not forget that the fact that "everybody's doing it" was no excuse for the brethren at Pergamos to indulge their fleshly desires. Jesus looked askance at the idolatry and debauchery of those who upheld the doctrine of Balaam and that of the Nicolaitans. How does He look at you and your intemperance? at me and mine?

## Revelation 3:1-6

by Pastor Jon Cheatwood  
Pamona, CA

# A Letter to the Church at Sardis

**A**T THE TIME OF the writing of this letter, the city of Sardis was a wealthy, but degenerate city. William Barclay noted, "There was no life, no spirit there. The once great Sardians were soft, and twice they had lost their city because they were too lazy to watch."<sup>1</sup> They had once been a great, rich, and powerful city, but they fell victim to themselves.

Sardis sat on the top of a hill, about 1500 feet up. That position made the city nearly impregnable. Its people, because of their position and power, believed that they were too strong to need a guard. That belief led them to be unconcerned during a two-week-long offensive against the city, and they ended up losing their city in a night attack, because no one was standing guard. Then, centuries later, when people of Sardis had forgotten that lesson, the city was again taken over in much the same way it had been the first time. Had they been watching in either instance, rather than thinking they were so strong they didn't need to, they would not have lost their city so easily.

Sardis came back into prominence under the Roman empire. It was a center of woolen trade. The city was also known

for its dyeing of woolen garments. In fact, it was claimed that the art of dyeing wool was actually discovered there. In contrast to this, Jesus promised those who overcome that they will walk with him, dressed in *white* (Rev. 3:4, 5).<sup>2</sup> The city was known for its immorality, and most of its people practiced pagan worship. Jesus said that there were only "a few people in Sardis who [had] not soiled their clothes" (3:4, NIV).

Jesus begins the letter to Sardis with rebuke. There are no kind words to draw them into what He's saying, as there were in the letters in chapter 2. Plainly they had been dead, and He tells them that in the first verse. He immediately tells them to wake up (or watch), and to strengthen what remains. Like their ancestors, who failed to be alert and keep watch during battle, the believers in Sardis were failing to be alert to the sin around them and among them. Because they were probably former pagan worshipers themselves, they needed to watch carefully that they would not fall into their old ways. Unfortunately, they were asleep on duty, or not watching at all, and thus they were falling short of God's will. "I have not found your deeds complete in the sight of my God" (v. 2, NIV).

The solution for this problem was relatively simple. "Remember, therefore, what you have received and heard; obey it, and repent" (v. 3, NIV). You have strayed from the path that you set out on, so get back on the path and repent. It was time for these people to learn the lesson that they should have learned centuries ago, after the first attack that caught them off guard. They needed to guard themselves against straying from the teachings they had been given. If they failed to wake up and watch, Jesus said that He would "come like a thief, and you will not know at what time I will come to you" (v. 3, NIV).

I have to disagree here with the writers of the NIV Study Bible study notes. They say, in reference to verse 3, that it is "not a reference to the second coming of Christ, because here His coming depends on the church's refusal to repent. Elsewhere in the New Testament the clause refers to the second advent."<sup>3</sup> Likely it is, in fact, in reference to the second coming. To me, it appears that the language in this text mirrors the language found in the

watch and would not have let his house be broken into. So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him" (42-44). The idea is the same: we must watch and be alert, or the Day of the Lord will catch us off guard, just as a thief catches a sleeping man off guard. He is merely stating again that if you do not stand guard, keeping yourself in line with God, then you will not be ready for Christ's return. In that way, in the sense of our own readiness, we can cause His coming to be like that of a thief in the night.

Even though the outlook for this church wasn't too good, Jesus did say that there were actually a few people in Sardis who had not yet soiled their garments. Those people would get to walk with Him, dressed in white, as will those who overcome. This is an often-used picture of salvation in Revelation. Those who come out of the tribulation in Revelation 7:9-17 (NIV) were said to have "washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." Revelation 22:14 (NIV) gives a similar image: "Blessed are those

would be very easy to take a few bad experiences with someone of another race and decide that all people of that race are bad. Unfortunately, many in the Church of God have fallen into that trap. Of all people, though, Christians should be able to see people as individuals, and as such they should love them unconditionally. Sure, that can be incredibly hard at times, but isn't the road to salvation said to be small and narrow, and only a few will find it? (Matthew 7:14, NIV) Why? Because following the example of Jesus is not at all easy.

Another sin that is easy for us all to fall into is the sin of being complacent—just plain being nothing. Part of the problem at the church in Sardis was that they were going nowhere. One commentator (Barclay) said that at least a heresy in the church would have been a sign that they were very much alive. The people in Sardis were evidently too lazy to even think. If they were doing ANY good, there would probably have been some sort of attack from outside the church, some persecution or slander. The fact of the matter was, though, that they had ceased to matter. "It was so lifeless that it was not worth attacking."<sup>4</sup>

Pray that you and your church do not end up in such a position. Pray also for those churches that are already in that position, so that they may each catch fire. We must keep ourselves alive and alert spiritually so that the Second Coming will not catch us spiritually sleeping.

"You are all sons of the light and sons of the day. We do

not belong to the night or to the darkness. So then, let us not be like others, who are asleep, but let us be alert and self-controlled" (1 Thessalonians 5:5, 6). Watch and pray!

<sup>1</sup> *The Revelation of John*, volume 1, William Barclay, p. 145.

<sup>2</sup> *A Survey of the New Testament*, Robert H. Gundry, p. 371.

<sup>3</sup> *The NIV Study Bible*, Kenneth Barker, general editor, pp. 1929, 30.

<sup>4</sup> *The Revelation of John*, volume 1, William Barclay, p. 148.

## If they failed to wake up and watch,

texts the NIV Study Bible points to as second coming texts.

Let's look at the verse in question again: "Remember, therefore, what you have received and heard; obey it, and

who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life and may go through the gates into the city."

Of course, we would all do well to follow the commands in this letter. Times

## Jesus said that He would "come like a thief..."

repent. But if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what time I will come to you" (NIV). It speaks here of keeping in mind the message you've heard and obeying it. It equates that with waking up, or watching. Matthew 24, clearly a "Day of the Lord" text, uses similar language. "Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come. But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming, he would have kept

being as they are, the warning to stay awake is important. We must guard ourselves against falling into the sins that are so rampant all around us, especially those sins to which we may have been slaves before we came to know Jesus Christ. We've got to avoid picking up the sins of our society. Racism, for instance, which was quite evident here in Southern California last spring. I feel it is our responsibility to remind Christians that Jesus taught us to love our neighbor and to love our enemies, which I often preach. It

# A Letter to the Church at Philadelphia

## Revelation 3:7-13

by Pastor Hollis Partlowe  
Oregon, IL

**T**HE CITY of Philadelphia was located 30 miles southeast of Sardis. It was built by Attalus Philadelphus (159-138 B.C.) and named after him.

This city in Asia Minor (now Turkey) was a busy marketplace but never grew very much because of frequent earthquakes in the area. Philadelphia was on the main line of communication between Rome and Central Asia Minor. Its strategic location enabled it to open or close these lines of communication. The Lord reveals Himself as the one who opens and no man shuts. The church located in this city could well be called "the church with the open door."

The Greek word for Philadelphia is found six other times in the New Testament. Here is the seventh and final time. It is used only here of the city bearing this name.

The word "Philadelphia" means "brotherly love" (Heb. 13:1). The name "Christadelphian" (referring to our good Christian friends in that group) means "Brother in Christ."

One of the distinguishing marks of genuine Christians is love. Our Lord said: "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (John 13:35). One of the constant evidences of a healthy Christian life is the way Christian brethren get along with one another. Where there is no love between believers you won't find a wel-

come for Christ. If we are to have and enjoy Christ, we must love and live the truth. Of the seven letters to the seven churches, only the one to Philadelphia contains no word of rebuke. Apparently these first-century Christians had learned to apply Christian truth to everyday life. Here was a humble, faithful church in a pagan and corrupt society reflecting the love of Christ. It was the only one of the seven that received an unqualified commendation from the Lord of the church. The letter to Philadelphia is all praise and no condemnation. In it there is a word about Christ, the church, and the individual Christian. We would do well to pattern our churches after it. Members of Jesus' family will bear His resemblance. If brotherly love is missing, we have not yet found Philadelphia.

The Lord, the head of the church, introduces Himself in a threefold way:

1. He that is holy and true.
2. He that has the key to David. That's another way of saying that Jesus Christ has the right to rule and reign over this planet from David's throne in Jerusalem (Luke 1:31-33; Isa. 9:6, 7). Some day He will exert His authority. Make no mistake about it.
3. He that opens and no man shuts.

The Lord Jesus Christ is the central subject of all Scripture. If you want to see man as God wants to see him, look at Jesus Christ. He is perfect man. He is man as God expects man to be.

The congregation at Philadelphia had patience, Christ to keep them from temptation, a little strength, and had not denied Christ's name—a good track record. Jesus did not demand repentance of them.

### An Open Door (vv. 7, 8)

This may mean various things. Jesus is the open door to God (John 10:1, 10). The church will be built and not even death can hinder it (Matt. 16:18). Christ will win converts and none can hinder Him. The Lord Himself opens doors for those He sends forth. (Acts 14:27; 1 Cor. 16:9.) He has the power and authority to open doors which no man can shut. Jesus is the door of salvation. If you wish to enter, no one can stop you except yourself. When the door of salvation is closed, the Lord will close it (not man) as was the case in the days of Noah (Gen. 7:16). See also Matthew 25:10.

"I know you well" (v. 8, Living Bible), Jesus says to the Philadelphians. Although

## Here was a humble,

few in number, you have kept the faith. This world's system usually measures strength in numbers, but not God. This little minority had remained faithful against considerable odds. True Philadel-

## faithful church in a pagan

phians are all too hard to find. Right doctrine and right living go together.

The Lord specializes in opening doors (2 Cor. 2:12; Col. 4:3). I trust that your church in these last days will know the

## and corrupt society reflecting Christ's love.

open doors. An open door means opportunity, a call to action. Doors to former communist countries are not only open to the gospel, they are off the hinges. I praise God that Tracy Savage of the Pine Grove Church will hopefully be in Rus-

sia sharing Christ when you read this.

Israel stood on the edge of the Promised Land but refused to go to Canaan. The door was closed until 38 years later. That generation died without fulfilling its God-given purpose. The next generation came on the scene and went in and took the land from the enemies of Israel.

Christ has opened many doors in our time. Let's use them to share the Good News.

### Key to David

This is probably a reference to Isaiah 22:22, 23 where the key to the house of David was given to Eliakim who then had access to all the wealth of King Hezekiah. Jesus had already announced that He had the key to death and the grave (Rev. 1:18). In fact, He had already received all authority in heaven and earth (Matt. 28:18). Being the Son of God and a descendant of David, He could rightly claim the key to David. No church has that authority. Christ is truth in contrast to all that is false.

### They Say They Are Jews and Are Not (v. 9)

The ones in view are probably Judaizers who opposed the apostles at every turn in the road. Jesus said they are liars and are of "the synagogue of Satan." Jesus issued a stern warning against them because they opposed the work of the gospel and persecuted the early believers.

(See 1 Thes. 2:15, 16). God will deal with them in His own good time. This same problem is seen in the church at Smyrna (Rev. 2:9). Equating New Testament Church believers with Jews is forbidden,

although many groups through the centuries have made that claim.

### Kept From the Hour (v. 10)

Perhaps this is the most controversial phrase found in the seven letters. Good

students differ on the interpretation of it. Does this phrase apply to the church in general? Does it mean that the church will be kept through the period of trials in view or kept from that time period?

A. J. Pollack wrote: "It is remarkable that out of over 890 times the preposition *ek* is found in the New Testament, only once, Galatians iii.8, is it translated *through* and there the sense is evidently *by*. 'God would justify the heathen *through* or *by* faith. . . .' The word is translated dozens and dozens of times by the word *by*, and many times by the two words *out of*. But to be '*kept from*,' is not being '*safe in*.'"—quoted by Gerald B. Stanton (p. 49), *Kept From the Hour*.

"Kept through" as a translation of *ek* seems highly unlikely. One out of 890 is very convincing. Then, too, observe that the deliverance is not from the trials (testing), but from the time period or hour of trials which shall come on all the earth-dwellers. Perhaps if it were intended to teach that they would be kept through the time of trouble, it would be proper to use another preposition (Greek, *dia*), meaning *through*. I have 12 translations in my study and all of them read "*kept from*," including *The Emphatic Diaglott*. It is clear that this time of God's wrath and judgment will come upon all the earth-dwellers to try or test them (Rev. 6:10; 11:10; 12:12; 13:8, 12, 14; 14:6; 17:8).

Paul D. Feinberg "argues from classical literature, the Septuagint and the New Testament that 'the Greek preposition *ek* indicates a position outside its object,' and that the combination *tareo ek* promises 'a preservation outside of a time period. . ..'"—quoted by Gerald B. Stanton in *Kept From the Hour* (p. 357). Certainly, this issue will continue to be de-

bated by good students on both sides of the issue.

Earlier, in His Olivet Discourse, Jesus said: "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man" (Luke 21:36).

(Continued on page 19)



**CHURCH OF GOD GENERAL CONFERENCE**  
**HISTORY NEWSLETTER**

Atlanta Bible College  
Box 100,000  
Morrow, GA 30260

Church of God  
General Conference  
Box 100  
Oregon, IL 61061

Volume 5

October/November, 1992

Number 1

**EDITORIAL**

**Explanation of Time Line**

In this issue I have attempted to help the reader visualize events of the nineteenth century Age-to-Come development. I have chosen a time line because it is simple to follow and yet allows for some basic analysis of events corresponding to or having effect upon our movement.

For example: at point A, the basic tenets of the Millerite movement are lined out to correspond to point B which are activities called "Antecedents to the Church of God"—a term first coined to me by Moses Crouse, former archivist at Aurora College (University). The reader will notice the "antecedents" push through the period of the Bitter Disappointment and beyond it to the late 1840's when the supporters of the Age-to-Come rallied around Joseph Marsh, J.B. Cook, and Ralph V. Lyon, and tried to form an enduring national general conference.

From this time on, Point C to the end of the century, the Age-to-Come movement struggled to find its identity as a denomination. In another issue, we will examine its sectarian qualities, but not now. During this 50-year period, state conferences or districts became strong and regular. Quarterly conference meetings enthused, supported, and stabilized the new churches—mostly frontier works.

Several isolated national general conference meetings were held—about every decade—being primarily Bible studies with some vision, but spawning no concrete, enduring organizational goals to implement the vision.

The role of evangelists during this time should not be overlooked. W.H. Wilson made regular circuits into Missouri, Arkansas, Oklahoma, and Louisiana; Joseph Marsh traveled throughout the midwest; J.S. Hatch was licensed by the Illinois Conference and followed a circuit through Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, and Iowa. These men faced all kinds of hardships to promulgate the gospel story.

The principal topic of discussion at many of the state conference meetings was Bible doctrine. What were the major points required for salvation? Did the national organizational effort require a Statement of Faith? A creed was shunned (even into the 20th century), but shouldn't a Statement of Faith be articulated? And, if so, how many points should it have? Such questions may be seen under debate in many of the early conference reports prevalent in our published religious papers.

Finally, the time line stops short of entering the 20th century—we'll save that for another issue, too. I invite reader response, questions, analysis, and doubts; it will all make a more interesting newsletter.

**Memoirs**

Please send information to David Graham regarding T.A. Drinkard and the papers he published—1325 West Albion St., Chicago, IL 60620.

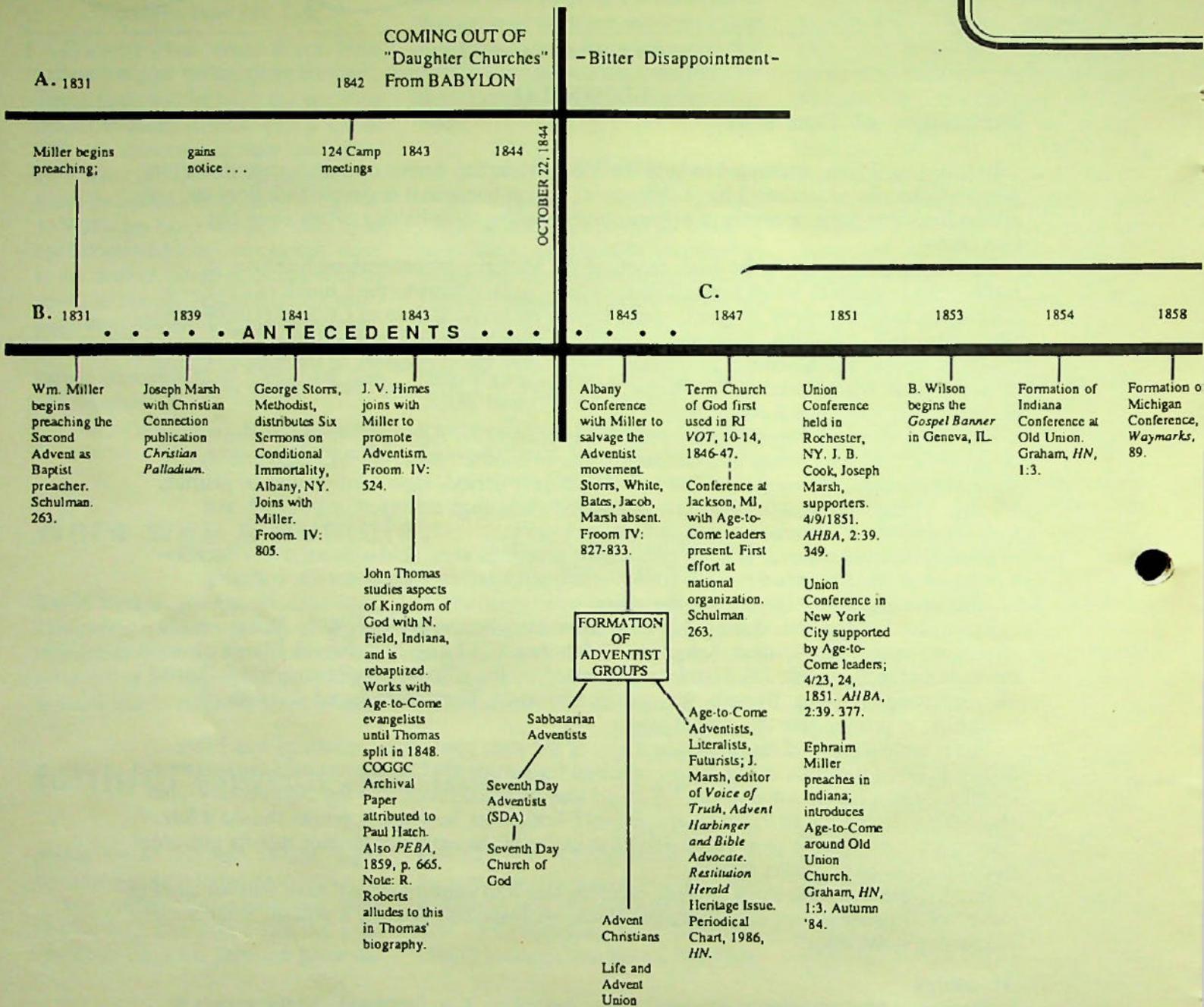
—More memoirs next issue—

**Editor's Note:** I am looking for any information on President Eisenhower's parents regarding their religious preference prior to 1896. Mr. Richard Rowe of Soap Lake, WA, sent info regarding their Jehovah's Witnesses membership after 1896. Next issue I will publish what I have regarding this question.  
—J.S.

**Deadline for next issue: November 1, 1992.**

Millerite/Adventist Movement

*Pathways  
Development of  
Movement in the*



*s of Faith*  
the Age-to-Come  
Nineteenth Century.

Age-to-Come  
work  
sustained by  
evangelists  
and state  
conference  
formations.

1863	1864	1868	1869	1872	1876	1888	1889	1892	1895	1898
J. Marsh preaches final sermon at Old Union before his death. <i>MIIBE</i> , 35:9, 1863.	Formation of Christadelphians. J. Thomas Oregon, IL. R. Roberts, <i>Biography of Dr. Thomas</i> . B. Wilson publishes <i>Emphatic Diaglott</i> (Greek NT), Geneva, IL.	<i>Herald of Coming Kingdom and Christian Instructor</i> , T. Wilson, ed., replaces <i>Gospel Banner</i> . Chicago becomes center of Age-to-Come publishing.	Formation NW Christian Association, Chicago, IL. Age-to-Come dissolved 1 year later.	Formation of Jehovah's Witnesses Chas. Taze Russell.	<i>Restitution</i> Age-to-Come begins publication, Plymouth, IN, H. V. Reed, S. A. Chaplin, editors.	Formation of Church of God in Christ Jesus General Conference. Age-to-Come reorganization attempt. Philadelphia, <i>Waymarks</i> , 14.	Second Annual General Conference Age-to-Come, Chicago, IL, <i>Waymarks</i> , 18. GC never meets again in 19th c. Executive Committee w/George Work, President, continues meeting.	George Work dissolves Executive Committee and General Conference due to lack of funds. Minute book given to A. J. Eychaner, Iowa evangelist.	Charles Taze Russell joins with Eychaner to preach throughout Iowa at Age-to-Come meetings. Executive Minute book/Eychaner journal. Mattison, <i>HN</i> , 4:2, 3, '92.	Formation Church of God congregation at Oregon, IL. Site of Illinois Conference meetings. Minutes. Formation of Illinois Conference Minute Book, COG Archives.

Dear Jan,

I received the latest COG HISTORY NEWSLETTER with all the interesting info. I like this idea of tying in the connections with the other "Adventist Family" groups. This is almost never done; I suppose each group likes to emphasize its own separate identity and sees no need to give "space" to others.

I think that's why the JW's have always insisted Benjamin Wilson was a Christadelphian—they can get a "handle" on that.

We know for a fact B. Wilson rejected the Trinity, immortal soul, eternal torment, preexistence of Christ, no personal devil—all Christadelphian teachings. Wilson was obviously a Christadelphian.

"Church of God" is impossibly vague. Dozens of sects call themselves "Church of God," most of them Holiness and/or Pentecostal. . . .

Similarly, the name "Advent Christian Church" is meaningless to JW's. They've never heard of it, even though Pastor Russell adopted his entire theology from them.

Russell learned his theology—remember he was a mere boy of 16—from his spiritual "fathers." (Primarily George Stetson and George Storrs. Later, in 1876 he came under the influence of Nelson Barbour and John Paton, leaders in the Advent Christian "1874 Time Movement.")

Russell didn't come up with any ideas of his own—nor did he

ever claim to. He gave total credit to Jonas Wendell, Stetson, and Storrs.

These facts need to be made known. They've been hidden long enough due to JW neglect of their own "roots." So why don't I tell that to the JW's? I have, *repeatedly*, but they prefer ignorance to knowledge, at least in this area.

I didn't know Eisenhower's parents were SDA's. (See page 8 of latest NEWSLETTER.)

It may be the writer is confusing the SDA's with another "AF" sect—the JW's.

Jan—please look into this and publish comments in your next NEWSLETTER. Some of us thought David and Ida were JW's. I'd love to have a photocopy of *Glad Tidings* with the Eisenhower names—this is truly fascinating! Keep up the good work!

J. Ross

Sunnyvale, CA

Editor's Reply: Thank you for the letter and for the material regarding the Eisenhower parents' history with Jehovah's Witnesses. I have asked several COG historians to search our early literature for other indications the Eisenhowers followed the Age-to-Come movement prior to 1895. Hopefully, more next issue.—JS.

### Time Line Bibliography

*Advent Harbinger and Bible Advocate* (AHBA), Joseph Marsh, ed. Rochester, NY, 1847-1854.

*Christian Palladium*, Joseph Marsh, ed. Union Miles, NY, 1832-1843.

*Emphatic Diaglott*, Benjamin Wilson, translator, Geneva, IL, 1864.

Froom, L. E., *Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, Vol. IV, Washington, D.C., Review Herald, 1966.

*Gospel Banner*, Benjamin Wilson, ed. Geneva, IL 1853-1865.

Hatch, Paul, "History of the Church of God." Unpublished study. Church of God General Conference Archives, Atlanta, GA.

*History Newsletter* (HN), Janet Stilson, ed. Church of God General Conference, Oregon, IL.

*Millennial Harbinger and Bible Expositor* (MHBE), Thomas Newman, ed. Seneca Falls, NY, 1863.

Minutes—Executive Board of General Conference, Philadelphia, 1888-1892. Church of God General Conference Archives, Atlanta, GA.

Minutes—Illinois Conference of Church of God, 1898-1919. Church of God General Conference Archives, Atlanta, GA.

*Prophetic Expositor and Bible Advocate* (PEBA), Joseph Marsh, ed. Rochester, NY, 1855-1860.

Randall, Clyde, *Historical Waymarks of the Church of God*, Church of God General Conference, Oregon, IL, 1976.

*Restitution Herald* (RH), Russ Magaw, ed. Heritage issue. Periodical Chart by J. Stilson, 1986.

Roberts, Robert, *Dr. Thomas, His Life and Work*. Christadelphian Press, Birmingham, AL, 1954.

Schulman, *Religious Heritage of America*, Barnes, NY, 1981.

*Voice of Truth* (VOT), Joseph Marsh, ed. Rochester, NY. Vol. 10-14, 1846-1847. Church of God General Conference Archives, Atlanta, GA.

Note to Harry Goekler—Thanks for the correspondence and encouragement.

# A Letter to the Church at Laodicea

Entrepreneurs  
Among Us

## Revelation 3:14-22

by David Wilsterman  
Associate Pastor, Valley View Bible Church  
Scottsdale, AZ

**T**HEY WERE an exceptional people. All that they had and everything they were was the result of their ingenuity and hard work. They were noble beings born of common stock—noble because their common origins were never an excuse for not excelling in the business of life. The world's citizenry looked to them as examples of success, for they took whatever was handed them, even the bad and the bitter, and made of it something estimable. They were not just survivors content with eking out a modest existence in a hostile environment, rather they were model achievers who were determined at every life-juncture to build a dream. They were bright. They were determined. They were strong. They were proud. They were entrepreneurs in the truest and purest sense. They were Laodiceans.

Their community had been established in the third century B.C. in the fertile valley of a tributary of the Macander River by Seleucid Antiochus II. He named the settlement after his wife, Laodice. The population applied themselves to building a top-ten city (you know, one of those places in which you'd like to raise a family or start a business). And their efforts in hard work paid off big for them.

They became a commercial hub famous for developing such fashionable products as shiny, black-dyed wool. Their medical research capabilities were renowned after their advancements in the treatment of diseases of the eye led to the formulation of a wondrous ophthalmological salve. Others believed in them and invested in their labors, making Laodicea a tremendous financial capital as well. In fact, so great did the wealth of their city become that, after an earthquake leveled Laodicea in 60 A.D., the populace rebuilt entirely by themselves. They never solicited Rome for imperial aid. Whatever had to be done for them, Laodiceans felt confident that they could do it themselves. After all, they had once been weak, but now were powerful; had once been illiterate, but now were lettered; and, had once been poor, but now were rich. And they had done it all themselves!

History suggests that the gospel came to these seemingly self-sufficient people early in Paul's career as an apostle of Jesus Christ. Although he apparently never journeyed there himself, it is felt that a close associate of Paul's—probably Epaphras—traveled to Laodicea during the apostle's stay in nearby Ephesus. The "letter from Laodicea" (Col.

4:16) is thought by some to be our Ephesian epistle, and if this assessment is accurate, then we know that the Laodiceans were familiar with such Christian distinctive teachings as God's gracious provision for us in Christ, and sufficiency for eternity in Jesus alone. If they read what we read, then they knew that

## Whatever had to be done,

one could be rich, and brilliant, and strong, and successful in God's estimation only when he abandoned his own wherewithal and became utterly dependent on the Lord as the sole resource for living.

## Laodiceans felt they could do it themselves.

Laodicean Christians knew that God had chosen them to populate a perfect city which He Himself was building, that He had blessed them with spiritual riches beyond their wildest dreams, and that He had equipped them by His power to negotiate the most hazardous life circumstance. But they chose to believe what others believed about them—that they could excel by themselves, achieve by themselves, overcome by themselves. In the end, they successfully factored Jesus out of their church equation, leaving Him on the outside looking in (Rev. 3:20).

That's where we find Him in His letter to the church at Laodicea (vv. 14-22), picturing Himself on the outside banging on the door for admittance. Whether interpreted historically or eschatologically, literally or figuratively, the interpretation is pretty much the same: hard-working church people have excluded the risen Christ from His church, and believe that their contributions to the church's development are both significant in God's estimation, and appreciated by Jesus. They believed that achievement was achievement, an end secured by any means. They believed that that end—success—even in the work of Christ on earth, justified any means. After all, wouldn't Jesus want a sophisticated,

powerful, wealthy church? Wouldn't He be pleased that His followers would apply themselves to the task of church-building and not trouble the Savior with the mundane? Wouldn't He be proud that His followers had organized themselves so as to become successful in all to which they invested themselves and were the envy of all the world? No! He wouldn't be proud—not then; not now. That's

the whole point of His letter to the Laodicean church recorded in the third chapter of Revelation. Whether an ancient or future body, Christ counsels that without His presence among us, inside us, the

church is nothing but pitiful, poor, and wretched. He advises that the Laodiceans forget whatever their own entrepreneurial genius has gotten them and get from Him all that they need, because, no matter how all that might look to them, from Jesus' perspective they are genuinely impoverished.

I thank my God that, we living in the last decade of the last century of the second millennium A.D., do not bring to the church of Jesus Christ our own agendas for where His church ought to be going or how it ought to get there. I thank my God that we do not believe, as did the ancient Laodiceans, that the church is just like any other enterprise which, when our entrepreneurial skills are applied, will prosper under our own manipulations. I thank my God that we do not ever suppose ourselves to be in control of the business of the church to the extent that we prescribe this world's formula for success in doing Christ's work of peace-making and bridge-building. "Those who believe that unbelievers can only respond to God by a gift of His grace will not act as though it all depended on clever marketing techniques." (Bill Hill, *Power Religion*, Moody Bible Institute, 1992). And, I thank my God that if, God forbid, we should ever find ourselves in any

such circumstance as described above, Jesus is always faithful and will keep on knocking at the door, seeking the invitation of just one believer for Him to enter and save us from ourselves.

But these kinds of things happen whenever we view the church as something which is ours, not something we are. It happens every time we imagine that we are responsible for the success or failure of ministry. It happens whenever we bring to the task of reconciling the world to God through Christ the notion that we can do it without Christ, or in spite of Him. We fall into the Laodicean trap every time we bring the tried and true techniques of entrepreneurs to our mission for God-with-Christ; whenever

we suppose that because achievers use such ploys in the world productively, we may do the same

in Christ's church with His approval and to His delight. (I declare if I hear such phrases as, "But, this is the real world!" or, "But, it works!" just one more time relative to using the techniques of modern-marketing strategists, I'll be pushed to the point of being a small toy short of a Happy Meal!) In fact, Bill Hull writes in *Power Religion* that "church growth should not be a primer for building effective churches; it has a sociological base, it is data driven, and it worships at the altar of pragmatism. It esteems that which works above all and defines success in worldly and short-sighted terms. It offers models that cannot be reproduced and leaders who cannot be imitated."

There is no room in the church for entrepreneurs, in the popular sense. But sometimes we find ourselves among them. Sometimes we find ourselves working alongside them. Sometimes we find ourselves following their lead as our pastor, or teacher, or elder. Sometimes we discover that we're applauded for strategic brilliance, or our business sense, or our knowledge and logic, when all the while it is apparent to Jesus that we're just entrepreneurs bringing to the task building His church our innate abilities, but doing that work without Him. Many

encourage this by telling church leaders that theirs can be "bigger" and "better" churches when they attend growth seminars and marketing retreats and acquire those skills commensurate to developing successful, profitable enterprises. (Those who hesitate to buy in to such notions are usually labeled "lazy" by the "go-getters.")

We generally do this, become Laodicean entrepreneurs, because we do not trust Christ; we let ourselves "be paralyzed by fear, fashioned by our environment, petrified by routine, sterilized by conformity," as Paul Tournier writes in his book *Guilt & Grace* (Harper & Row, 1962). And for this, the author goes on to observe, we will be self-condemned by guilt, knowing that God would have us do otherwise.

For our rebellion, albeit for every right

and noble reason, Jesus writes of His disgust, that He would spit us from His mouth. (Another reference to Laodicea, for, their water supply was poor and they had to have fresh, but warm, water piped to their city from some distance.)

It must be repulsive to the Savior to have us consider doing the work of His church without Him, as to give a thirsty person on the desert warm water to drink. Long ago God spoke through Jeremiah of His dissatisfaction with our attempts to do what He has not given us to do—in fact, what is His alone to accomplish. "My people have committed two sins: They have forsaken me, the spring of living water, and have dug their own cisterns, broken cisterns that cannot hold water" (Jer. 2:13, NIV). It must grieve Jesus, as it grieved God in Jeremiah's day, to realize that we know His ways are

not our ways, and yet have us determined to do the work of His ministry our way. It must pain Him to be on the outside of His church looking in, pleading to be admitted, as we involve ourselves with the business of His church as true Laodicean entrepreneurs.

"Lord, deliver us from the mistaken notion that we are responsible for the survival of Your church, its success or its failure. Let us hear Your Son's knocking at its door, and with hands dedicated to doing His bidding, open it to Him. May we never presume to apply the sciences of this world to the business of Your church. Grant us relief from the guilt which drives us to make disciples as Laodicean entrepreneurs. Help us to trust in the reality of Christ's being, in the competency of your equipping, and in the truth of His soon appearing. In Jesus' name. Amen."

---

## Philadelphia

(Continued from page 16)

It is not my purpose here to debate who is in or out of the tribulation period. Good scholars differ widely on this issue. The important thing is that Jesus is coming again. "Behold, I come quickly" (3:11). This statement is found three times later in the book (22:7, 12, 20). The idea is not that Jesus will come soon after the book was completed but when events in the book started happening, they would move in swift succession. Therefore, "Hold fast what you have, in order that no one take your crown" (v. 11, NASB). This is good admonition for Christians in the twentieth century.

Four times in verse 12 Jesus calls God "my God," which is in beautiful harmony with the whole revelation of Scripture. Our Heavenly Father is the God of Jesus Christ.

Then Jesus issues a promise to overcomers which He does several times in this book. Overcomers will be pillars in "the temple of my God." This is a figure of speech in which the entire city of

Jerusalem is considered a temple. In keeping with this symbolism the Philadelphian Christians will be permanent like the pillars in a temple. They will stand when all else has fallen. This would have special meaning to them because of their experience with earthquakes which had ruined their buildings and left only the pillars standing.

### What the Spirit Says (v. 13)

"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." This admonition is given to each of the seven churches. This is equal to what Christ says to the churches inasmuch as Christ does all of His work through the Spirit. Sometimes in Scripture "spirit" refers to the whole personality (Dan. 7:15; Phil. 4:23, NASB; 1 Cor. 15:45; 1 John 4:1).

### Threefold Assurance

Jesus gave the Philadelphians a threefold assurance that they would be identified with God because:

1. They will have the name of God.

The name is a mark of citizenship and ownership. Followers of the beast are tagged with the mark of their master (Rev. 13:16-18); so are followers of Christ. One is true, the other counterfeit.

2. They will have the city of God—New Jerusalem.

This is a reference to the future eternal city described in Revelation 21; 22. This city is just as literal as the new heavens and new earth, although all that is involved in this verse is beyond our finite comprehension.

3. They will have a new name—"my new name" (NASB).

The Church of God will ever bear the name of God. These Philadelphians portray what is good and desirable in a church. They were humble and faithful, exemplified the life of Christ, loved God's Word and kept it, and won converts. We'd do well to look at Philadelphia. Nothing can hinder such a church.

# God Keep Our Land

by Pastor Stephen Bolhous  
Glad Tidings Church of God,  
Fonthill, Ontario

Pastor Stephen Bolhous is a member of the General Conference/Atlanta Bible College Board of Directors, having been elected recently by the delegates as the Conference convened in St. Paul, Minnesota, August 3-7, 1992.

**T**his year our great nation of Canada celebrates a century and a quarter of confederation. Patriotic sentiments are rising to new heights. This pride for country is not out of proportion to the reality that Canada is one of the greatest countries in the world. In this 125th year our national anthem has been frequently played and sung. One line of "O Canada" says, "God keep our land, glorious and free!"

This lyric says two things: first, it acknowledges the sovereignty of Almighty God over our nation; second, it is a request and prayer for God to sustain and preserve our nation. We want God, our ultimate Sovereign, to "keep" the land of Canada, to sustain, preserve, and defend Canada in a continuing capacity.

I've got good news! Our prayer has been heard, and, to this point in time, has been answered!

*God is the Keeper of Our Nation!* The psalmist says, "He rules by His might forever; His eyes keep watch on the nations" (Psa. 66:7, NASB). King Jehoshaphat said, "Art Thou not ruler over all the kingdoms of the nations? Power and might are in Thy hand so that no one can stand against Thee" (2 Chron. 20:6).

God is the keeper of Canada; our history shows His providential hand. The beginnings of Canada were not peaceful. European nations fought with one another for the land and fur trade of the New World. By 1775, the United Kingdom had emerged as the victor with eighteen colonies in North America. In 1776, thirteen colonies revolted against the crown and formed their own new nation—the United States. The remaining colonies maintained loyalty to the crown while self-government developed.

Through Lt. Governors and councils (for Ontario it started with Governor Simcoe's arrival in Niagara in 1792), to an elected assembly in

1846, to the British North America Act of 1867 and the birth of Confederation—God has kept our land.

The first legislation in the British Empire for abolition of slavery was promoted by Governor Simcoe and passed by the assembly of Upper Canada in Newark (now Niagara-on-the-Lake). The hand of God was keeping the nation by keeping the freedom of the individual!

In 1867 George Brown wrote: "We are trying to adjust amicably to difficulties that have plunged other countries into all the horrors of civil war. Today, we celebrate the confederation of Canada and the spirit in which it was founded." When Confederation took place the pain of the American Civil War (1861-1865) was still in recent memory. Canada and its freedom had been the terminus of the "Underground Railroad" for fleeing slaves. The spirit of Canada—freedom for all its citizens—was and is an evidence of God keeping the nation.

God continues to be the Keeper of Canada in the twentieth century. Today the UN peace-keeping force in Sarajevo is Canadian. Canada has a world-wide reputation for being a people of peace. Why are we a people of peace? Why do we have a nation strong enough to send troops to a troubled part of the world? *God has kept us!*

Did you know that the United Nations' "human development" index, which measures standard of living, life expectancy, literacy, and other well-being elements, ranked the nation of Canada *first* in the world? What a great place to live!

The phrase "God keep our land, glorious and free" is immediately followed by the phrase: "O Canada, we stand on guard for thee." How do we stand on guard for Canada? Not with military strength prepared for possible invaders or financial acumen in the world trade market. We stand on guard for Canada *by standing with God as He*



*has stood by us! We are to keep God!*

The psalmist said, "He brought forth His people with joy, His chosen ones with joyful shout. He gave them also the lands of the nations, that they might take possession of the fruit of the peoples' labor, so that they might keep His statutes, and observe His laws" (Psa. 105:43-45, NASB).

The focus of this passage is on Israel as it entered Promised Land. It is interesting

to note the parallel of ancient Israel to Canadian history. Our forefathers came from the old country to prosper in the fruit of a new rich land and take possession of it. In that new land we as God's people are to keep His laws.

Have we as a nation kept God's laws and standards in our society? Not very well. We have not loved our neighbours as ourselves or loved God with all of our being. We have failed to keep God. We

have followed the pattern of ancient Israel and pursued a degenerative course in our relationship to God. Solomon wrote, "Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a disgrace to any people" (Prov. 14:34, NASB). Though the majority of Canadians would say they believe in the existence of God, the percentage of people who actively pursue a daily relationship with Him is a minority.

*(Please turn to page 27)*



Senior Pastor  
Michael Hoffman.



Newly constructed Oregon Church of God, 860 W. Oregon Trail Road, Oregon, IL.



Associate Pastor  
Bob Alcumbrack.

## • Changing Challenges by Pastor Michael Hoffman Oregon, IL

**O**N AUGUST 2, 1992, the Oregon Church congregation celebrated God's faithfulness and goodness, through four years of planning and construction, in a Dedication Service for the new church facility. It was a great day of celebration after years of fairly intense effort and focus to bring the project to completion. Some history will help you appreciate the need to celebrate in God's honor.

The amount of change this congregation weathered in the 14 months prior to the Dedication Service has been incredible. The people's resilience and perseverance have been highly commendable and glorifying to God in whom they trust. Changes include: the General Conference and Oregon Bible College relocating, five other families moved the same summer (the result was over 40 people leaving—we say we launched them for further ministry rather than that we lost them), we left a facility we had occupied for over 92

years, the new facility has one multi-purpose room rather than a separate sanctuary and fellowship hall, the parsonage was sold and the pastor moved into his own home, the associate pastor married after spending eight years of single life with the congregation. There are a few more, but you see the point—things changed dramatically for the Oregon Church in the last year. God has been faithful and His presence has been felt each step of the way. The Dedication celebration was needed to express our praise and bring closure to that phase of our church life.

I have heard it said that the greatness of a church is found not in how many people come into the building, but in how many go out into service. That is the focus we are working hard at now. For about four years we have of necessity largely focused on construction of a new facility. We still regularly sent people out into service with ministry trips to Mexico, V.B.S. teams to Minnesota, and teams to Americus, Geor-

gia, working with Habitat For Humanity. But in all honesty, the intensity of our construction focus hindered our local outreach.

The congregation recognizes that and is ready to shift from construction of a new facility to building the church, from pounding nails to meeting people's needs, and from excitement over a new facility to exercising our faith. The challenges before the church are great; that amount of change certainly has many ramifications. But we have seen God work in tremendous ways in the lives of His people and we trust that in the strength of Christ we can indeed meet any challenge and bring glory to God.

Our time of celebration was sweet and very well deserved. Stay tuned for further reports as we get back to the real work of the church, impacting our community with the love of Jesus Christ. As God continues to work in great ways in this church, I am fully confident the results will be exciting.

# The Doctrine of the Holy Trinity: Is It True or False?

by Brenda J. Swartz  
North Ridgeville, OH

Brenda Swartz is a second-year student at Lorain County Community College, Ohio. This paper was originally written for her English term paper.

**T**HE TRINITY HAS long been taught in many churches, and specific attention was centered upon the doctrine "early in the fourth century as a result of a controversy between two church leaders in Alexandria, Arius (256-336) and Athanasius (293-373)." (Huffer, *Systematic Theology*, 66). The trinity was widely accepted in Alexandria and was part of the doctrines taught in the established churches. "Arius maintained that Jesus, although great, was in some ways inferior to God" (66). Arius stated that if Jesus was really the Son of God, then there must have been a time when there was a Father but no Son, therefore making the Father greater than the Son. Because of this opinion, Arius and his friends were excommunicated from the church in 321 A.D. (66, 67). Trinitarianism did not become the dominant doctrine of Christendom until Theodosius became emperor in 379. Theodosius was the emperor who made Christianity the state religion. This paved the way for the rise of the Roman Catholic Church (67, 68).

Today the controversy continues as the Church of God of the Abrahamic Faith, based in Atlanta, Georgia, and the Jehovah's Witnesses continue to believe, contrary to popular belief, that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are separate, and are not parts of one godhead as is taught by the doctrine of the trinity.

In order to know if the trinity can be true, we must first establish some facts about God. God has many attributes, and these attributes make him God. God's natural attributes are: "infinity, eternity and immortality, immutability, omnis-

cience, omnipresence, and omnipotence" (Ibid., p. 97). Because these attributes are necessary for understanding God, we need to know what they mean.

**Infinity:** "God is infinite." There are no limitations on God. Man however, is limited by relations of time and space. Man has both mental and physical limitations and imperfections. Man is finite; God is infinite. God has unlimited power. He has universal and perfect relations with all other existence (Ibid., p. 97).

**Immortality:** "God is immortal. He is not subject to death. That which is immortal is deathless, imperishable, incorruptible, indestructible, indissoluble. It never fades, never dies, never ends. It does not depreciate, decay, or corrode. It results in unending existence; it is exempt from death" (Ibid., p. 98).

**Immutability:** "God is unchangeable. . . . God cannot change for the better because He is already the best. He cannot change for the worse "because that would make him imperfect. "Infinite perfection is unchangeable" (Ibid., p. 98).

**Omniscience:** "God is perfect in knowledge. God's mind is perfect. His knowledge is infinite, eternal, and complete" (Ibid., p. 99).

**Omnipresence:** "God is all powerful. He is almighty. His power is infinite. There is nothing that He cannot do. With Him all things are possible" (Ibid., p. 102).

God has moral attributes as well as natural ones:

God's moral attributes describe His character. They designate the properties within God's nature that determine His moral relationships with

mankind. What God does is determined by what God is. The works of God are based upon the character of God. . . .

The three fundamental moral attributes of God are holiness, love, and truth. Holiness includes righteousness and justice. Love includes mercy, grace, lovingkindness, and goodness. Truth includes veracity and faithfulness" (Ibid., p. 103).

Holiness: "God is holy. Holiness refers to God's moral perfection" (Ibid., p. 103). This holiness involves both positive and negative. The positive side is that in Him all goodness dwells. The negative side is that in Him no immorality exists. This is excellence and purity.

Love: "God is Love. . . . The truth is not merely that God loves, but that God is love. Love is not simply something God does; it is His Nature" (Ibid., p. 108). There are no limits or conditions put on God's love. It is always and forever, and is everywhere.

Truth: "God is Truth. This means that what God knows agrees perfectly with what God is" (Ibid., p. 110). We depend

and could only be the Son of God.

This brings up another problem. It is said that "Mary ought not only be called the mother of Christ, but also the mother of God" (Beardslee, 94).

The persons of the Godhead are three: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The Father is the first person of the Trinity, self-existent, begetting the Son from eternity and with the Son producing the Holy Spirit. The Son is the second person, begotten by the Father from eternity, and with the Father producing the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the third person, proceeding from eternity from the Father and the Son (Beardslee, 41).

This tells of Jesus as the second part of the Trinity, however these details of His birth tell of His being born of a virgin:

The birth of Christ was both natural and supernatural. It was natural, in that He was born with the normal period of pregnancy and the opening of the womb; it was supernatural in that He was born from a virgin (Beardslee, 95).

We have already established that one of

power Christ exercised in performing miracles was received from God" (Ibid.). "The Son can do nothing of himself" (John 5:19).

Jesus is also inferior in life. God has always existed, whereas Jesus was born. Jesus had a beginning; God did not.

Jesus prayed to His God, the Father. Jesus revealed that He was not Himself God when He prayed to His Father as God. If Jesus were equal with God, why did Jesus pray to God? Trinitarians claim that God, Jesus, and the Spirit all have one intelligence and one will. If Jesus and God share one will, the power of decision, it would seem like mockery for one person of a trinity to pray to another person of a trinity. Jesus showed that He is inferior to His Father and that His Father alone is God by the fact that He prayed to Him (Ibid., p. 83).

Jesus prayed the prayer known as the Lord's Prayer to teach others to pray. But He prayed many other times. Another time that He prayed to His Father was on the Mount of Olives. This was just before

## Jesus is inferior to God in knowledge, power, and life.

upon Him because He is dependable. We have faith in God because He has revealed Himself as Truth through His word." Now that these facts are known, we can further understand why the trinity cannot be true.

It is relatively widely accepted that our Savior, Jesus Christ, was born of the Virgin Mary. However, some liberal theologians deny the virgin birth of Jesus:

They believe in the human paternity of Jesus or that He is a son of Joseph. They regard Him as a mere man. One group of theologians explains the many Bible verses which clearly designate Jesus as the Son of God by saying that all men are sons of God; all men are divine. Another group explains these verses by claiming that Jesus is the adopted Son of God. They teach that Jesus was the son of Joseph by natural birth and became the Son of God by adoption (Ibid., p. 244).

If Mary was a virgin at the time of Jesus birth, Jesus couldn't be the son of Joseph,

God's attributes is eternity. If God has always been here, He couldn't have been born, and therefore, would not have a mother. Jesus was born, and had Mary for His mother. He then could not be God.

"Jesus is Inferior to God" (Huffer, p. 84). How can God be inferior to Himself? The answer is simple. It has previously been stated that God is perfect, and to be inferior is to be less than perfect. Therefore, Jesus cannot be God. Jesus clearly shows us this when He says "My Father is greater than I" (John 14:28).

Jesus is inferior to God in several ways: in knowledge, in power, and in life. God is omniscient. Jesus is not. "Jesus increased in wisdom (Luke 2:52). If Jesus were God with infinite knowledge, how could He have increased in wisdom?" (Huffer, p. 85).

"God is omnipotent. He is almighty. He has infinite power. . . . Jesus, on the other hand, was not omnipotent. The

His death. His purpose was to communicate as one Son to His Father.

Jesus is the only begotten Son of God. (John 1:14, 18; 3:16, 18; 1 John 4:9.) He has a unique relationship with God. This relationship is one which no other man has experienced. Christ's life among men was a revelation of God's character. He reflected God's holiness, love, and truth; He showed what God is like. (John 1:18; 14:9.) (Huffer, Systematic Bible Study Course, Lesson 14.)

This is what Anthony Buzzard writes in his book, *Who Is Jesus? A Plea for a Return to Belief in Jesus, the Messiah*:

Luke knows very well that Jesus' divine sonship is derived from his conception in the womb of a virgin; he knows nothing at all of any eternal origin:

"The Holy Spirit shall come upon you [Mary] and the power of the Most High shall overshadow you; for that reason

the holy thing which is begotten shall be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:35). The Psalmist has ascribed the Messiah's sonship to a definite moment in time—"today" (Psa. 2:7)—on the occasion of his appointment to rulership of the world. Paul finds a further application of Psalm 2 in Jesus' resurrection (Rom. 1:4).

Here, clearly presented by the Scriptures which Jesus recognized as God's Word, are the biblical ideas of Jesus' sonship. It is to be dated from Jesus' conception, his resurrection, or from his appointment to kingship. Luke's view of sonship agrees exactly with the hope for the birth of the Messiah from the woman, a descendant of Adam, Abraham, and David (Matt. 1:1; Luke 3:38). (Buzzard, 10).

Jesus is clearly the Son of God, and as such is divine.

We have previously established that God is eternal. God is also immortal.

He is not subject to death. God always has been immortal and always will be immortal. It is impossible for God to die. Jesus, on the other hand, was born mortal. He died. Jesus had characteristics of mortal man. He experienced hunger (Matt. 4:2), thirst (John 19:28), weariness (John 4:6), temptation (Matt. 4:1), and suffering (Luke 24:46). Jesus died (John 19:33; 1 Cor. 15:3). God cannot die; Jesus died. Jesus is not God. Jesus became immortal when God raised Him from the grave. Jesus received immortality from God. Jesus can never die again (Huffer, Systematic Bible Study Course, Lesson 5).

Because Jesus died and God cannot die, there is no conceivable way that Jesus could be part of a godhead.

"There is one God, one human race, and one mediator between the two. The one mediator is Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God. He is the only person who could ever have served as mediator between the one God and the one human race" (Huffer, Systematic Bible Study Course, Lesson 13). Trinitarians believe "If the mediatorial work is divinely-human and perfect, in which there is activity not only by the human, but also by the divine nature . . . Beardslee, 96). However, Jesus as Mediator cannot be

God Himself. The Church of God of the Abrahamic Faith believes:

"There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. 2:15). Jesus is mediator between God and men. Jesus, therefore, is not God Himself. If Jesus Himself were God and equal with God, as trinitarians assert, He would not be in a position to serve as mediator. As mediator one must be a third party. If Jesus were God and equal with God, He would be one of the two parties and could not serve as mediator between the two—God and man. (Gal. 3:20.) The fact that Jesus is a mediator nullifies the possibility of His being part of a trinity (Huffer, Systematic Bible Study Course, Lesson 5).

"The Old Testament is strictly monotheistic. God is a single personal being. The idea that a Trinity is to be found there or even in any way shadowed forth, is an assumption that has long held sway in theology, but is utterly without foundation. The Jews, as a people, under its teachings became stern opponents of all polytheistic tendencies, and they have remained unflinching monotheists to this day. On this point there is no break between the Old Testament and the New. The monotheistic tradition is continued. Jesus was a Jew, trained by Jewish parents in the Old Testament Scriptures. His teaching was Jewish to the core: a new Gospel indeed, but not a new theology. He declared that He came 'not to destroy the Law and the Prophets, but to fulfill' them, and He accepted as His own belief the great text of Jewish monotheism: 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one God.' His proclamation concerning Himself was in line with Old Testament prophecy. He was the 'Messiah' of the promised Kingdom, the 'Son of Man' of Jewish hope . . . if He sometimes asked 'Who do men say that I the Son of Man am?' He gave no answer beyond the implied assertion of Messiahship." (*A Critical History of the Evolution of Trinitarianism*, 1900, pp. 4, 5.) (Buzzard, 5).

Dr. Huffer writes this about the theory of the doctrine of the trinity:

There are three primary propositions involved in the doctrine of the trinity. These three points are: (1) The com-

pound unity of God. (2) The deity of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit. (3) The personality of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit.

Failure to prove any one of these three propositions will result in the collapse of this theory. To disprove trinity, therefore, one needs to establish only one of the three facts: (1) The simple unity of God. (2) Jesus is not God. (3) The Spirit is not a person. (Huffer, *Systematic Theology*, 63).

It can be clearly seen that the trinity is a false doctrine. Jesus was born of the virgin Mary, but Mary is not the mother of God. A person cannot pray to himself, making it impossible for Jesus to be God. Jesus died; God cannot. The mediator must be a third party, and since Jesus is the mediator, He cannot be God.

Many people profess to believe in the doctrine of the trinity; however, there can be no basis for this belief. "The New Testament contains no formal doctrine of the Trinity" (Brown, 140). However, religion is entirely based on faith; faith in a God we have never seen. It is because religion is based on faith and interpretations of the Bible that this controversy started in the first place.

#### WORKS CITED

- Beardslee, John W. III, ed. *Reformed Dogmatics*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1965.
- Brown, William Addams. *Christian Theology in Outline*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1906-1976.
- Buzzard, Anthony. *Who Is Jesus? A Plea for a Return to Belief in Jesus, the Messiah*. Oregon, Illinois: THE RESTITUTION HERALD, 1990.
- The Holy Bible.
- Huffer, Dr. Alva G. "Christ the Mediator." Adapted from *Systematic Theology*. Oregon, Illinois: THE RESTITUTION HERALD, 1960.
- "God's Attributes." Adapted from *Systematic Theology*. Oregon, Illinois: THE RESTITUTION HERALD, 1960.
- "Nature of Jesus." Adapted from *Systematic Theology*. Oregon, Illinois: THE RESTITUTION HERALD, 1960.
- "The Son of God." Adapted from *Systematic Theology*. Oregon, Illinois: THE RESTITUTION HERALD, 1960.
- Systematic Theology*. Oregon, Illinois: THE RESTITUTION HERALD, 1960.

# Forgive and Forget

by Pastor John A. Railton  
South Bend, IN

The first person to benefit from forgiving is always the person who forgives.

**T**HERE ARE TWO broad problems that many have with forgiveness, and we'll address both of them. First, many have difficulty believing and accepting God's forgiveness. It's as though His forgiveness is valid for everyone else, "but surely it doesn't apply to me." "My mistakes are too bad." Or, "I'm worse than the others." Or, "If He really knew all of what I've done, He'd never forgive me." Closely related to this is the refusal to forgive yourself, or holding onto the guilt of the past. This shows a lack of understanding of what forgiveness really is. The second problem is the flip side of forgiveness—difficulty with, or the refusal to grant, forgiveness to others. This is such a critical problem to resolve because it affects how God forgives us.

## "Forgive Us Our Debts"

Let's begin by defining forgiveness. Our friend Webster well defines forgiveness as "giving up resentment against, or the desire to punish, to stop being angry with, to pardon, to give up all claim to punish or exact penalty, to cancel or remit the debt, fine, or penalty." The word "forgive" is really a combination of two words, "for" and "give." The first word, "for" means "away." When God forgives, He "gives away" or "gives up" the resentment, the right to exact penalty, etc. As we consider God's forgiveness we'll find this is exactly what God has done for us.

When we define forgiveness it's essential we understand what forgiveness is not. Forgiveness is not discounting the violation, or ignoring it. It's not disregarding, tolerating, excusing, overlooking, or closing the eyes to the offense committed. It is not saying, "It's okay," or, "It doesn't matter." It is not simply letting time pass. It is not pretending that the offense didn't happen. It is not resigning ourselves to someone's actions by say-

ing, "Well, that's just the way he is." God has done none of these in resolving our sin.

Far too often these are the working definitions of forgiveness. They are inaccurate. They confuse the issue. They in fact short circuit the process and prevent true forgiveness from taking place. It is because of these inaccurate definitions that people have difficulty believing and accepting God's forgiveness. With any honesty at all it's clear these definitions resolve absolutely nothing, whereas true forgiveness resolves the violation. When God forgives, He forgives. He gives up the desire and the right to punish. He gives up the anger. He takes away the guilt.

There is considerable cost involved in forgiveness. The forgiver pays the price. If you steal a thousand dollars from me, and are absolutely unable to repay it, and you come begging me to forgive that debt, someone has to pay. If I forgive the debt, I'm out the thousand dollars. I have absorbed the loss. The forgiver pays the price. God paid dearly. See Romans 5:8 and Acts 20:28.

Jesus paid dearly as well. In Philippians 2, Jesus is described as humbly and obediently going to the cross. He gave up His innocence. He gave up Himself. He paid a heavy price. Second Corinthians 5:21 tells us Jesus became sin for us. You see, He took our sin upon Himself. I believe He died a guilty man, certainly not of His own sin, but guilty of ours. The forgiver pays the price of forgiveness.

Look at 1 John 1:9. What does God want us to do concerning our sin? Confess! How is God described in the act of forgiving? Faithful! Just! What does God do besides forgiving us? He purifies us from all unrighteousness! Let's look at some examples that show how faithful and just God is. Hebrews 10:17, "Their sins and lawless acts I will remember no more" (NASB). Isaiah 44:22: "I have swept away your offenses like a cloud, your sins like the morning mist. Return to

me, for I have redeemed you" (NIV). Isaiah 43:25: "I, even I, am he who blots out your transgressions, for my own sake, and remembers your sins no more" (NIV). Isaiah 55:7: "Let the wicked forsake his

tion for those who are in Christ Jesus, because . . . Christ Jesus . . . set me free from . . . sin and death" (NIV).

The forgiver pays the price, but the forgivee has always had to meet certain

him go. Now let's read the rest of the story, Matthew 18:28-35. Particularly notice verse 35. This is reinforced elsewhere. Matthew 6:14, 15 tells us, "If you forgive men when they sin against you,

## Healthy anger can motivate one to make things right.

way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the LORD, and he will have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will freely pardon" (NIV). Isaiah 1:18: "Come now, let us reason together, says the LORD.

conditions. You'll find this true throughout the Old Testament as well as the New Testament. The conditions we must meet are clear. We must believe the good news of the Kingdom of God, and the name of

your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins" (NIV). Mark 11:25 says, "And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins" (NIV). We pray in the Lord's Prayer, "Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who have sinned against us."

## Unhealthy anger can motivate sin.

Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow, though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool" (NIV).

Psalm 32:1, 2: "Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man whose sin the LORD does not count against him" (NIV). Psalm 103:12: "As far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us" (NIV). Isaiah 38:17 (NIV): "You have put all my sins behind your back." Jeremiah 31:34, (NIV): "For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more." Jeremiah 50:20: "In those days, at that time, declares the LORD, search will be made for Israel's guilt, but there will be none, and for the sins of Judah, but none will be found, for I will forgive the remnant I spare" (NIV). Micah 7:18, 19: "Who is a God like you, who pardons sin and forgives the transgression of the remnant of his inheritance? You do not stay angry forever, but delight to show mercy. You will again have compassion on us; you will tread our sins underfoot and hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea" (NIV). I don't know if there's any way He could have assured us any better, or said it more completely!

It is the same God that we worship and serve today. He has made the same offer of forgiveness to us. Romans 8:1 tells us, "Therefore, there is now no condemna-

tion for those who are in Christ Jesus, because . . . Christ Jesus . . . set me free from . . . sin and death" (NIV). The forgiver pays the price, but the forgivee has always had to meet certain conditions. You'll find this true throughout the Old Testament as well as the New Testament. The conditions we must meet are clear. We must believe the good news of the Kingdom of God, and the name of

Jesus Christ. We must confess and repent of our sin. We must be immersed in the name of Jesus as a result of this belief and confession. These are the conditions, but God and Jesus have still paid the price. As mentioned earlier, it's common to hear people say they believe God has forgiven, but they can't forgive themselves. What an insult to God! He has given the precious blood of His only begotten Son. Jesus has given His very life. And someone comes along and says it's not enough! It's not complete! If you have met the proper conditions, then claim and accept the promises of 1 John 1:9. If you haven't met these conditions, why not take care of them now?

There is a parable in Matthew 18 that illustrates God's forgiveness. Our sin is as a humongous debt we owe to God. There's no way we can pay. We literally deserve to die because of our sin, but God in His mercy has forgiven this great debt. In fact He has paid the debt Himself by sacrificing His only begotten Son. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16, KJV).

### "As We Forgive Our Debtors"

According to Matthew 18:21-27, a servant owed his king a huge debt. He was totally unable to pay, so he begged for mercy. The king canceled the debt and let

We are that servant. God is the King. We are forgiven a great debt—all our sins, all our life. But, among other things, our forgiveness is contingent upon our forgiveness of others. It is essential that we forgive those who have wronged us. I will neither suggest that it is easy, nor that it can be done in a moment. But it must be done or it will destroy our own relationship with our Heavenly Father.

There are a number of instances of forgiveness among men in the Scriptures. 1) Joseph forgave his brothers. 2) Moses forgave Miriam and Aaron. 3) Jesus forgave His executors. 4) Stephen forgave those who stoned him. 5) The father forgave the prodigal son.

Most are familiar with Jacob and Esau, twin sons of Isaac. Esau was the firstborn and so was entitled to a double portion of the inheritance and also a special blessing from his father. One day Jacob took advantage of Esau to gain the firstborn birthright. Later, when Isaac was about to die, Jacob deceived Isaac to obtain the blessing Isaac intended to give Esau. This of course really offended Esau and he worked through several stages of emotion before he could forgive his brother. In his book, *Forgive and Forget*, Lewis Smedes identifies four stages that we typically go through in such a case: Hurt, Hatred, Healing, and Harmony.

1. First there is hurt. There was considerable pain in knowing your own brother

would refuse to give food in order to barter for your firstborn birthright. There was also a lot of pain in knowing Jacob had deceived his father to obtain the firstborn's blessing. It was quite a blessing, including abundance of material goods, leadership among nations, to be Lord over his brothers, and that whoever blessed him would be blessed, and whoever cursed him would be cursed. The only blessing left for Esau was that he would serve his brother—just what he wanted to hear! It hurt a great deal because it was personal, it was unfair, and it was deep.

2. It didn't take long for Esau's pain to turn into hatred. This often happens. Genesis 27:41 says, "Esau held a grudge against Jacob because of the blessing his father had given him. He said to himself, 'The days of mourning for my father are near; then I will kill my brother Jacob'" (NIV). There certainly was some anger involved, but anger itself isn't necessarily wrong. A healthy anger can motivate one to make things right. An unhealthy anger can motivate revenge and other sin. Esau's was clearly a sinful reaction. He harbored this grudge and hatred for many years. Jacob fled for his life, was gone a number of years, married, and had 11 children. But his goal from the start was to return to his home.

3. Healing came, but it was many years later. We're not told all the details of the healing but we are told of their reunion (Gen. 32:3-33:11).

4. Now in this instance, healing and harmony were apparent both at the same time. This isn't necessarily typical, nor does harmony necessarily have to take place. Sometimes it isn't safe, as in the case of violence or abuse. Sometimes it isn't possible, as in the case where the offender is dead. However, it's obvious how sweet the harmony then was between these two brothers.

When we forgive, which we're commanded to do, we too must "give up" a great deal. There is considerable cost involved in forgiveness. The forgiver pays the price. When we forgive a personal, deep offense, we "give up" our rights to revenge, to exact a penalty, to be angry, etc. We absorb the loss. We don't over-

look it. We don't bypass it. We make a willful choice to forgive it. I should mention, the first person to benefit from forgiving is always the person who forgives. The heart, life, personality, and sometimes physical body are purged of the poison of unforgiveness. A prisoner is set free, and that prisoner is the forgiver. The one who is forgiven may never know, may not need to know, maybe shouldn't even be told. You can stir up a hornet's nest if you go up to someone and say, "I forgive you," when he or she may not necessarily have been seeking it, and may not agree anything wrong was done. You may then rob yourself of the peace of forgiveness.

Before his death, Frederick the Great was told he should forgive his enemies. Calling his queen over he said, "Dorothy, write to your brother that I forgive him all the evil he has done me, but wait till I'm dead first."

Clara Barton, founder of the Red Cross, was reminded one day of a vicious deed that someone had done to her years before. But Clara acted as if she had never heard of the incident. "Don't you remember it?" her friend asked. "No," came Clara's reply. "I distinctly remember forgetting it."

Following is a formula that may help in the forgiveness process. This is taken from a little booklet put out by the Neues Leben International organization.

1. Clearly identify the actual offense that made the person guilty toward you. Write it out, if need be.

2. Alone before God, go down the list item by item, telling Him you are lifting from the offender his responsibility to "pay for" his wrong toward you—and that by God's grace you no longer consider the offender guilty—toward you. It may be necessary to do this with a counselor, or a mature Christian friend. This may take a considerable amount of time to work through.

3. Then in prayer, entrust the offense and the offender to God. God may still have to deal with the offender, but it is now in His hands, and not yours.

4. Destroy the list.

Again, I'm not suggesting forgiveness is easy, nor that it can be done in a moment, especially when the offense is deep, personal, or of long standing. I am suggesting that forgiveness must be done—for the sake of our own relation with our Heavenly Father, and for the sake of our own peace and health.

---

## God Keep Our Land

(Continued from page 21)

Jeremiah recorded God's words about the nation: "Has a nation changed gods, when they were not gods? But My people have changed their glory for that which does not profit. Be appalled, O heavens, at this, and shudder, be very desolate," declares the LORD. "For My people have committed two evils: they have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, to hew for themselves cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water" (2:11-13, NASB). Note two sins God charges to them: 1) failing to keep God; 2) investing their lives in the vanity of broken cisterns, i.e., things which have no true or eternal worth.

Some weeks ago a young girl named Phoebe Martin wrote a letter to the editor

of the *Tribune* in which she said, "It's time we turn around and bring Jesus back into the country, back into the schools and see Canada rise up as a strong and healthy nation as we proclaim that Jesus is Lord over Canada. It's time we seek the face of this country's only answer and only hope for success and prosperity. We need Jesus!"

"Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD" (Psa. 33:12, NASB). "How blessed are the people who are so situated; how blessed are the people whose God is the LORD!" (Psa. 144:15.)

God has faithfully kept Canada! If God is going to continue to keep our land glorious and free we *must keep Him!*

# Stewardship

by Pastor S. O. Ross  
Litchfield, MN

**Editor's Note:** Pastor Stan Ross fell asleep in Christ on October 24, 1992. His timely and appropriate article each issue contributed significantly to this magazine as a whole. Being a great leader of God's people, he will be sorely missed throughout our conference, and while we mourn his death, we rejoice in the great hope of resurrection to immortality when Jesus comes.

Are you a good steward of the manifold blessings of God?

**A**S I BEGIN TO SET down some thoughts on stewardship, I am well aware that the word seldom appears in Scripture. In fact, I believe that it appears only three times—and they're all in Luke 16 in three successive verses. The word "steward," of course, appears often.

What does the word "steward" mean? Who is a steward? The dictionary tells us that a steward is an administrator or a supervisor—a manager or an officer in charge of finance.

God has created everything in the world for us to use. We need to be stewards or managers of that which He has given us. Everything we have or touch or use from the cradle to the grave is from God. He is the Creator of all things.

Psalms 24:1 tells us, "The earth is the LORD's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein." So not only what we use but we ourselves are His. The Psalms further tell us, "Every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all the fowls of the mountains: and the wild beasts of the field are mine" (50:10, 11). Doesn't leave much out, does it?

Haggai says further, "The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the LORD of hosts" (Haggai 2:8). So we are only stewards, managers, users of that which He has provided for us.

In our rental system of today, we are expected to pay a fee or an amount of rent when we use property owned by someone else. We would never think that we could use someone's car without payment, or live in some party's house without rental payment. The same is true of all properties belonging to someone else.

So if we follow that example, how much do we owe to God for rental or use of all He has provided for our use daily? Certainly we must be expected to give back a portion to Him. How can we do this? In our system of rental, we can pay in

various forms, sometimes by cash or check, sometimes by goods, sometimes by labor or other means. So with God we can "pay our rent" in various ways.

In the parable of the Talents in Matthew 25 we find that three servants were each given a number of talents. We note that each one was rewarded in accordance with how he used his talent. The one who had received only one talent did nothing with it. In fact, he hid it and returned to the owner only that one talent that had been given him. He made no profitable use of that which was given him. What was the response to that one who did not make any use of his talent? "Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents. For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath" (Matt. 25:28, 29).

We need to make use of that which God has given to us, whether the talents are large or small. Henry Van Dyke once said, "Use what talents you possess, the woods would be very silent if no birds sang there except those who sang best." This well applies to our Christian service as well. Little would be done if only the expert, the best, would serve.

Time is given to us to use. Do we use it wisely or waste it? "See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil" (Eph. 5:15, 16). We need to use our time—at least a goodly portion of it—to God's glory, walking circumspectly, atune to the times about us. Paul says again in the letter to Colosse, "Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time" (Col. 4:5). We must be good managers of our time, if you will, using it to God's glory.

What stewardship do I display with my finances, my salary, my earnings? I think we each need to take a real good look at that part of



management, supervision, and administration of our earnings. Let us be sure we are not withholding from God, not robbing God. "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it" (Mal. 3:8-10). Certainly the tithe is necessary and the offerings encouraged.

How do we arrive at the tithe, the ten percent for God? "And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the LORD'S: it is holy unto the LORD" (Lev. 27:30). That clearly implies the earnings, not the profit. This is to be a regular and consistent procedure. "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come" (1 Cor. 16:2). Not just when a need arises should we tithe, but regularly provide and give.

Paul assures us that responding with the tithe will bring us rich blessings, knowing that we have accomplished for the Lord. "But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver" (2 Cor. 9:6, 7).

The rich young ruler in Luke 18 is an example of misuse of material goods. He was wealthy, but he knew he lacked something. He wanted to know how he could receive eternal life. However, his wealth was more important to him, as in the end he could not give up his material gains for eternal life. We have no record that he ever came in obedience to accept the Lord.

Having said all that, I believe the most important stewardship for the Christian is to be good stewards of God's Word. We

need to share in God's service. We need to share the Word. We need to tell others. As we have been enlightened, so we need to let that light shine. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father, which is in heaven" (Matt. 5:16).

First we need to be sure we have the light. Then we need to display it. The

## Everything we have or touch or use

story is told of the time a railroad trainman was to flag down a train, but the train went on through and a bad wreck took place. There was a lawsuit to prove the trainman was negligent in failing to prop-

of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen" (1 Pet. 4:10, 11). So we are not asked to do the impossible, but we are asked to use what talents and abilities God has given us to His glory, not ours.

"Charge them that are rich in this world,

## from the cradle to the grave is from God.

erly flag down the train. During the trial the trainman testified that yes, he had gotten the message to stop the train, yes he had taken his lantern and had gone out and frantically waved the lantern, but the train went right on through. Finally the man was exonerated from liability. After the trial was over the trainman said to his lawyer, "I sure am glad no one asked if the lantern was lit." Yes, we need to light our lanterns and then use that light for the glory of God.

Are you a good steward of the manifold blessings of God? "As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as

that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing

to communicate" (1 Tim. 6:17, 18). Those two verses sort of tell it all and give us a challenge to committed stewardship for the Lord.

So let us share our blessings, our light,

## He is the Creator of all.

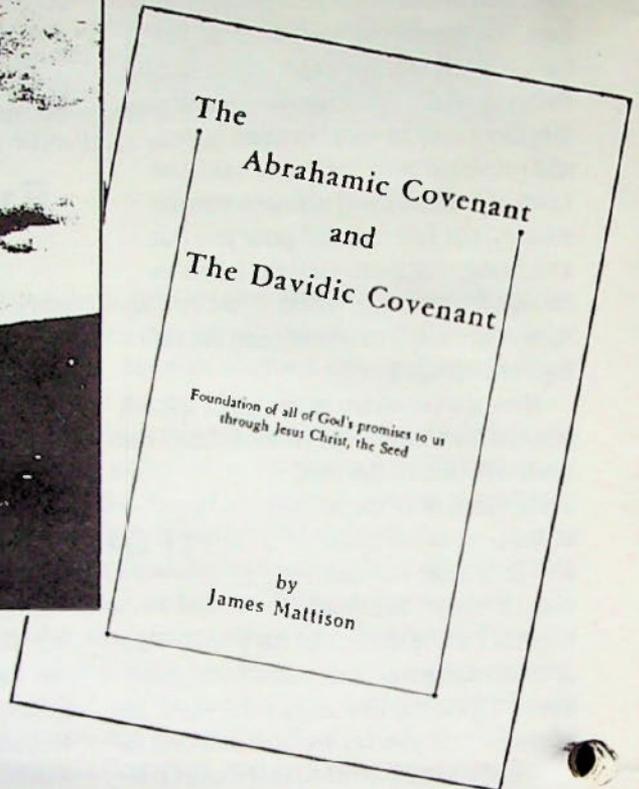
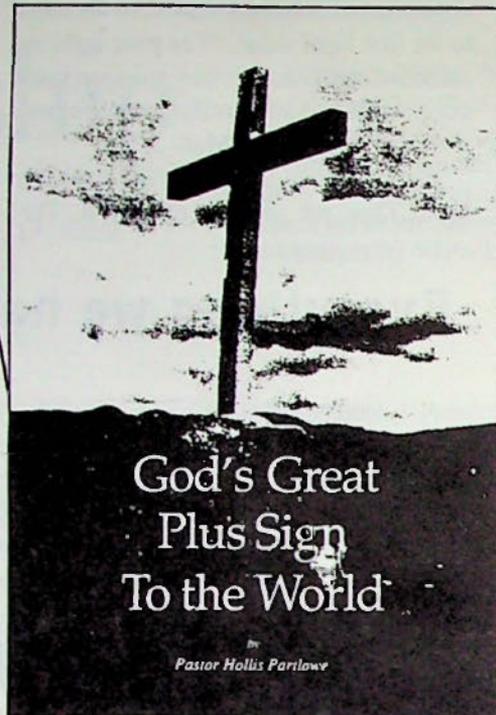
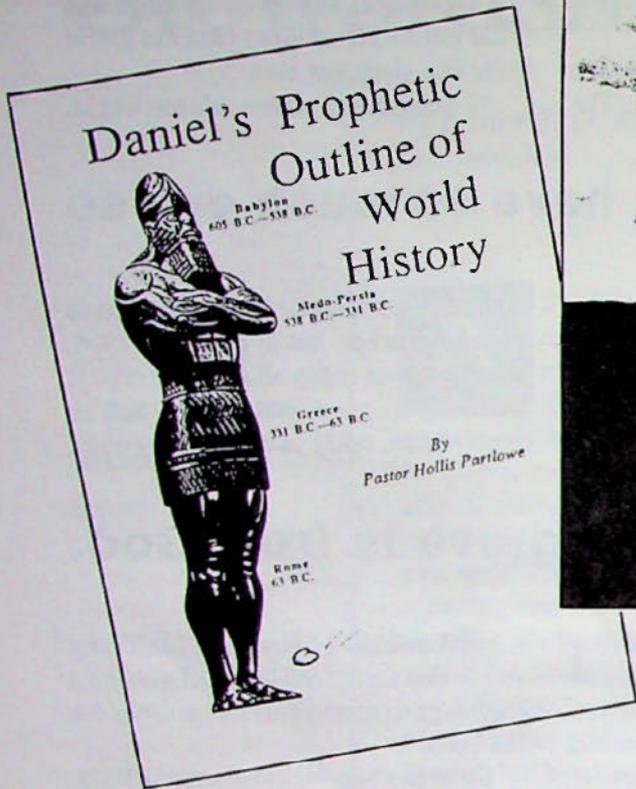
the Gospel, to the glory of God. Let us use our talents, our time, and our finances; in God's service. As quoted earlier from Malachi 3, "Prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." We cannot outgive God. "Try me," He says. As individuals and as a people, we need to be good stewards to the glory of God.

## Observers of Action

Most people in the pews are like people sitting in an airline terminal. They hear announcements of arrivals and departures, watch all the hurry and bustle, and imagine they are really in on the action, yet they never purchase a ticket or board the plane.

—Samuel M. Shoemaker.

## New Booklets Available



### Daniel's Prophetic Outline of World History by Hollis Partlowe

Daniel, more than any other book in the Bible, gives an overview of prophecy and "the times of the Gentiles" (Luke 21:24). Starting in his day, this Hebrew prophet revealed four successive world kingdoms that would come upon the stage of human history. Then finally all kingdoms of men would be replaced by a fifth kingdom, the Kingdom from heaven. The Kingdom of God is the goal or grand climax of world history.

This Kingdom will be established "without human hands" when Jesus returns to earth.

Daniel saw the nations as "chaff on the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them." Then God's Kingdom "filled the whole earth" (Dan. 2:35). This kingdom will be located "under the whole heaven"; it will stand forever and be given to God's people of all ages (7:27).

This booklet is designed to give an overview of the fascinating twelve chapters in the Book of Daniel. It could be used as an outline in a study of this major prophet of the Old Testament during Sunday School time, midweek Bible study, home Bible study and/or personal study. The cost is 95¢ (16 pages).

### God's Great Plus Sign to the World by Hollis Partlowe

This is a salvation tract and could be used to share your faith in our crucified, risen, and coming Savior. Certainly the cross is the center of God's plan of redemption for earth and man. God is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to

repentance" (2 Pet. 3:9). He wants all to have a clear presentation of the good news of salvation which only can be found in Christ. The cross is the center of God's great moral universe. If one is to have a place in God's coming Kingdom, he must come to the cross today. Otherwise he faces the wrath and anger of the Lord in the future. Use this tract to share Christ and His love with your friends and neighbors. The cost is 75¢ (eight pages).

### The Abrahamic Covenant and The Davidic Covenant by Pastor James Mattison

This booklet (56 pages) is an excellent treatment of the two major covenants of the Old Testament which are eternal in duration and still have great significance today.

Brother Mattison shows clearly that Jesus is a descendant of both Abraham and David. "Christ occupies a unique position in both covenants." God has made it possible "that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ" (Gal. 3:14). The author refers to the church as "the second seed of Abraham."

Then chapter four focuses on the future restoration and conversion of the remnant of Israel. "Study of the promises reveal that *two different inheritances are promised two different seeds of Abraham.*" The writer is referring to the church (*ekklesia*), Abraham's descendants through Christ, and the physical descendants of Abraham through Jacob (the believing remnant which will be restored to God in the millennial Kingdom).

This booklet, by a sharp and devoted student of God's Word, would be ideal for an elective Sunday School class, midweek class, etc. The cost is \$1.75.

# Supplies Order Form

Prices effective September 15, 1992

Quantity	Part A	COST
<b>BOOKS AND BOOKLETS</b>		
...	Christ or Confusion (Gospel Pub League)	.95 .....
...	Concerning the Nations (Gospel Pub League)	.95 .....
...	Daniel's Prophetic Outline of History (Partlowe)	.95 .....
...	Daring to Differ: Adventures in Conditional Immortality (Hatch)	9.95 .....
...	Emphatic Diaglott (Wilson)	4.95 .....
...	"Except" (baptism, Bilton)	1.15 .....
...	First Principles (Marsh)	.75 .....
...	Fundamentals of the Christian Faith (Lyon)	.75 .....
...	God's Covenant with Abraham (Lindsay)	.75 .....
...	God's Great Plus Sign to the World (Partlowe)	.75 .....
...	Making the Most of Your Marriage (Partlowe)	1.95 .....
...	"Must Not Fight" (Bilton)	.95 .....
...	One God (Judd)	3.95 .....
...	Prophecies of the End of the World (Mattison)	3.95 .....
...	Russia, Israel, Christ and You (Bilton)	1.25 .....
...	Scripture Searcher's Assistant	.95 .....
...	Systematic Theology, Hard Cover (Huffer)	12.95 .....
...	Systematic Theology, Soft Cover (Huffer)	9.95 .....
...	The Bible: Its Principles & Texts (Huggins)	3.95 .....
...	The Abrahamic & Davidic Covenants	1.75 .....
...	The Coming Kingdom of the Messiah (Buzzard)	4.95 .....
...	The Law, Sabbath & N.T. Christianity (Buzzard)	1.95 .....
...	The Miracle of Pentecost (Partlowe)	1.95 .....
...	The Seventh Day Sabbath (Gospel Pub League)	1.50 .....
...	Triumph of the Resurrection, 176 pp., Soft Cover (Huffer)	4.95 .....
...	What Happens When We Die? (Buzzard)	1.95 .....
...	Words of Truth, Subject Concordance	1.25 .....
...	Who Is Jesus? (Buzzard)	1.95 .....
...	Wrested Scriptures	14.00 .....
<b>HYMNALS</b>		
...	Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs	5.95 .....
...	Loose Leaf for Musicians	9.95 .....
<b>CHURCH SUPPLIES</b>		
...	Baptismal Certificates (doz. 5.00)	ea. .50 .....
...	Caring System File Folders	ea. .23 .....
<b>EVANGELISM FLIP CHART</b>		
...	Opportunity of Eternal Life	1.50 .....
<b>RECORDS—OREGON BIBLE COLLEGE CHORALE</b>		
...	Sing to the Lord	3.00 .....
...	Sheltered, Protected	5.00 .....
<b>SUNDAY SCHOOL SUPPLIES</b>		
Please specify starting date for quarterlies		
...	Kindergarten Creative Teaching Aid Packet	8.25 .....
...	Kindergarten Teacher's Guide	2.95 .....
...	Kindergarten Bible-In-Life (for teachers)	1.95 .....
...	Kindergarten Make-It/Take-It (for students)	1.95 .....
...	Primary Creative Teaching Aids Packet	8.25 .....
...	Primary Teacher's Guide	2.95 .....
...	Primary Student's Books (2) grades 1-3	3.65 .....
...	Junior Creative Teaching Aids Packet	8.25 .....
...	Junior Teacher's Guide	2.95 .....
...	Junior Student's, grades 4-6	1.95 .....
...	Junior High Creative Teaching Aids Packet	8.25 .....
...	Junior High Teacher's Guide	2.95 .....
...	Junior High Student's—THE ROCK	1.95 .....
...	Teen-Age Creative Teaching Aids Packet	8.25 .....
...	Teen Teacher's Guide	2.95 .....
...	Teen-Age Lessons I. D. (for High School)	1.95 .....
...	Adult Teachers' Guide	2.95 .....
...	Adult Student's	1.95 .....
...	Sample Kit of all Sunday School Lessons	Free .....
...	Superintendents' and Workers' S.S. Manual	1.95 .....
...	Sunday School Openings Idea Book	2.50 .....
<b>BIBLE STUDY COURSES</b>		
...	Berean Scripture Studies, No 2 (52 lessons)	1.95 .....
...	BYF Focus 10 @ \$1.75 each or	1.95 .....
...	The Nature and Destiny of Man (13 lessons)	1.95 .....
...	Where Do I Fit? (8 lessons—Partlowe)	1.95 .....

## SYSTEMATIC BIBLE STUDY COURSES (29 lessons)

...	Correspondence course ( <i>enrollment only</i> )	Free .....
...	Loose Leaf edition	2.95 .....
...	Bound edition	3.95 .....

## ISSUES, Paperback Books

...	The Case Against Pornography (Wildmon)	1.00 .....
...	The Home Invaders (Wildmon)	2.00 .....

## SLIDE-CASSETTE PROGRAMS

### God's Plan for This Planet

...	Oneness of God	10.00 .....
...	Worth of Each Person	10.00 .....
...	Salvation Through Christ	10.00 .....
...	The Empty Tomb	10.00 .....
...	World's Only Hope	10.00 .....
...	Christ's Coming Kingdom	10.00 .....
...	All Six Complete Programs	50.00 .....

THE RESTITUTION  
HERALD  
Box 100  
Oregon, IL 61061

Box 100,000  
Morrow, GA 30260

### Total Cost of Part A

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Part B:** The tracts listed are available from the Church of God General Conference at \$3.50 per hundred. Please order each tract in lots of 50. You may order single copies at 6¢ each and a minimum of 25.

## EVANGELISM TRACTS

Quantity	
...	ABC's of Salvation
...	An Invitation
...	An Invitation to Life
...	Better Than Money in the Bank
...	Bible Faith Stands the Test of Time
...	Can God Help Me?
...	Can You Believe?
...	Do You Ever Think About God?
...	Do You Prefer Insurance or Assurance?
...	Have a Good Day
...	Here's My Tip
...	Meet My Friend
...	One Step From Death
...	Puzzled?
...	See What Real Love Is
...	The Blood Bank of the Bible
...	The Guiding Light
...	Traveler's Credit Card
...	Use the Past to Build a Future
...	Why Be Baptized?
...	Your Introduction to the Church of God

...	Newsday 1992
...	Signs of Jesus' Coming and the End of the World
...	Signs of the Times
...	The Kingdom of God
...	The Kingdom of God (Spanish)
...	The Premillennial Coming of Christ
...	The Purpose of the Millennium

## BIBLE DOCTRINE TRACTS

...	Baptism
...	Christian Tithing, An Act of Faith
...	God's Laws Concerning Marriage
...	Is Going to Heaven Our Reward?
...	Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God
...	One God
...	Resurrection
...	Seven Bible Reasons for Christian Baptism
...	The Covenants of Promise
...	The History of Baptism
...	The Marriage God Planned
...	The Meaning of the Word "Soul"
...	The Nature of the Soul
...	Two Hells
...	What Happens After Death?
...	What is Man?
...	Who Owns the Wool?

## MISCELLANEOUS TRACTS

...	Chart of the Ages
...	From One Who Cares
...	How to Grow in Christ
...	How Your Pastor Can Help You
...	What Can We Read Tonight?

## BIBLE PROPHECY TRACTS

...	Death of the Dollar
...	God's Tomorrow

Total Number of Tracts \_\_\_\_\_

Total Cost of Part B \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### Postage and Handling

Order up to \$10: add \$2.40  
Order \$10 to \$20: add 20%  
Order \$20 and up: add 10%  
Overseas: Actual Cost

Total of Part A	\$ _____
Total of Part B (Tracts)	\$ _____
Amount of Complete Order	\$ _____
Postage & Handling	\$ _____
Total	\$ _____

Name \_\_\_\_\_

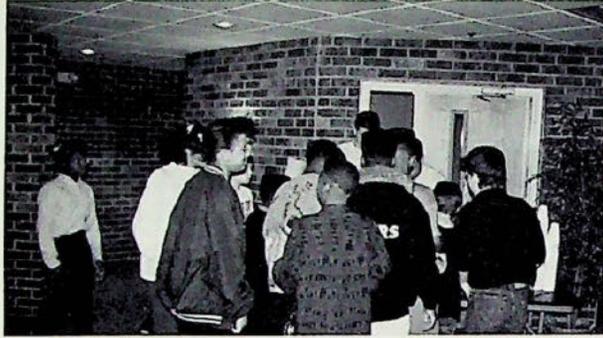
Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_



## After School Special

Two ministries that might draw you to come to ABC as it seeks to reach out to its community.



## Fast Forward

# ATLANTA BIBLE COLLEGE

For more information call  
1-800-FISH CO 1

### Subscription Expirations

The three-digit number on the top right of your address label identifies the renewal date of your subscription. If the number is 93.0, it expires with the February/March issue, 1993. A 93.2 number means a June, July, expiration. This method will assist the subscriber in keeping tabs on his expiration date and serve as a reminder for renewal.

Church of God General Conference  
P.O. Box 100,000  
Morrow, GA 30260

Address Correction Requested

U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
PERMIT 21  
Oregon, Illinois  
Nonprofit Org.

Dear RESTITUTION HERALD,

I am writing for the following reason:

- My address label is incorrect, please note the changes.
- I am moving in the next six weeks; please send the magazine to my new address printed below.
- I wish to send a gift subscription to the person listed below. Enclosed is \$12 payment.
- Subscription renewal, payment enclosed—1 yr. \$12, 2 yr. \$21, 3 yr. \$30. [British subscribers send U. S. funds]. Thank you.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: THE RESTITUTION HERALD, P.O. Box 100,000, Morrow, GA 30260.

Please check the mailing label to the left for your RH expiration date and renew promptly to keep THE RESTITUTION HERALD coming to your home bimonthly.

IS IT TIME TO RENEW?

THE  
RESTITUTION  
HERALD

Vol. 82, No. 2  
Dec., 1992, Jan., 1993

Our 82nd Year

Church of God General Conference  
*History Newsletter* included



THE WISE-MEN LED BY THE STAR

—Matt. 2: 1-12



## THE EDITOR'S OPINION

# There Is This About Christmas

**O**NCE MORE THE WORLD about us comes alive with the spirit of the season. Conceived in all its fullness before the world began and carried out in each exacting detail, the birth of Jesus Christ is without doubt one of the greatest miracles of all the ages. It's common knowledge that we don't know the day of Jesus' birth. In all probability, it was not December 25. In fact, we don't even know the year our Savior was born. The best authorities tell us Jesus was born about 4 to 6 B.C., according to our calendar, and most probably in the spring of the year.

Since we don't know the time of His birth, some feel that Christians should not "observe Christmas." They will criticize us for placing any emphasis on it. It appears that they fail to realize that it is not the day, but the event that is important. Furthermore, they may label the church "pagan" that observes Christmas or Easter. To be sure, Christmas and Easter are much abused and misused, but the fact of the birth, death, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ is that which we emphasize. These are magnificent truths—the very heart of Christianity. Just because the world has misused these events is no reason for us to set them aside. They can be and certainly should be used to the glory of our lovely Lord.

The music of Christmas alone is worth the effort. To hear the Christmas carols in the shopping centers and on TV and the radio is a real joy over the ear-grinding rock-'n-roll that we hear the rest of the year. We feel that those who shy away from Christmas miss a good opportunity to share our lovely Lord. I've never known anyone made better by not keeping Christmas, but I've known many made better by keeping it.

### Two Extremes to Avoid

We feel that Christians should avoid the commercialism of the season, but not do away with Christmas completely. We should avoid both extremes like the plague. Many minds are open at this time of year. Let's give them something wholesome; let's get their attention and exalt Jesus before them. Let's offer them something

**We must  
get in  
there  
and  
offer  
some-  
thing  
better.**

better than this world system has to offer. Don't shrink from bringing Christ into your holiday conversations.

Many are wondering what happened to peace on earth, good will toward men (Luke 2:14). In many areas there is no peace and little that could pass for good will. While the demon alcohol is still the most abused drug of all, marijuana and crack cocaine are commonplace in junior and senior high schools. As servants of Christ, we must remember that we are the salt of the earth and the light of the world (Matt. 5:13-16). Isolating ourselves from Christmas and labeling it and all that goes with it as "pagan" is no answer at all. We must get in there and offer something better. Jesus Christ is better than anything this world has to offer.

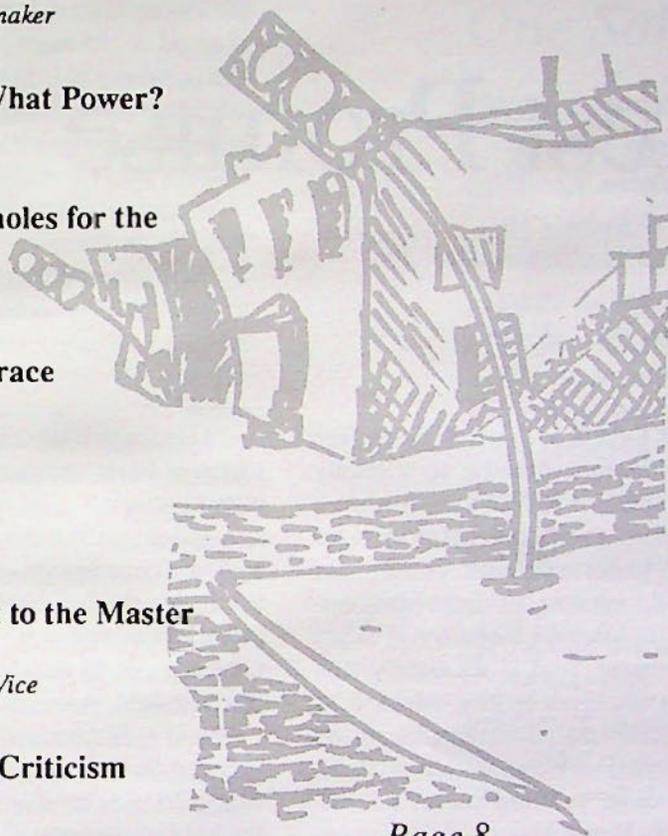
From a secular point of view, Rockford, Illinois, offered something new last year—an alcohol-free party during the holiday season. About 10,000 attended, and all of them well-behaved.

They participated in the wide array of entertainment and refreshments spread among 18 buildings in downtown Rockford. With attractions for all ages, and with the absence of strong drink, it clearly was a family affair. We hope that other communities will follow suit this year. For Rockford a tradition has been set.

Jesus was virgin born and gave mankind a reflection of our Heavenly Father. If you want to know what God is like, look at the Messiah, our Lord Jesus Christ. He, full of grace and truth, lived among us. He taught us that God is not a fearsome tyrant but a consistent Father that loves each of us. The light that Jesus brought exposed the darkness of men's lives. His mission was to restore God's creation to what it was intended to be, being "born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John 1:13). Our Lord, moreover, is the firstborn of the new creation (Col. 1:18; Rev. 3:14). By God's grace in Christ we become a new creation. That is the declaration of 2 Corinthians 5:17: "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creation; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift" (2 Cor 11:15).

# Contents

- 4 **The Greatest Promise**  
*Donald G. Nunemaker*
- 6 **Prayer Has What Power?**  
*J. Arlen Marsh*
- 8 **Patching Potholes for the King**  
*Stephen Bolhous*
- 10 **Walking in Grace**  
*S. O. Ross*
- 12 **Opportunity**  
*Janice Hart*
- 21 **Giving Credit to the Master Designer**  
*Diana Morrison Vice*
- 22 **Constructive Criticism**  
*Ruby McCaslin*
- 25 **The Virgin Birth, a Basic Teaching of Scripture**  
*Ray Hall*



Page 8

## FEATURES

- 2 **EDITOR'S OPINION**
- 14 **ESPECIALLY FOR THE PASTOR'S WIFE**  
**Ministry, Commitment, Sacrifice, Joy**  
*Paula Kirkpatrick*
- 16 **HISTORY**  
**William Greenwell and the Ripley Church of God**  
*Millie Laning*
- 17 **Midnight and Morning**  
*Janet Stilson*
- 20 **DR. JAMES DOBSON**
- 23 **LETTER TO PARENTS**
- 24 **CHURCH/PASTOR RELATIONS**  
**Pastors' Dilemma**  
*Eunice Pearson*
- 30 **CHILDREN'S PAGE**  
**God Will Suply**  
*Susan Lapp*

## THE RESTITUTION HERALD

Vol. 82, No. 2  
December, 1992, January, 1993

THE RESTITUTION HERALD is owned and published by the Church of God General Conference, a non-profit Christian corporation located at 131 N. Third St., Oregon, Illinois 61061. THE HERALD is mailed six times a year.

THE RESTITUTION HERALD advocates: the oneness of God (1 Cor. 8:6); the Holy Spirit is God's power (Acts 1:8); Jesus Christ is God's only begotten Son (Matt. 16:16), and is our Mediator (1 Tim. 2:5); the Bible is the inspired Word of God (2 Tim. 3:16); the mortality of man (Job 4:17; Psa. 146:4); the near return of Christ (Acts 1:11), and life only through him (Col. 3:3); the literal resurrection of the dead (John 5:28); the immortalization of those in Christ (1 Cor. 15:53, 54); the destruction of the wicked (Rev. 21:8); the final restoration of Israel as the Kingdom of God under the kingship of Christ (Luke 1:32), the church to be joint heirs with him (Rom. 8:17), and Israel to be made head over Gentile nations (Isa. 60:1-3); the "restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began" (Acts 3:21). It also firmly advocates repentance and immersion in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38), and a consecrated life as essential to salvation.

**Editor:** Hollis Partlowe  
**Associate Editor:** Gordon Landry  
**Make-up Editor:** Mark Cain  
**Typesetter:** Becky Hall  
**Proofreader:** Barbara Landry  
**Contributing Editors:** Richard Alcumbrack, Susan Lapp, Richard Eldred, Dr. Alva G. Huffer, Delbert Jones, Paula Kirkpatrick, Gordon Landry, Stan Ross  
**Mailing and Subscriptions:** Becky Hall, Terri Tschaenn, Judy Myers, Harry McMin

Address all correspondence to: THE RESTITUTION HERALD  
P.O. Box 100,000  
Morrow, GA 30260

## SUBSCRIPTIONS

One Year, \$12  
Two Years, \$21  
Three years, \$30

Most subscriptions begin with the February or August issue. Readers may begin full-year subscriptions at any time. Use the form on page 32 when corresponding concerning your subscription.

---

# The Greatest Promise

by Pastor Donald G. Nunemaker, Jr.  
Burr Oak, IN

God provided each of His prophets with a key (a part of the promise) to unlock the door to His greatest promise . . .

**M**OST OF US at one time or another will make a promise to a family member or to a friend. And when it comes time to honor that promise we usually make every effort to fulfill it. To not honor that promise would result in our name being dishonored (we let him down) by the person to whom we made the promise. And if we consistently break our word it would not be long before those around us would know that no matter what we say . . . what we promised . . . our word was no good.

What does the word "promise" mean? According to *The Reader's Digest Illustrated Encyclopedic Dictionary*, the word "promise" means: A declaration giving assurance that one will or will not do something; a vow. However, in *Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words* we get a little different meaning of the word: Primarily a law term, denoting a summons, also meant an undertaking to do or give something. Except in Acts 23:21, it is used only to denote the promises of God. It frequently stands for the thing promised, and so signifies a gift graciously bestowed, not a pledge secured by negotiation. Putting this word into a biblical context, it would appear that a promise made by the Lord God is a form of a gift that is guaranteed delivery.

So with that definition of "promise" in mind, take a look around us during this Christmas season. And what do we see? We see a nation caught up in a gift-buying frenzy, trying to deliver on promises made to children, to family, or to friends as to what they can expect as Christmas gifts. But in all the commercialism and materialism, the greatest promise given to man is somehow buried under tons and tons of wrapping paper and seasonal good cheer.

What is this great promise? It was God's unse-

cured pledge that He would one day deliver to the nation of Israel and to the world a Savior; a baby born in poverty—one who would take away our sins and place us at the doorstep of the Kingdom of God. To me this speaks of one fantastic gift, not to mention the fact that God has delivered on that promise! Let's take a look at a few verses of Scripture and examine this promise of a new-born baby (the Messiah), the promise made by Jehovah God.

The very first indication of the coming Messiah is found in Genesis 3:15, in which we read the words that the "seed" of the woman would crush the head of the serpent. This is a prophetic statement which was later fulfilled in Galatians 3:29, which states that Christ is the seed of Abraham; and in John 7:42 He is shown to be the seed of David. This correlation of the "seed" gives indication that the "seed of man" would someday come and would put to death the enemy of all mankind. While the Genesis verse cannot be considered a particularly strong verse to prove an impending birth of the Messiah, we can conjecture that the greatest promise was the basis for this thought of God.

However, a passage of Scripture that provides a much stronger indication of a coming Messiah is found in Isaiah 7:13-16, which promised that a child would be born of a virgin, and that child would be called Immanuel (God with us). Upon review of Luke 1:26-38 and 2:6-16, we see the story of the Savior's birth unfold. In that story we read that a baby was in fact born to a virgin, thus fulfilling the Isaiah writing. The baby's given name was not Immanuel as we might presuppose, but the angel did call Him "The Son of the Most High." This statement would certainly qualify His name as Immanuel. In addition, that statement would give us a very good idea as to who named



this child! Also, in Luke 2:11 the angel declared that "a Savior is born . . . he is the Messiah." This statement could stand alone and tell us that every Old Testament prophecy concerning the coming Savior had now come to pass! In other words, the angel said it all . . . nothing more had to be said.

Another text that tells us of God's promise of a coming Messiah is Micah 5:2. This particular verse speaks to the fact that the city of Bethlehem would play a very important part in the greatest promise. Basically, it states that from this city a man would arise who would rule over the nation of Israel. And from the context of the verse it would appear that His power would come from Jehovah God. This was the statement of prophecy. And the fulfillment came around the year 30 A.D. According to Matthew 2:1-5 Jesus was born in Bethlehem. Then, according to the statement made by the Prophet Micah, this particular birth had to be the expected one—not because one baby just happened to be born in Bethlehem, but because there were so many prophecies answered with this one particular birth.

It would appear to me that God provided each of His prophets with a key (a part of the promise) to unlock the door to His greatest promise—the coming of His Son, our Savior. But, each key has to be used to unlock the door of God's promise. One key will not do it; all must be used. While I only wrote of three prophecies, there are still many many more which were fulfilled with the birth of this particular child. Therefore, if all the prophecies would be reviewed there should be little doubt that this child was indeed the greatest promise.

God made a number of statements through His prophets concerning the coming of His Son. And it appears that those statements have come to pass. We now have a living Savior mediating for us before the throne of God. However, there is one more great promise that has yet to occur. That promise is found in Acts 1:6, 7 and Matthew 24:1-51; the promise is that God will one day establish His Kingdom on earth.

While man as a rule tries to honor any promises that he might make, sometimes he doesn't do real well in keeping his word. But the God we honor and praise keeps His word, His unsecured pledge. We have proof that God has honored one of His promises: the birth of His Son Jesus Christ. And He has stated that He will honor that next promise, the establishment of His Kingdom.

So while you enjoy this time of year with all its passions and joys, remember the reason you celebrate—it is because God kept His greatest promise.

## *One Solitary Life*

*He was born in an obscure village,  
the child of a peasant woman. He grew  
up in still another village, where  
he worked in a carpenter shop until  
he was thirty. Then for three  
years he was an itinerant  
preacher. He never wrote a book.*

*He never held an office. He never  
had a family or owned a house. He didn't  
go to college. He never visited a big city.  
He never traveled two hundred miles  
from the place where he was born.  
He did none of the things one  
usually associates with greatness.  
He had no credentials but himself.*

*He was only thirty-three when  
the tide of public opinion turned  
against him. His friends ran away.  
He was turned over to his enemies and  
went through the mockery of  
a trial. He was nailed to a cross  
between two thieves. While  
he was dying, his executioners gambled  
for his clothing, the only property  
he had on earth. When he was  
dead, he was laid in a borrowed  
grave through the pity of a friend.*

*Nineteen centuries have come and  
gone, and today he is the central  
figure of the human race and the  
leader of mankind's progress. All  
the armies that ever marched, all the navies  
that ever sailed, all the parliaments  
that ever sat, all the kings that ever reigned,  
put together, have not affected the  
life of man on this earth as much as  
that one solitary life.*

---

# Prayer Has What Power?

by Pastor J. Arlen Marsh (retired)  
Cleveland, Ohio

**NOTICE:**  
In the event of an earth-  
quake, the Supreme  
Court's ban against  
praying in school will be  
suspended temporarily.

**T**HAT NOTICE, according to Paul Brickner, immediate past president of the Ohio State Board of Education, made its appearance some time back on a California school bulletin board.

Brickner recalled the posting as he noted his feeling that a recent Supreme Court expansion of its previous decisions about prayer in an educational environment "seemed to me to be unnecessary." The expansion prohibited what had come to be "traditional invocations at public-school graduation" ceremonies (to quote Brickner once more).

Life is full of personal memories, often prompted by comments like those of Brickner.

There was the time I graduated from Los Angeles High School (later to be destroyed by one of those California earthquakes). The school, with 4000 students, had so large a population of

Buddhists, Hindus, Moslems, Jews, agnostics, and out-and-out atheists that authorities deemed it unsuitable to allow "traditional invocations." It was, alas, a bit more than 60 years before the current Supreme Court rendered its latest judgment about prayer in school; but the ratiocination of the governing powers was the same in each case.

There was the time I delivered the invocation before 900 graduates, plus friends, families, and faculty, of John Marshall High School in Cleveland. (It's an "invocation" when it's done formally in public rituals. It's a "prayer" when it's done in private or in church.) This was an outdoor ceremony, and my voice kept echoing back to me from the loudspeaker system a half second after I spoke each word. The audience probably was as confused as I was, and this sample of "traditional invocations" drew less than normal attention.

For some years, when I was younger and even more foolish than I am now, I earned an unenviable reputation as one who saw little of value in public prayer. I offered public prayers—including many formal invocations—because a clergyman is expected to do so. I tried, now and then unsuccessfully, to listen to and appreciate those public prayers offered by others.

But these questions continued to haunt me:

Do we—speaker and audience alike—think more of *how* the invoker does his invoking than of *what* the invoker says?

Do we, as my own children have been known

to do, begin to time the prayers that stretch on and on and on?

Do we consciously omit from our public prayers, if we have been volunteered to do the job, those matters which most deeply concern us? Do we generalize to the point that anyone, any time, anywhere, could have pronounced that same prayer?

Do we then remember to present these omitted items to God in private prayer, or do we actually feel that prayer should be confined to church or to the clergy—or, in the event of an earthquake, to school?

Should a public prayer (invocation, if you like) voice a faith that is not present among a considerable and often militant portion of the listening audience?

Can any prayer have significant meaning if it must be written out and read—perhaps with eventual book publication in mind?

These and a multitude of other questions prompted me for some years to decry the value of public prayer, even in church. Elders of churches confessed to me how their minds wandered to personal problems, to the weather, to traffic noises from outside the church, to squalling children, while other elders or the pastor intoned even short prayers. Young people besought me to avoid asking this one or that one to offer public prayer: "He preaches a whole sermon." "She talks as though she had a mouthful of oatmeal mush." "He repeats the same thing every time." And so on, almost *ad infinitum*.

Even in those ancient days when I admitted freely my distaste for public prayer except as a habitual necessity in worship services, the *requirement* to pray was obvious to me. Requirement? Yes. Paul told the Thessalonians (and they were representative of all Christians) to "pray without ceasing." The apostles, who had enjoyed years of learning about God in the Jewish synagogues and temple, nevertheless asked Jesus to teach them to pray "as John [the Baptist] also taught his disciples."

Why should any of us who purport to

be Christian need to be taught to pray?

Prayer is learned more by osmosis than by formal education or by memorizing the precise language of Matthew 6:9-13 and Luke 11:2-4. Osmosis is a patient, often unconscious, absorption of ideas and feeling and faith and knowledge of facts. The spirit that leads us to "pray constantly" (the Jerusalem Bible puts 1 Thessalonians 5:17 that way) stems from a slowly developing awareness that God and His Son are always actually *with us*—not merely nearby, or in some indefinable heaven.

God and Jesus are, to be sure, in heaven (wherever that is); but both are so closely associated with us that Jesus said,

"I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Only when we appreciate

**QUESTION:**  
Do we—speaker and audience alike—think more of how the invoker does his invoking than of what the invoker says?

the total meaning of that statement can we appreciate the value of prayer.

This kind of spirit, this appreciation, is not produced by depending upon public prayer, ritual, carefully edited, printed, or self-authored petitions or simple thanksgivings to a God who remains an almost unknown Figurehead. This spirit, this appreciation, springs rather from firm belief that God meant exactly what He said in 2 Chronicles 7:14. He then spoke to Israel, but the principle applies equally to us who worship Him today: "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray . . . then will I hear from heaven."

Prayer is an act of humility. It is a recognition of the fact that God has all

the answers to all the difficulties that beset humankind. That kind of recognition rarely appears in the meticulous language of the invocations which lace many public gatherings. It is a recognition which can come only from within the individual.

Yet the church service would be incomplete without its public prayers, just as it would be incomplete without its music, its Bible reading, its sermon, or lesson. Some local churches—I first ran into the practice in an American Baptist congregation more than 40 years ago—have turned to including three to five minutes of silence for personal prayer in their regular Sunday services. Others ask for ideas for prayer: the sick, the troubled, the convalescents, the special needs of a congregation or a conference.

What value, what power, has prayer? Despite its obvious weaknesses as prayer is applied in public ceremonies, prayer does call attention to the human need for something greater than men and women can offer to themselves. This is what led to the inclusion of two words in the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag: "One nation *under God*." The italicized words were added to the pledge, originally written by a Frank Bellamy, by an act of Congress in 1954.

In church, prayer accomplishes much more than this. It helps, and only helps, to put us attune with the God and Christ we worship. It helps, and only helps, to prepare us to face our worldly state with the faith that we are, after all, "under God," and that God "shall supply all [our] need" (Phil. 4:19).

Prayer helps, and only helps, in public use to do these things if we personally permit it to do so. Unless the faith which grows slowly within us by that process of osmosis makes prayer valuable for us, prayer has no value, no power, for us. Truly, "the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (Jas. 5:16); but there is no evidence that prayer offered by the unfaithful and the wholly unrighteous will have any such consequence.

# Patching Potholes for The King

by Pastor Stephen Bolhous  
Fonthill, Ontario, Canada

**T**HE TRAFFIC LIGHT turned red; I pressed my foot on the brake pedal, but was not prepared for what came next. The road was not just wet, it was icy. The wheels locked and my sliding car ground the recently spread sand and fine gravel into the ice and pavement beneath. The car stopped with its nose aimed at the window of an office building rather than at Highway 20.

It's amazing how many subjects the brain can process in those moments when your breathing and heartbeat seem suspended. For some unknown reason my mind took off on a loosely connected chain of subjects beginning with the abuse the pavement regularly receives. Slowly over successive winters it is eroded by the weight and friction of passing vehicles, by their grinding of grit into it, by the heat and the cold, the rain and the ice, the freezing and the thawing. After an ample amount of this erosion treatment a detestable item evolves known as a pothole.

Next my mind thought of the road crews and their hot asphalt machines working through the spring and summer months to repair the worn and broken roads, the highway canyons that had started out as minute cracks, the potholes that threaten to consume my vehicle.

My mind flowed on to focus on an advent passage that speaks about highway repair: "A voice of one calling: In the desert prepare the way for the Lord; make straight in the wilderness a highway for our God. Every valley shall be raised up, every mountain and hill made low; the rough ground shall become level, the rugged places a plain" (Isa. 40:3, 4). Isaiah was talking about the work of a road crew. He was referring to a standard custom of preparation for visiting royalty. Whenever a monarch



chose to make an official visit to the outreaches of his domain ('in the desert prepare the way') the local citizens would prepare by making the roads smooth and level for the ease of the royal tourage.

Isaiah's reference to roadwork in this advent passage focusing on the coming of the Lord is not an advocacy of asphalt spreaders in the Judean desert. Isaiah is simply using roadwork imagery to give us a message about the need for preparation. The Lord Jesus Christ has come one time and He will come a second time very soon. Prepare the highways of your heart and life: smooth out the rough spots; patch up the potholes; some of your mountainous priorities may need to be shaved down a bit; some of your low priorities may need to be built up in importance.

How can we patch and repair the potholes of our lives? The King is coming soon; we must make sure we have prepared the way. To successfully accomplish the needed roadwork in life follow these four steps:

1) Assess the damage. Take an inspection tour and see where the value potholes and priority potholes are located. Solomon said, "The conclusion, when all has been heard, is: fear God and keep His commandments, because this applies to every person" (Eccl. 12:13). Use this verse as a measuring stick. Have God's ways been faithfully followed or are there some gaping potholes glaring at you?

2) Contact the right repair person.

When expert help is required the do-it-yourself approach only masks and complicates a problem. The right repairman for the potholes of our lives is Jesus Christ. He says to us, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28). If we try to correct those potholes without Him it will only be a temporary and ineffective measure.

3) Practice road maintenance. Set your sites on values and practices that honor the King. "Give to him who asks of you, and do not turn away from him. . . . Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you. . . . To the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me" (Matt. 5:42, 44; 25:40).

4) Don't delay! Soon the King will come to earth again. The Bible predicts it and current international unrest points to it. "For in just a very little while, He who is coming will come and will not delay; but my righteous one will live by faith" (Heb. 10:37, 38a). Don't put off making important spiritual corrections in your life. Patch those potholes, live by faith, and be prepared with an improved, resurfaced life roadway to greet the King when He comes!



# Walking in Grace

by Pastor S. O. Ross  
Litchfield, MN

We should do nothing we wouldn't do with Jesus with us.



**W**E LIVE IN A WORLD of sin and it is only by the grace of God that we can have forgiveness. Grace is the unmerited favor of God, and we can only have that through Jesus Christ. When we are in Christ we are in grace. We need to walk in that grace, in Christ. We have forgiveness if we continue walking with Him.

In 1 Corinthians 10:1-4, the Apostle Paul sets up for us an example of Israel, and we find these words: "Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and did all eat the same spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ."

We note here that the Israelites had all the privileges of grace: they were all under the cloud, they all passed through the sea, they were all baptized unto Moses in the Red Sea, all were fed, all were supplied with drink, all had these blessings, and what happened? "With many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness" (v. 5). You see, they fell from grace, they lusted after evil things, they committed idolatry. We all need to be very careful that we don't set up idols and not follow the true God and His Son. And then they committed immorality. They tempted the Lord. They murmured against God. These were all for our examples, we find in verse 10: "Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer."

God was not pleased with what they were doing, so we need to take a good close look at ourselves and not be murmuring. We need to abide in Him, and walk in His grace. We read in verses 12 and 13, "Wherefore let him that thinketh

he standeth take heed lest he fall. There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." We need to stay in that grace; we need to stay steadfast. The warning in verse 12 is followed by a great hope in verse 13. Be encouraged by the fact that we're not to be tempted beyond that which we are able to bear. But do not walk directly into temptation. Avoid temptation and with Jesus at our side we can do that. Man *can* fall from grace today; we need to be very careful.

One good formula for not being tempted too greatly is to say nothing we wouldn't say with Jesus at our side. We should do nothing we wouldn't do with Jesus with us. We should go nowhere we wouldn't go with Jesus by our side. This is a good outline and a good formula to follow, and then we can withstand temptation.

Yes, man can fall from grace today. Matthew 24:12 says, "Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold." Iniquity is all around us. You can't go out of your door, or turn on TV, without seeing iniquity and troubles and trauma. These temptations can lead us into sin if we allow them to.

We find in Luke 9:62 a very pertinent verse: "No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." And so we must not falter. We must stay the course. We must plow that straight furrow. Luke 17:32 says, "Remember Lot's wife." We know she looked back at the wicked city of Sodom and turned into a pillar of salt.

In 2 Peter 2, we find the dangers in turning back. I would like to share with you verses 20-22: "If after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled

#### EDITOR'S NOTE:

This is the last article by Pastor Stan Ross. It was written shortly before his death on October 24, 1992. Besides being a pastor, he held many positions in our Conference—Executive Director, "Pastor's Pastor," Superintendent of Missions, etc. Stan was loved and respected by all far and wide. His vision and firm voice of leadership will be greatly missed in our ministerial body and in our Conference as a whole.

We are reminded of what King David said of the death of Abner: "A great leader and a great man has fallen today in Israel" (2 Sam. 3:38). Certainly a prince and a great man in our Conference has fallen, but there is a glorious future for Stan and all who place their faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. He was no stranger to the One who will some day call his name in "the resurrection of the just" (Luke 14:14). Although he has fallen asleep in Christ, through this article and in many other ways, "He still speaks, even though he is dead" (Heb. 11:4).

therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire." So there is great danger in turning back; there is great danger in looking back. We need to be especially careful in these last days that we are not caught up in that falling away and that drifting away.

In 2 Thessalonians 2:3, Paul says, "Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition." So we need to be very careful, because there will be a falling away for certain. First Timothy 4:1, 2 tells us, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron." How can we avoid these temptations? What do we need to be doing? How can we brace ourselves? How can we prepare ourselves for facing the temptations that might come before us?

We must not be caught up in that falling away by condoning the things that are happening in the world today. We need to be very careful about those things.

Let me share with you Ephesians 4:1-3, "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." Whatever we are doing, we need to walk worthy of our vocation—whether it be in a secular position or in our spiritual life. We need to respond to the calling we have in Christ Jesus. We who are in Christ need to be walking in the grace He has provided for us.

Ephesians 5:1, 2: "Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour." So if we are in grace, if we are in Christ, we are invited to walk in Him because He has loved us enough to give His life as a sacrifice to God for us. We need to be followers of God as dear children walking with Christ. "For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light" (Eph. 5:8). At one time we were without the light of the world, without Christ; but now in the Lord we must walk as children of that light. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 5:16). We must not glorify self, but our Father in heaven.

Notice Ephesians 5:14-16: "Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil." We need to be aware of all the circumstances in which we find ourselves, and beware the consequences. Awake from the sleepiness of the day! Arise from dead service! Walk in Christ and let your light shine. Walk circumspectly before Him, making good use of the time—because we know the days are evil.

Finally, we need to put our hope and trust in God and in Christ. God can control the temptations; He can adjust them for us. He can deliver us from the temptations, and He can forgive. Remember 1 Corinthians 10:13, that we are not tempted above that which we are able to bear, but that God will make a way of escape.

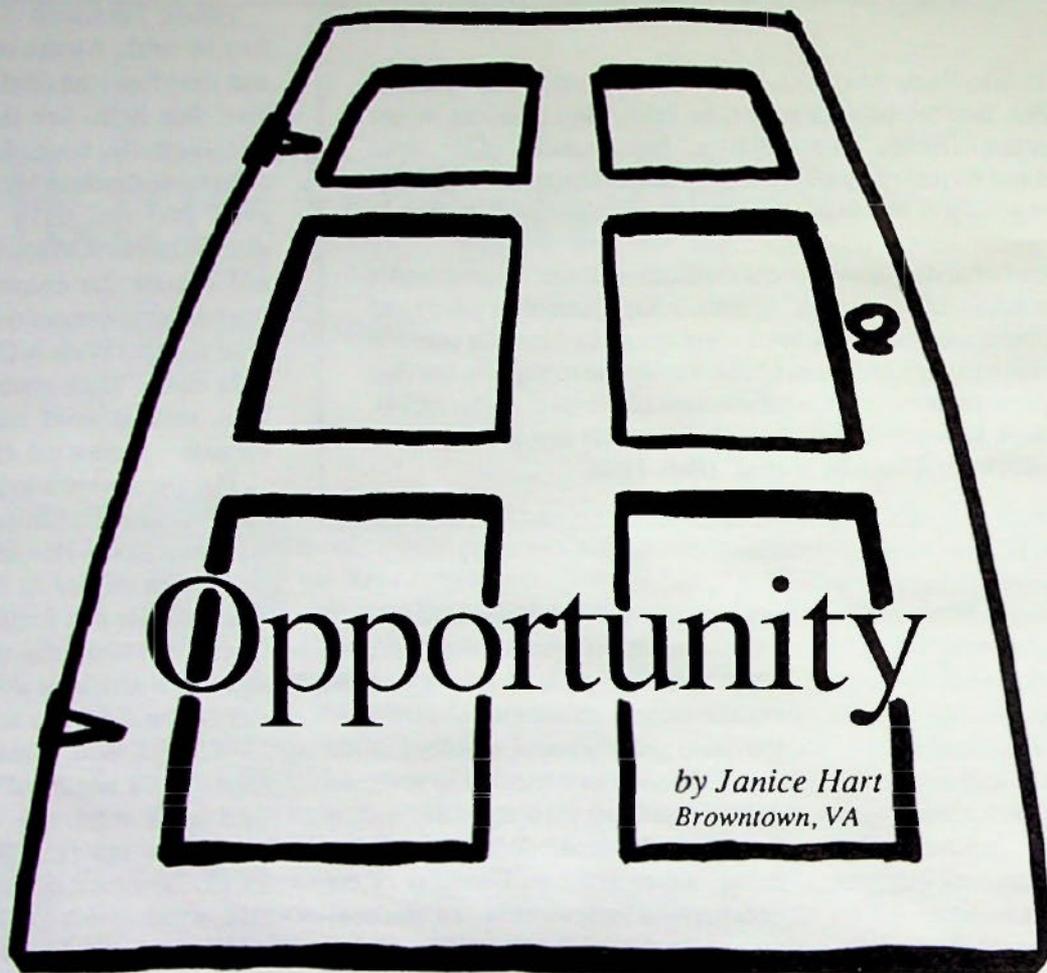
We need, then, to stand steadfast. We need to walk worthy of God's grace. We need to be solid and stand up for our beliefs and our faith. First Corinthians 15:57, 58, sums it up well: "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." We need to be standing steadfast, unmovable, abounding in the work of the Lord. Indeed, our labor is not in vain.

I would like to share a poem entitled:

#### Step by Step

"He does not lead me year by year  
nor even day by day,  
But step by step my path unfolds,  
my Lord directs my way.  
Tomorrow's plan I do not know,  
I only know this minute.  
But he will say this is the way,  
By faith now walk ye in it.  
And I am glad that it is so,  
today's enough to bear,  
And when tomorrow comes,  
his grace shall far exceed its care.  
What kind of worry then or fret?  
The God who gave his Son  
Holds all his moments in his hand  
and gives them one by one."

—Author Unknown.



**O**PPORTUNITY. . . . It's a word that excites me, challenges me, and scares me at times. Opportunities come in all shapes and sizes at all hours of the day and night. Some you can recognize. Others may be masked and hard to discern. And sometimes you don't know you've had an opportunity until much later down the road. I sometimes joke with friends that my life is like one big volume of *Reader's Digest*!

Don't let fear keep you from taking advantage of an opportunity. I manage the largest shopping center in my home town. It is a job that fell into my lap almost five years ago. I was not looking for a job at the time and was quite negative in my interview, insisting that I was a poor risk for their needs. I really didn't know anything about what they were hiring me for! But as a result of accepting the job, it led me to accept Christ and changed my life. I meet challenges there every day in one way or another. Some of them, quite frankly, I did not think I would survive! But I just stop and remember who is in control, and it all works out. I learn something and I go on to the next thing. I am most blessed to have a fantastic boss who understands and accepts my priorities and even encourages me in them!

Those of you who know me know that I am a "people person"—a trait I inherited from my father who never met a stranger. I confess there have been times when I wish I weren't, but there again I feel it is the Lord's doing and I just go with it! Two summers ago our church decided to do our Bible School in a tropical theme. The other co-director and I decided that it would be fun to dress up in tropical "island-girl" costumes to add to the spirit of the week. I felt more like a cocktail waitress than a Bible School co-director! While our outfits were



most proper I still thought to myself, No one would ever believe me if I told them I was dressing for the Lord's work! I was given the opportunity to witness to a co-worker at the shopping center, who happened to see me in this "get-up"! As a result this gentleman not only joined my Bible-study group and attended services when he could, but when he was transferred he called me for the nearest Church of God to his new location. He attended there regularly and his love for the Lord made him very popular with everyone he met. I trust the Lord will take care of him and provide for him wherever he goes.

Recently, I was given a surprise birthday party by one of the new merchants in the shopping center. We had become very close in a very short time. I have shared much of my church family experiences with her and have invited her to church many times. Not only did she invite all the merchants from the shopping center, but she managed to get about half of my church family to the party and two of the other churches were also represented there! She had never met any of these people. They were just names in my computer that she managed to get! As a result she has started going to church with me! Praise the Lord!

Having been a child of God for only four years I am still learning about spiritual gifts. I know what some of mine aren't! I am not a teacher. But I take the opportunity when offered to me to "teach" our adult Sunday School class. I call it "leading the lesson discussion." Others are much better than me and so much more knowledgeable. But it is a chance for me to share my love of the Lord with them. I usually end up getting a lot more out of the lesson than they do! I prefer to seek opportunities to use the gifts I know I have. Hostessing is my favorite.

Many times we tend to keep our love for the Lord and all His wondrous blessings to us under a rock. I would encourage us all to *share* our experiences, good and bad. They are all opportunities to praise God and thank Him for everything.

I have recently entered into a 12-step

recovery program. It is a very difficult program that requires you to examine yourself openly and honestly. It is painful and time consuming. But I know the Lord is guiding me to get my life back on track. I feel His strength when I am at my weakest. All I do is ask for it! It is truly amazing! With the Lord's help and support I will recover. He led me to the program, and it has given me numerous opportunities to share with others suffer-

ing much greater hardships than mine to ask for God's help. It is wonderful to feel and see others changing their lives for the better.

I could go on and on, but I think you can see what I mean. Every day God gives us opportunities to praise Him and His Son, to thank Him, and to use our opportunities to serve Him. I'm sure there is an opportunity for you around the next corner. Try it—you'll like it!!!

## *A Promise for 1993*

*Approaching quickly is New Year's Day,  
Why not start this year in a different way?  
Make 1993 a year less demanding,  
Take the time to be more understanding.  
Call on someone you know in need,  
Offer your support, do a good deed.*

*Be reassuring, show that you care,  
Join hands with your friend and together have prayer.  
God will take us in His loving arms and keep us close this year,  
We need only to talk to Him, for all our prayers He'll hear.*

*If there is someone with whom you've had a spat,  
Drop a note; get together to chat.  
If you feel someone has done you wrong,  
Don't let it go for very long.  
Explain to him the way you feel,  
For then emotions can start to heal.*

*May this promise be kept, not broken,  
That this year kinder words will be spoken.  
Perhaps someone will make 1993 special for you,  
If you share your love the whole year through.*

*By Dyan Rhodes  
South Bend, Indiana*

# Ministry, Commitment, Sacrifice, Joy

by Paula Kirkpatrick  
Hector, MN

This article is based on a sermon presented by the author during the Priscillas' 50th Anniversary Celebration service at the 1992 Church of God General Conference, St. Paul, MN.



**T**HEY WERE PACKING again. Bundling up their belongings. It seemed just yesterday that they had gone through this same process, when they last moved. Carefully they sorted through their earthly possessions, laying aside the treasures, questioning the necessity of each remaining item. Would they need it at their new home? Space was so limited for their move.

What would it be like, this new city where they would establish a ministry? Would people listen to the gospel message? Would they adjust to their new surroundings? Would God's work flourish and grow under their leadership?

So many thoughts and questions swirled about in the young woman's mind. Sometimes doubts popped up and added to the confusion. But eventually the young woman shook her head decisively. The Lord's call was clear. There was no mistake. God would bless their work in this new city. Yes, God would bless their work in Ephesus. With a smile on her lips and a song in her heart, Priscilla continued her packing. Soon Aquila and Paul would be home, and she must be ready.

Yes, even 2,000 years ago ministry was not so different from today. Moving was part of the job description. Getting acquainted, adjusting to a new home, was a major concern. The desire to make a difference in people's lives was a constant prayer.

The Bible's example of a ministry couple, Priscilla and Aquila, seemed a fit-

ting role model to a group of pastors' wives who decided to meet together at General Conference to share their mutual concerns. And so, 50 years ago, August 4, 1942, the name Priscilla was suggested for this new organization of ministers' wives. The following day, a slogan was adopted for the Priscilla Auxiliary—"Priscilla and Aquila—My Helpers in Christ Jesus," based on Paul's affectionate description of the couple found in Romans 16:3.

Priscilla and Aquila—the Biblical writers always mention their names together, but in no set order. They appear as a cooperating item, as a ministry partnership. According to Acts 18:1-3, they had recently come to Corinth from Italy because of an edict issued by Claudius that commanded all the Jews to leave Rome. Paul joined them in their trade of tent-making and, as they worked together, they shared and learned from him. Soon their ministry began.

Everywhere Priscilla and Aquila lived, they hosted a church in their home (1 Cor. 16:19). Truly they possessed and practiced the gift of hospitality.

Down through the years, hospitality has been a big part of the lives of our pastors' wives, of Priscillas. Jane LeCrone once hosted nineteen people overnight for Minnesota Conference. During a three-month period, Louise Hearp had forty overnight guests at their pastorate near Niagara Falls. Every Priscilla has a story to tell about overnight guests or company for dinner—the surprises, the disasters, the blessings. Every Priscilla has a story to tell about following Paul's

admonition in Romans to "contribute to the needs of the saints, to practice hospitality."

The Bible also says that Priscilla and Aquila had a teaching ministry. Acts 18:24-26 tells us of Apollos, an eloquent man, mighty in the Scriptures and fervent in spirit. But he was acquainted only with the baptism of John. So Priscilla and Aquila taught Apollos, explained to him the way of God through Jesus Christ, through our acceptance of His sacrifice on the cross.

Teaching often seems to be second nature to pastors' wives, too. They have taught in Sunday School (from nursery to adult), Bible School, home Bible studies, church camps, conference classes, and workshops. Mildred Macy taught Bible stories to children through the air waves, on her own radio program.

Priscillas have taught and shared through the written word too. They have composed many lessons for Sunday School quarterlies and Bible School curriculum down through the years. A devotional booklet for use in hospital visits and sick calls, entitled "Christ—Our Strength in Sickness and Distress," was printed and mailed for distribution in 1956 by the Priscillas. One thousand were first printed.

Ministry families who know the agony of frequent moves can identify with Aquila and Priscilla. Cross-country pastoral moves have occurred countless times in Church of God history. Together you box the books and books and books of your husband's library. You pack the possessions, wipe away the tears, and face the hopes and fears of a new pastorate. How often this scene has been reenacted down through the years.

And we mustn't forget the travels of our evangelists in our earlier days. Francis and Iris Burnett, as national evangelists, pulled their home (a trailer) behind their car, traveling to the congregations and home churches in the states of Arkansas and Missouri to minister to them. There were travels of ministry couples to conduct revival meetings and home Bible studies. At one point in V. E. Kirkpatrick's ministry, he had a Bible study or church service four different nights of

the week—all of which the entire family attended.

Yes, there were miles and miles of teaching and preaching, miles and miles of sacrificial giving.

Aquila and Priscilla were acquainted with sacrifice in their ministry marriage, even danger for the sake of the gospel. They risked their lives so the Word of the Lord would go forth. (Rom. 16:3, 4.)

Our Church of God ministry couples have also sacrificed for the Lord's work throughout our history, even to the point of endangering their lives. Accounts in *Historical Waymarks of the Church of God* testify of pastors performing baptisms despite the threat of death.

Romans instructs us to be living and holy sacrifices, and so our Church of God Priscillas and Aquilas have sacrificed down through the years for the sake of the gospel. For the continuance of the ministry, for the spreading of the gospel, these sacrifices were accepted. Limited income, loneliness, discouragement, moving, "making do"—it was all taken in stride. They learned the secret of turning sacrifice into satisfaction. Philippians 4:12, 13 says, "I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or want. I can do everything through him who gives me strength."

The Priscillas have made a rich contribution to the history of the Church of God. From 50 years ago and beyond, we are spiritual sisters with a common bond. All of us chose a husband who was or became a minister. And with that vow of marriage came a mutual interest in his work, and a commitment to his calling of sharing the gospel message. But how we fulfill that calling will be different for all of us, as it was for past Priscillas. Each ministry marriage is unique. The pattern set by each ministry couple in serving God and His church will be theirs alone to develop.

As pastors' wives, our primary ministry is to our pastor-husbands and our

families. As Mary Chambers, a pastor's wife and well-known Christian cartoonist, said, "A ministry I have is my relationship with my husband and children. Our family life should be an example of harmony and love. To properly bring up my children is a ministry not only to them but to the congregation. It is a ministry to my church to live at peace with my husband and children, and that benefits anyone who knows us."

Beyond this personal ministry, pastors' wives are all different. We possess

## The Lord's call was clear.

various gifts, strengths, and weaknesses. But whether we shine in the kitchen, at the piano, in the classroom, through a listening ear, or a compassionate hug, we are all committed to the same goal—

## There was no mistake.

ministry; the ministry we share with our husbands, the ministry we share with our congregations.

Paul says it well in Philippians 1:3-5. "I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now."

The church at Philippi and Paul were partners in the gospel. Our churches and ministry couples are partners in the gospel. All of us share an equal part in the work of the Lord. It is a work that has its setbacks, sorrows, and sacrifices. But it is a work that can be filled with joy unspeakable.

The joy of watching a person accept the Lord.

The joy of voices singing in triumphant praise.

The joy of a family of believers learning, nurturing, growing in the Lord.

There is joy in ministry.

The joy of a pastor and wife and the church—partners in the gospel together.

The joy of serving Jesus!

# William Greenwell and the Ripley Church of God

by Millie Laning  
Mt. Sterling, IL



**T**HE GREENWELLS have been in Brown County, Illinois, since 1840. William, son of Henry and Rachel Harned Greenwell, was the first to come from Mead County, Kentucky, in 1840. He erected a gristmill on Crooked Creek, now called Lamoine River. For many years it was the only water power mill nearer than Quincy. It was known as Greenwell's Mill.

William Greenwell was a man of courage and firm conviction. He must have been rather ingenious too; it is said he built a cab to be used on his buggy or sled in which he installed a small stove. When he drove back and forth about the countryside, the smoke rolled cheerily out the stovepipe, to the wonderment and amusement of the natives.

Mr. Greenwell was a very religious man of the Advent faith. He believed so firmly in the second coming of Christ that he built and furnished a room in his rather pretentious brick home so that he would be ready to receive Him. He had only one son, Warren, who died young. This house is still standing as the picture shows, and reveals the walkway out of the upper story.

No profane language was allowed around the mill. It is told that one time during a flood when one end of the log dam became loosened, Mr. Greenwell talked excitedly about the dam logs. The spectators thought it funny, for they interpreted his speech to mean "damn" logs, when he had no such thought.

At the end of the work week, he would load his wagon with meal and flour and go about the area sharing what he had with those less fortunate.

About 1840, "The Second Coming of Christ" was preached in this part of the state. Several of the earlier members, by careful Bible reading and studying, accepted this teaching and formed a group known then and for several years as the "Advents." The charter or early members of the Ripley Church of God, according to an old record book, were WILLIAM GREENWELL, Isaiah Laning, Ellen Laning, Garrett Robins, Mrs. Garrett Robins, Dr. Bowman, Mrs. Emma Bow-

#### EDITOR'S NOTE:

The doctrine of the second Advent was first introduced among the people of Mt. Sterling, Illinois, in the winter of 1842 by H. A. Chittendon of New York in a series of lectures on the prophetic Scriptures. His efforts laid the foundation for further work later on, on the part of others.

Many became deeply interested in the return of Christ which led to the great disappointment of 1843. The Greenwell house had a special door on the second floor with a landing leading outside where William Greenwell and his family expected the Lord to come for them. See picture.

Needless to say Jesus did not come in 1843, but that doesn't mean that He will not come. All efforts to set dates for that great event have ended in failure because no one knows when He will come (Mark 13:32). As foolish as date setting is, let's never forget that "he that shall come will come and will not tarry" (Heb. 10:37).

## EDITORIAL

### The Function of History

Some would say we study the past to reveal its mistakes so we can avoid repeating them in the future. This sounds suspiciously like a secular notion that "things will get better and better until eventually we'll have Utopia." It places a lot of strength on the inherent goodness of man and the evolutionary process that the good will outweigh man's basic nature until perfection is achieved. One might say people believing this are definitely optimists.

We have not been successful in all the centuries of civilization in improving man's moral fiber, or the national integrity of many empires and nations, by looking back on the past.

Looking back to analyze the crisis of World War I could not save the nations from the crisis of World II, or Korea or Viet Nam. We do not learn very well by reviewing lessons from the past.

What is the function of history?

Christian writers would say the function of history is to reveal the Creator. The Book of Genesis is a history book. "In the beginning God created," and because He intervened in the universe at

some point in the past one may trust that He will continue to intervene in present history and future history.

A Christian, of course, is approaching this position from a point of view founded in faith. It is not difficult to understand God's hand intervening in daily events which will be the next generation's historical record—if one believes in answered prayer or God's providential watchcare over His children. One views events as the fall of communistic Russia, the Gulf War, and the recent elections as small increments in God working out His plan.

Let us be cautious then, in attempting to use the historical record within the Church of God to dredge up old quarrels or scandals and bring them to light. Let us not search for "ammunition" to prove a doctrinal point, or rehash old "heresies" which were settled by our fathers. Let us also be careful not to write off the early Age-to-Come theologians as being irrelevant simply because the 19th century culture was more primitive than ours and hence their theology was simpler. Disproving the study upon which the Age-to-

Come movement was founded would cut us loose from our heritage and allow us to say like the Russellites said to me one day, "Pastor Russell was a good man, but we know now what he was teaching about the Kingdom of God was wrong. We have learned more since then."

Heaven forbid that we should repudiate our heritage in order to wander off on some tangent that clouds our mission of reaching the lost for Christ.

That must be why we study the history of our pastors, of their ideas, and of the growth of our work: to reveal the Creator and His Son in our work so we may more clearly see His hand in our present work.

In this issue, David Graham examines the precept and practice of "Gospel liberty" within our work until around 1870. He looks, too, at the sectorian qualities, if any, of our group. We invite your comment.

We are still looking for any information on the Eisenhowers in Kansas before 1895. Please search your old papers for this. We will publish more when we know more. —Jan Stilson.

## A Short History of Anti-Sectarianism and the Church of God

by David Graham

Sometimes the writing of history is a good thing. By it we are kept posted of what is transpiring in the world. Our reason for writing it is not to find fault with anyone, but to let our people know what has happened and they will, of course, be governed accordingly—*adapted*. "A bit of history." A. R. Underwood. *Restitution* (Jan. 6, 1904), Plymouth, Indiana.

As citizens of the United States, the most important privilege we have is the sacred right to exercise religious freedom. The next is the "privilege" to dissent!

These are God-given rights, which, providentially, the American Government acknowledges as "inalienable," and, needless to say, has, far more than two centuries, faithfully guarded. Moreover, it continues to maintain its aging commitment to all people, regardless of religious diversity.

Since 1776, perhaps a half-dozen generations of theocrats of

some of America's oldest established religious institutions had stubbornly resisted, but gradually and yet wisely absorbed into their authoritarian fabric, many of the same old ideals of individualism and Christian Liberty with which the Church of God at one time was so strongly identified.

In the old History of the Christian Denomination in America, we learn that a Rev. Mister James O'Kelley and a host of about thirty Methodist Episcopal clergymen from Virginia dissented from that Connexion about 1792, "over the form of government adopted; which, it says, was unsatisfactory to Virginia ministers." After many years of striving with the system, a number of them finally gave up and went home, including James O'Kelley.

The New England, or Eastern Christians were, however, the first to proclaim Gospel Liberty in America. With political

safeguards in the government such as the policy of the separation of church and state; and the privilege to think out loud (as explained in detail through the medium of religious journalism), great leadership in religious circles suddenly began to emerge.

Another member of the clergy, Elias Smith (1769-1846), taught that creeds invariably prevent discussion and investigation—two very necessary parts of the whole counsel of God. Smith found that creeds, whether or not we like to think of them in this way, are a good source of repression; since "reason" is rendered powerless in churches where interpretation of Holy Writ is dictated by a string of resolutions. Hence, one of the most important popular religious journals of that time period (1809-1816) was *The Herald of Gospel Liberty*, which Smith began editing in 1809.

Through this medium others received new light, most of which Smith adapted from his study of the Constitution of the United States, the Bill of Rights, but most of all the Bible.

Having studied the works of Smith it is no wonder that so many people from every direction and persuasion experienced the force of Christian Liberty at that time. Smith's paper caught on quickly in the Thirteen States, during a period of time in America when the first wave of emigrants started out across the vast Allegheny Mountains. His paper intelligently explained Christianity, and reasoned all things through the Bible.

Smith learned to combine idealism with toleration and rationalism as it relates to theology. He discovered that "purity of heart" is a Christian doctrine that strengthens, or emotionally and spiritually undergirds men of different doctrinal persuasions. It is this doctrine that effects Christian unity, or union of sects.

Unfortunately, the Baptists of New England did not readily grasp Smith's philosophical ideals of democracy for the churches. For a while, anonymous pamphlets were circulated, attacking the character of some of the Baptists' most hard-line clergy. These pamphlets infuriated Baptists who, of course, blamed Smith for having written them, whether or not he actually did. No doubt his lectures tended to annoy them so much that there were often angry mobs waiting for him at the place he was scheduled to lecture.

Although his sermons were always scriptural and very interesting indeed, they were rather unorthodox. Some examples of these are, "The whole world Governed by a Jew"; "Denominationalism" and "The History of the Christians." Such topics, combined with all the rumors and allegations—concerning his reputation among the Baptists, only made things worse for him. Eventually, he quit that denomination, but it didn't hinder him from stirring up the minds and consciences of that people. He continued to provoke crowds into anger against him, until there is recorded at least one instance where he was literally carried out of the church, and by some miracle saved from being tarred and feathered!

He often took the kind of risks that many times brought him within inches of his life!

Eventually, some of the things he wrote caught the attention of a few intelligent, liberated individuals—Baptists, no less! Often, his friends in the ministry challenged the Baptist clergy to public debate on doctrinal topics, which, of course, they vehemently deplored, and tried to avoid at all costs! These debates brought Smith firmly into prominence.

Elias Smith realized early in his career the vast importance

of correct thinking in religious matters. He understood Baptist theology and after a few trials and errors, found out that it was wrong. Consequently, he dissented and immediately stopped being a Baptist, yet more importantly, stopped preaching their false theology!

Invariably, the Christians as they began to grow, campaigned vigorously for the overthrow of sectarianism. Soon their cries were heard in every direction, and a powerful movement ensued, which spanned the first half of the nineteenth century!

The work of pulling the sects together under one designation became a difficult task for the average minister. Hence, only a few men, of whom Elder Joseph Marsh was one, were gifted with this rare talent. Others associated with the Christians were Joseph Badger, Barton Stone, Alexander Campbell, Joshua Himes, Rice Haggard, Elias Smith, and Charles Fitch. Men like these for the most part opposed dogmatism and emphasized the ideals of Christian character.

Barton Warren Stone (1772-1844), one of the strong founders of the Newlight Movement, and who favored "unity," wrote the following to Elder Marsh in 1839:

"Christian Union is my polar star. Here I stand as unmoved as the Alleghany [sic] mountains; nor can any thing drive me hence!"

Individualism was extremely popular during the first half of the nineteenth century in religious and secular circles all over the Brave New World. Joseph Marsh was still just a boy then. In fact, by the time Marsh was twenty-five years old, he had earned a reputation as "the Boy Preacher."

Hundreds of individuals involved in Christian evangelism became famous almost overnight because of their firm and untiring zeal for the ideals of "Christian liberty." There were "heroes" from every doctrinal persuasion working together, "individually" toward the erosion of sectarian party platforms. These, in their ruinous state, only caused division and scattered the true saints of Christ.

At the peak of the anti-sectarian movement (circa 1835) another important minister suddenly came to prominence. Charles Fitch (1804-1844) tried to convince people that the chief source of evil in the world was right in the sectarian church. He warned everyone—all those who considered themselves true Christians—to come OUT of the popular denominations, or be condemned in them. He compared sectarians to "Babylon," the evil harlot; and his sermon, "Come Out of Her, My People," skillfully convinced many of them to leave their churches.

His campaign greatly bolstered the Movement of '43, because it was totally geared to the anti-sectarian bent of the Millerite Movement, which was later managed by Joshua Himes (1805-1895). During the Millerite campaigns, Himes and Joseph Marsh (1802-1863), both Christian Adventists, published Millerite journals in 1843 which provided a voice for believers in the second coming of Christ. Himes, formerly of the Christian denomination, made a small-time preacher/farmer, William Miller (1782-1849), extremely popular shortly after meeting him in 1839; and began organizing what immediately developed as the new "Millerite" Movement. William Miller became the main focus in many of Himes' tent crusades during the early Forties.

Out of the Christian denomination, leaders of independent

Bible studies carved out different versions of Adventism. Theories developed upon which good men sharply differed.

Joseph Marsh, of course, was certainly one of them. His system was fully developed by 1850, which was called the "Restitution," or "Age-to-Come."

Some of the theoretical systems that developed posthumously were the Life and Advent Union, whose founders were John T. Walsh and George Storrs; The Church of the Blessed Hope, founded in Cleveland by Robert McLaughlan, Maurice Joblin, and Newell Bond; and one other relevant to this study, was the Christadelphians, of John Thomas fame.

Most of the leaders of these independent Bible groups had originated with the Christian Connexion, or Disciples of Christ denominations, which also began as small groups of devoted individuals heartily sought to investigate, discuss, and draw conclusions based upon their own understanding of the Bible.

Yet it should not be overlooked that there did exist among them a wide range of differences of opinion on nearly every tenet of faith. This, of course, made it difficult to organize on any platform other than "Christian Character."

In the hey-day of "Age-to-Come" Adventism (circa 1847-1855), the anti-sectarian tradition which we have been discussing was as important to its survival as it was for the great Christian Advent Movement; which, of course, drew heavily upon the Christian Connexion and Christian (Disciple) populations for its numerical growth and support, which were also entirely anti-sectarian.

As these Movements grew, the popularity of anti-sectarianism grew with them. Out of this tradition, then, the Church of God of the Abrahamic Faith emerged and became a reality.

From the beginning, there were ultra-conservatives (Thomasites) who opposed "Christian character," as the basis for "union" in the Church of God. Still, their right to dissent through the Association's\* journals or at conference was always permitted. However, since their viewpoints were usually maintained by the minority of the whole Association, they were not considered a threat.

There were strong Limitarians like Maurice Joblin and for most of his life, J. M. Stephenson. Each on his own merit, was a highly respected man who made some particularly important contribution to the Association. Their views were not always popular.

In our examination of the role of the Church of God in the history of anti-sectarianism, a few concluding thoughts are in order.

As far as the Church of God (COG) is concerned, the traditional platform of uniting on the basis of *Christian Character* with the different sects began to change about 1867. For the sake of uniformity, they chose to unite on no other basis than *The Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ*.

"The whole Conference, with perhaps one exception, so far as they expressed themselves, were in favor of making the Kingdom and the name of the Anointed One a test of Christian Fellowship."—J. M. Stephenson, "Conference Report,"

\*The Church of God was called an "Association of the Church of God," per. se., by the Indiana State Conference in 1867. The term, "association" implies a fellowship or church organization. Hence, for our purposes, "Association," or "Association of the Church of God," shall be assigned as an alternative designation and used interchangeably with the official appellation, "the Church of God," for the remainder of this paper.

*Prophetic Watchman*, Oct. 26, 1867, p. 260.

This policy changed the focus of the COG forever. It no longer sought to court sectarian denominations, but rather turned its appeal inward, toward Millenarians and Millenists almost exclusively. That, for a while, drew much crossfire from Advent Christians (AC's). Of course, the "Jew" question was always a cliff-hanger for them. But not all AC's and Christadelphians (CD's) could ascribe to a variety of Age-to-Come Doctrine, among which the most controversial included The Return of the Jews, Millennial Probation, the Restoration of planet Earth, and Universal Resurrection.

"As no one can be a Christian according to your present theory unless he believes in the Restoration of the Jews, and as the platform on which we organized the Indiana Conference is abandoned and that dogma (of Jewish Restoration) substituted for it, there can be no union between the Indiana Conference and myself unless they retrace their steps, return to the ground from which they have strayed, and make Christian Character alone the condition of fellowship and cooperation. The Indiana Conference went on harmoniously until faith in the Restoration of the Jews was made a test of fellowship."—N. Field, "Letter from N. Field to Bro. R. H. Gresham," *Prophetic Watchman*, August 12, 1867.

First, it is important to realize that by 1867 the ministers, or leaders of the COG in Indiana, were much more proscriptive than ever before. No doubt the resolution voted on at Old Union regarding the basis for union was directed at AC's and CD's (or rather, anyone who opposed them on the essentials, especially on the Return of the Jews).

We can examine this important aspect another way by looking at some events from 1867 through 1900.

We see that the basis for union in the COG did become progressively more narrow, at least from the Advent Christian point of view.

First, the involvement by the COG with AC's and CD's had dropped off significantly by 1874.

Then, five attempts had been made by COG leaders to organize a permanent national conference without the support and cooperation of other denominations. The dates are as follows: 1869, 1888, 1889, 1910, 1921.

From these facts it is clearly revealed that as early as 1867 the indigenous COG was, in fact, already closing the gap on cooperating with other denominations—including Advent Christians and Christadelphians, and preparing the way for greater uniformity.

However, as late as 1900 one writer said he thought the Church of God was still nowhere near as narrow as he would like to have seen it.

There is strong evidence that the Church of God faced some important obstacles in providing for doctrinal uniformity on a national scale. Those who saw the need for national uniformity (Moderates), however, were totally powerless to see it through to its final conclusion.

One reason for this is that the Liberals and Conservatives were far too powerful.

Unable to please either faction in the Church of God, the Moderates stood by and watched as several conservative congregations (resembling the Blessed Hope Church in Cleveland) ceded from the Association in 1911. These, of course, were constituents of some of the more ultra-con-

servative organizations (Thomasites) that had always coexisted within the structure of the Church of God.

The traditional Moderates, who controlled the church paper, often battled Conservatives and Liberals through the church publications, who pounded out threats of aggression and/or cession. The editorial staff, who represented the whole Association, no doubt worked diligently to keep its paper free from all extremes. Although warnings were often fired through the paper to alert the whole body of such dangers, it seems apparent that no real help was given to curb them in a timely manner. Unfortunately, the business of dealing with national church conference politics was inappropriately handed to editors and others who, for a while, had to solve great problems extemporaneously.

The appellation "Church of God," which used to distinguish the Age-to-Come from other millenarian or spiritualist organizations, had, by 1900, gotten lost in the directory of Christian Faiths. There was no longer any way to know which "Church of God" was which. Hence, something had to be done.

Finally, about 1905 a suggestion was made by someone to add "Abrahamic Faith," or "Faith of Abraham" to Church of God. But what a day and year the suggestion was officially resolved and acted upon by the Association is anyone's guess.

The ministers who met to reorganize the Ministerial Association in Cleveland in 1911 made some particularly tough decisions. They realized the consequences and repercussions they'd have to face once their plan of compromise was unveiled. They were looking for moderation and compromise from both the right and left wings of the Church of God. The "New" Ministerial Association failed to impress many of the Liberals and certainly none of the Conservatives who labeled their plan of reform "insensible."

The burden of responsibility, for the first time in Church of God history, rested squarely on the shoulders of the second

generation of leaders. Unfortunately, their vows to uphold and protect the Association failed, from the point of view of Conservatives. They had hoped for a balance between all extremes, viz.,

- 1) Ultraism vs. liberalism;
- 2) What is order vs. what is disorder;
- 3) Morality vs. immorality;
- 4) What is narrow vs. what is broad;
- 5) How much truth should be uniformly standardized;
- 6) How much of it should be compromised.

The men who ultimately drew up such resolutions all favored Gospel Liberty, the Bible as the only rule in matters of faith and practice, and the freedom to investigate the Scriptures untrammelled. Therefore, such men represented the Liberal camp. However, in order to satisfy the majority of Conservatives some of their own values had to go.

Consequently these COG ministers chipped and carved away at their gospel heritage until about 1922, when they were finally ready to unveil their work. What ultimately materialized was an Association that was much narrower, and almost unrecognizable when compared to the same body that existed in 1867. Still, after all the political compromises, provisions, and innovations that were needed in order to reconcile both Liberal and Conservative parties, those congregations that withdrew from the Association in 1911, never found their way back.

Although there have been many adjustments, or amendments, made to the Constitution since 1922, the Church of God has invariable remained unchanged in most of what was written there since that time.

In retrospect, through nearly seventy-five years (1850-1922) of internal conflict between constituencies adjoining every doctrinal party in the Association, the era of "experimental knowledge" in the Church of God had finally drawn to a close.

(To be continued.)

Dear Janet:

Recently I have been going through some of my papers and clippings and ran across this picture of Auntie Wince. When I cut it out of *The Restitution Herald* I did not write down the year and month of *The Herald*. Only the page is given in this clipping.

Anyway this picture brought back some memories. In 1926 I was 15 years old and my sister Stella 13. Then she died of diphtheria. It was a tragic time for all our family, but especially my mother. I remember that my mother started getting letters from Auntie Wince. Those letters were such a comfort to my mother. Auntie Wince surely was a woman of faith and great compassion. It left a mark on me especially. So I treasure this picture and the information about her by Laura Slusser Glanton. I did make some copies of this picture, but this is the original. . . .

In Faith,  
Harry Goekler.

Dear Bro. Goekler:

Thanks for your fine letter and the picture of Auntie Wince. Unfortunately, we cannot reproduce a newspaper-printed

photo. I will try to locate an original in the archives and publish it. —JS.

Dear Jan,

I am glad that you are keeping the NEWSLETTER going. I have enjoyed all the research that has been presented. I am enclosing a check for \$12 so that I may continue to get these interesting articles.

I am also enclosing some "Age-to-Come" tract copies which you probably already have but here they are just in case.

Also I have some other things for your archives which I will send if you do not already have. They are:

*The Prophetic Watchman and Herald of the Kingdom*, Stephenson & Reed

Feb. 8, 1866                      June 29, 1867

Mar. 15, 1866                      Oct. 26, 1867

June 29, 1866                      Nov. 9, 1867

Nov. 9, 1866                      Nov. 23, 1867

*The Herald of the Coming Kingdom & Christian Instructor*, Wilson & Meyer

Mar. 1, 1868

*The Millennial Harbinger & Bible Expositor*, Newman

(No date) Vol. 39 Numbers 3, 8, 10.

All of the above are photo copies of the originals (which are at the Cashmere

Church of God). I will send any you do not already have.

Also, I have a very rare book that is quite interesting. I doubt that the author has any connection to the Church of God but Robert G. Huggins has his name stamped on it and I believe that it came from his library. The book is *Universalism Against Itself*, An Examination and Refutation by Alexander Hall (1846). Let me know if you want it. It is probably not a Church of God book.

Best wishes for the success of HISTORY NEWSLETTER and your efforts as editor.

—David Opel.

Dear David,

Thanks for your letter of encouragement. The copies of the above list we received in good condition, and I have enjoyed reading them. I believe the Millennial Harbingers are from 1865.

The book on Universalism will take a bit of study. I don't know Alexander Hall as an author, but there were Halls in the Cleveland work so we encourage our readers to look into this and send us a letter if you know or learn something about A. Hall. —Editor Janet Stilson



man, Emily Long, Elizabeth Cox, and Jennie Cox. They obtained the building which is still in use and began having services before 1865. The building had been built in 1855 to be used for church services and as a public meeting place. Among other things, it was used as a schoolhouse.

The building originally stood south of where it is now, across the present highway which was then a deep ravine. In 1889, Mr. and Mrs. Isaiah Laning purchased the lots on which the church now stands, and deeded them to the trustees of the Church of God of the Abrahamic Faith in 1890. The building was moved across the deep ravine to its present location in 1892 by means of hand-hewn logs, horses, and many men.

Originally the church had two doors at the west end and two heating stoves at each side in the center. The stovepipes



This house is still standing as the picture shows, and reveals the walkway out of the upper story.

were strung by wires along half the length of the building, proving quite a hazard because they occasionally fell down full of soot. Men and women each had their

own entrance and side on which to enter and sit. This eventually gave way to a single entrance and mixed company. Finally a little place under the southeast corner of the church was excavated for a small furnace and a new flue was built at the east end. A full basement was later made and more adequate heating was provided. Electricity came to Ripley in 1930 and the church was first to receive this blessing. This did away with kerosene and gas lamps which were quite difficult to keep in operation. Later improvements to the church included new pews, a bell, pulpit, stained glass windows, communion table, and chairs. The present parsonage was built in 1957-58. The church was enlarged in recent years, and a new entrance was made.

*Taken in part from "History of Schuyler and Brown Counties, Illinois."*

## HISTORY

# Midnight and Morning Clyde E. Hewitt

by Janet Stilson  
Oregon, IL

### EDITOR'S NOTE:

This review first appeared in THE RESTITUTION HERALD, November, 1984.

**O**NE OF THE MOST controversial periods in America's religious history was during the zenith of William Miller's popularity which encompassed the decades of the 1830's and 1840's. Clyde Hewitt of the Advent Christian General Conference of America has authored *Midnight and Morning*, which deals very effectively with the questions that historically and presently cloud Miller's ministry, and the Adventist movement spawned from it.

Hewitt carries the reader through the adult ministry of William Miller of Low Hampton, New York, making a strong case in Miller's defense for his great burden to win lost souls to Christ before the Lord should return: Miller was more interested in awakening Christians to the fact of the imminent return of Christ than he was in calling them out of existing churches to form a new denomination.

The controversy in Miller's ministry arose

because he dared to set a date for the return of Christ. Because of his belief that the 2300 days mentioned in Daniel 8:14 could be equated to 2300 years, and because he believed that the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem under Nehemiah was the date from which to figure (457 B.C.), he concluded that the Lord's return would be in his own day. Daniel 9:25 indicated that the restoration of the temple was the correct date, and by adding 2300 years to 457 B.C., the year 1843 became the only possible answer. Miller also worked two more prophetic calculations, and arrived at 1843 in both cases. He believed he had more than enough evidence to support his case.

Date setting itself was not such an unusual phenomenon in church history, but the impact of this date was popularized by the message and the media. Joshua V. Himes, a kind of promoter, published Miller's sermons, ideas, and the date through *The Midnight Cry* which he edited. Other Miller followers were also publicizing the mes-

sage and the man. Coming as it did during the height of the social reform movement in America when abolition, temperance, peace, women's rights, children's rights, and religious freedom were important causes, the Second Advent message of Miller took on an intensity and popularity that gave it a momentum orthodox pastors found bewildering and threatening. Their abusive letters can be found in the religious newspapers of the day.

Finding no personal fault with Miller, the media often expressed the confused reactions of the clergy and orthodoxy in terms less than complimentary to the Adventist movement. Hewitt says, "... biased journalists sent out to get a sensational story or unsympathetic editors only

by preaching fervently to win more souls, by settling financial debts, by selling property, and looking for the appearance of their Lord.

When October 22nd came and went, the bitter disappointment set in. Many followers abandoned Miller at this time and, in actuality, the Millerite movement ended. However, individual believers still preached the soon return of the Lord, as Miller himself did.

A general confusion arose among the Adventists in the aftermath of the great disappointment. This confusion would continue unabated for several years, with one Adventist denomination after another forming in an effort to save the message of Adventism. Immediately after, the Millerites called a conference

nation to develop from the broken Millerite movement.\*

On April 29-May 1, 1845, a conference of all Millerite followers was called in Albany N. Y. The Albany Conference was an immediate attempt to restore order to the confused Millerite movement. The conference was notable for those who showed up, as well as for those who didn't. Important to the Church of God General Conference is the fact that Joseph Marsh did not show up. Marsh had formerly been an editor for a Miller paper, but disagreed with the date-setting tendency, and several points of doctrine and methodology. He was particularly not in favor of organization, nor of forming creeds. The Albany conference developed a statement of faith which was Millerite in essence. It confirmed a belief in the imminent return of Christ, but came out against conditionalism and the return of Israel to its homeland, the latter two points being strongly held by Marsh. Marsh also later objected to the use of the name "Adventist." He believed only the term Church of God was scriptural. He also stated in one of his editorials that it was

## A general confusion arose among the

too happy to reprint, with embellishments, a story deriding the Millerites found it easy to mold an uncritical public mind, whether they intended to or not" (p. 143). Unkind caricatures and car-

in Albany, NY, with other prophecy conferences and meetings occurring at regular intervals. It must be remembered that although Miller had called for Adventists to "Come out of Babylon,"

## Adventists in the aftermath of the great disappointment.

toons were often printed in papers, or as separate broadsides, depicting the Millerite movement in a derisive manner.

The failure of Christ to return during 1843 cast the movement into a worse light than ever, not only among its critics, but among some of Miller's own followers. However, following a published apology for setting a date, Miller continued preaching as did many other Adventists because they still carried the burden for the lost, and still believed the Lord would return soon.

A spurious reworking of Miller's prophetic timetable by Elder Samuel Snow revived the furor for the Second Advent by setting a new date—October 22, 1844. Reluctantly, Miller came to accept the new computations, and J. V. Himes publicized the new date. Once again believers prepared to meet the Lord

meaning the established church, he did not intend for a new denomination to occur. Adventism was rather to be a special interest within existing churches. So great was the concern to prevent formation of another church that Adventist meetings and conferences were called for Sunday afternoons in meeting halls, so that attenders could be free to worship Sunday morning.

As an attempt to explain why Christ had not returned, several men developed the doctrine that Christ had begun to cleanse the heavenly "sanctuary" as a prelude to returning to earth in judgment. O. R. L. Crozier, editor of the *Day Star*, worked out the theology on this idea and publicized it in his paper. Soon the idea of worshiping on Saturday was added, with the eventual formation of the Seventh Day Adventists, the largest denomi-

not scriptural for a conference group to vote on the truth of Scripture, and felt the Albany group had formed a new sect. He felt that if they had returned "to the order of the New Testament under the name given there to the true church" it would have been acceptable. (P. 206.)

Other denominations forming within the next decade were Church of God (Seventh Day), Advent Christians, and Life and Advent Union. Joseph Marsh and other Age-to-Come Adventists remained outside the circle of organized

\*According to the late Paul Hatch of Oregon, IL, a long-time Church of God historian, O. R. L. Crozier quickly forsook the new theology and showed up a year later with the Age-to-Come believers in the Michigan conference. He became secretary for the conference, but evidently ceased to be an editor from that time on.

groups. Marsh's Age-to-Come idea was quite distinctive among Adventists as it divided history into four time frames. "The Mosaic age was the first. It had ended at Christ's death. Christ's resurrection had opened the second, or Gospel age. This would end with His return which would usher in the Millennium, or third age. Marsh called this the Age to Come. The Eternal age would begin at the close of the Millennium" (p. 230). Marsh further believed that during the age to come unbelievers would have an opportunity to respond to the gospel. Ex-Millerites could not accept this, nor could they agree with Marsh that the Jews would return to their homeland.

In *Midnight and Morning* Hewitt describes the development of the Advent Christian Church in detail, at least through the early stages. More importantly to the Church of God General Conference, he has written the account showing that Adventists interacted with each other, and has not minimized the role of the Age-to-Come Adventists. Joseph Marsh, the forerunner to the Church of God Abrahamian Faith, has been described both as a friend of Miller in his early days, and as a chief critic following the disappointment. Hewitt has treated Marsh generously, and has given ample space to the development and current position of the Church of God General Conference among Adventists today (see Epilogue).

Hewitt's style of writing is scholarly but popular and easy to follow. He has given enough documented content to satisfy the reader's appetite for a solid meal. Although he has not used as many primary sources as one might expect for a work of this type, he has, nevertheless, done extensive research and reached reasonable and balanced conclusions.

Another important facet of this work to the Church of God is that it enables the Church of God to examine its own beginnings in light of other groups which preceded it, and which developed at the same time as it did. It is possible to identify areas of similarity and areas of difference.

The areas of similarity seem to revolve around methodology and organization. One tradition in the Church of

God has been the strong conference movement. Miller gathered large crowds across denominational lines by means of prophecy conferences. Such conferences promoted Bible study and fellowship. Large charts were painted to illustrate time tables and important prophetic conclusions. Large tents were used to hold camp meetings. Miller borrowed his conference methodology from the Christian Connexion of which both J. V. Himes and Joseph Marsh had formerly been members, and he borrowed the camp meeting idea from the Methodist Connection. The early Age-to-Come evangelists relied heavily upon both ideas.

The leaders of the Millerite movement were prolific writers. Publishing became a very important means of getting the Adventist message out. The title of Hewitt's book comes, in fact, from an important periodical, *The Midnight Cry*, which, after the great disappointment, became *The Morning Watch*. The former was edited by Joshua V. Himes, the latter by Nathan Whiting. Likewise, Joseph Marsh edited several periodicals throughout his life, *The Voice of Truth*, the *Advent Harbinger* and *Bible Advocate*, and *Expositor and Advocate* which show a progression of ideas as he studied himself into the Age-to-Come doctrine.

Areas of difference in addition to those pertaining to Joseph Marsh's concerns

about creeds, scriptural names, and organizations, center on doctrinal issues. Mention has already been made that the Millerite movement was anti-Zionist, against unbelievers being saved in the Millennium, and anti-conditionalist. William Miller was particularly against conditionalism. Joseph Marsh, however, and many individuals within the Millerite movement, were strong proponents of conditionalism. Hewitt gives a good summation of the history of conditionalism and its major scriptural support. Advent Christians and Age-to-Come Adventists (Church of God General Conference) have historically been strong advocates for conditionalism. As the doctrine enjoyed widespread acceptance during the nineteenth century in America (see Froom, *Conditionalist Faith of our Fathers*), so it is once again coming to the forefront of theological debate. Many who were at General Conference about 10 years ago heard Edward Fudge's presentation on man's nature. Mr. Fudge has written *The Fire That Consumes* from a conditional point of view.

Clyde Hewitt's book stops short of giving more than "birth pain" accounts of the developing Adventist denominations. This is all he intended to do, as his book is the first in a series the Advent Christians plan to publish discussing their history.



# ANSWERS TO YOUR QUESTIONS

*Dr. James Dobson*

**Question:** What role is rock music playing in the pressure we're seeing on this generation of teenagers?

**Answer:** It is difficult to overestimate the negative impact music is having. Rock stars are the heroes, the idols, young people want to emulate. And when they are depicted in violent and sexual roles, many teens and pre-adolescents are pulled along in their wake.

What could possibly be wholesome about showing explicit sexual scenes—especially those involving perversions—to 12- and 13-year old kids? Yet videos come into the home via MTV and other channels that feature blatantly sexual situations, or even depictions of sadism.

One study showed that more than half of all MTV videos featured or implied violence, and 35 percent revealed violence against women. A steady diet of this garbage will pollute the minds of even the healthiest of teenagers.

I believe that this perpetual and pernicious exposure to rock music is responsible, at least in part, for many of the social problems now occurring among the young, including the high suicide rate, the reported willingness of young men to rape women if given an opportunity, and the moral undermining of the next generation.

As a case in point, you may remember the flap that occurred in 1990 over the rap group 2 Live Crew and their album, "As Nasty As They Wanna Be." A Florida judge reviewed the filthy lyrics of this album and, for the first time ever, a judicial official declared a piece of "music" to be obscene and illegal.

Predictably, Phil Donahue and his cronies in the press threw their usual temper tantrums when the news broke. "Censorship!" they cried from the rooftops. Virtually every newspaper in the country carried editorials and feature stories about the audacity of the judge who imposed his standard of morality on the rest of us.

Dan Rather, on his show "48 Hours," made outlandish statements about our loss of freedoms in this

era of oppression. And Geraldo Rivera risked getting his nose broken again by bringing 2 Live Crew and their critics face-to-face on his television show.

What the media did not tell the public, however, was the content of 2 Live Crew's album. They *censored* that information, choosing instead to talk abstractly about "First Amendment rights" and "right-wing fundamentalists."

Millions of words were spoken about the obscene lyrics to a single album, yet no one would quote them directly. Why not? Because adults would be shocked and outraged by their filth and debauchery. This language, which was unfit to print or utter on television, was considered perfectly acceptable for the consumption of young minds. That is the logic of Phil, Dan, and Geraldo.

At the risk of upsetting our readers, let me list for you—as discreetly as possible—the words that appeared in the one album, "As Nasty As They Wanna Be." They included:

- 226 uses of the "F" word
- 117 explicit terms for genitalia
- 87 descriptions of oral sex
- 163 uses of the word for female dog
- 15 uses of "ho" (slang for whore)
- 81 uses of the "S" word

Remember, too, that youngsters buying this "music"—some only 8 to 10 years of age—typically listened to it dozens of times.

Descriptions of oral sex and extreme violence against women were thereby memorized and burned into the conscious experience of kids barely out of elementary school. More than 2 million albums were sold, and with the exception of Florida and a few other locations where it was banned, no restrictions were placed on its distribution. A child of any age could purchase it.

This is merely one salvo in an industry that has helped destroy the moral code of Western civilization. It has been accomplished methodically and deliberately during the past 30 years, in cooperation with television and movie producers. The damage has been incalculable!

Copied from *Children at Risk* by Dr. James Dobson and Gary Bauer. Copyright 1990, Word, Inc., Dallas, Texas. Used with permission.

---

# Giving Credit to the Master Designer

by Diana Morrison Vice  
Lafayette, IN

Eve was right in giving credit to God. It's about time our society started to give Him the credit as well.

**W**OMEN HAVE BEEN having babies for centuries. Childbirth is a very natural body function. God awesomely designed women's bodies to give birth. It was an incredible, yet simple, plan. The birthing process did not become complicated until the medical establishment started to intervene. Now, the "birthing industry" is a multi-billion-dollar-a-year business. The United States has one of the highest rates of Caesarean-section births in the world, and the number is increasing every day. Mothers are continually being monitored, drugged, starved, carved, and injected with artificial hormones, while many professionals call this "natural childbirth." Medical practices during real emergency situations are necessary; however, the medical establishment many times abuses its position by performing unnecessary C-sections, along with other medical interventions, during the course of childbirth.

Nancy Wainer Cohen, in her book entitled *Silent Knife*, states, that the birthing process "is a process that has worked for eons, one in which each step has a distinct purpose and a specific goal. It is agonizingly detailed, yet very simple. It is extremely precise, yet requires no scientific tools or devices; indeed, outside interferences often confuse the process. The design is beautiful, intricate, unique, delicately balanced, and not easily duplicated. Birth's design was patented years ago; the original blueprints are not accessible, nor will they ever be. . . . Problems arise, however, when we believe that our technology can produce a birth process superior to Nature's own. When we become so confident as to believe we can reproduce and redesign such a

complex event as birth, we are assuming that we can, indeed, play God."

Sadly, Nancy's words are true, and I have the scars to prove it. My first childbirth experience was less than pleasant, and anything but natural. I became part of a statistic on that day ten years ago. Statistics have proven that women encountering their first births are more likely to have Caesareans. Also, women who have health insurance are more likely to have a C-section as opposed to women without insurance. There is also an increase in the number of C-sections performed during a holiday weekend. I had fit into all of the foregoing categories, and I believe that my surgery was unnecessary. I was robbed of the opportunity to experience childbirth the way that God had intended.

The world's very first childbirth is recorded in Genesis 4:1: "Adam lay with his wife Eve, and she conceived and gave birth to Cain. She said, 'With the help of the Lord I have brought forth a man.'" Think a minute about Eve's predicament. She was about to give birth. She had no idea what labor or the birthing process was going to be like. She had no classes to attend, no hospital to go to, not even a midwife to attend to her. I found it interesting, but not surprising, that she said, "With the help of the Lord . . ." God was Eve's labor coach, and why not? After all, He was the author of the birthing process. Eve was right in giving credit to God. It's about time our society started to give Him the credit as well.

My second child was born according to God's "blueprints," and with His help. It was an experience I'll never forget. I encountered God's presence, His healing, and His genuine love. I learned that the Master Designer has no competition.

# Constructive Criticism

by Ruby McCaslin

**EDITOR'S NOTE:**  
Ruby McCaslin was elected to a three-year term on the Atlanta Bible College Development Foundation Board of Trustees by the delegates convened at General Conference in St. Paul, Minnesota, August, 1992.

**T**HIS SUBJECT has been on my heart for a long time. When we vent frustration to what is happening, do we really try to find out why? Do we ever consider others might have a valid point if we but listen? Why are we so critical of our own brothers and sisters in the church? Do we think we are better than they are? Has God given us authority to criticize, judge, and in general just whine? (Matt. 7:1, 2; Rom. 14:4.) So God is your Master, but He is also my Master. Should we be so judgmental of each other?

It's easy to find fault with our pastors and our leaders in general. We get on the phone and cause discord, telling things we should not tell. Scripture calls it idle gossip (Matt. 12:36). I hate to say this, but too often it is women. But is it just women, or is it their husbands telling them things—things they know will be repeated and create divisions?

I know there are those that will say it is the devil, but it is just wicked mankind. We must remember God knows who is at fault.

Here is a list. I imagine it sounds familiar. "I'm sick of the hymns"; "We don't sing peppy-enough songs"; "The sermon didn't do a thing for me"; "She doesn't sing on key"; "The children do not behave"; "The church is not clean." This is just a few. Does being a child of God give us a reason to criticize and complain? Shouldn't we rather be praising God?

Example: We're at church. The preacher is finishing his sermon. His last words are "Jesus is the only way to God. We must follow Jesus." At the door the pastor is shaking hands. A person walks up and says, "Pastor, you should have said, 'Jesus and His Word.'" He didn't hear the message.

We know there will never be peace in the world, but can't we have a little more unity in the body? We pray for the physically sick, but do we pray for the spiritually sick? I don't mean those

people out in the world, but those that are in the church—those that claim to know what is right and continue to gossip and criticize any and all. Remember that when one is sick (physically or spiritually) it hurts everyone. Pray to change yourself, and pray to find your own faults.

All of this causes pastors to change churches more often. It causes people to leave the church. Rarely do we get them back. This is why we have lost so many of our own people. It is not our teaching. We have an admonition from God to love one another. Too many of us forget this.

Now why should I write about this subject? We know it happens, and we all know it is wrong. But we need to recognize it takes the *enthusiasm* out of the body for the Word of God. We have lost our enthusiasm. Our preachers are preaching, but their words are falling on deaf ears, whether we have one, or two, or a thousand present. We should be enthusiastic and rejoice about God's Word. As we see the day approaching, rejoice—be enthusiastic!

What will we be doing in the Kingdom? It surely won't be running to Jesus complaining. There will be no more sorrow, pain, sickness, gossiping, jealousy, hatred, or death. Rejoice, the Kingdom is coming! There is always a place for criticism in the church, but make it constructive criticism.

I sang a song in a worship service—a country gospel piece. It was a testimony. A person came up to me and said, "That was just wonderful. I guess you showed them." Just to set the record straight, I did not sing that song to show anybody anything, but to praise Jesus for leading me in my life. If anyone thought I was being vindictive, I do apologize, for it was not my intent. This is just another example of the old saying,

"You can please some of the people some of the time; You can please all of the people some of the time; But you cannot please all the people all the time." This holds true even in church.

## An Open Letter to Parents

Greetings in the name of Him who gave you life, new life . . . and children. I hope and pray this letter finds your family enjoying both physical and spiritual health.

Have you ever stopped to consider how God might like to answer some of your own prayer requests through you? The temptation is to consider the act of praying as the end of a matter when from God's perspective our involvement may just be beginning.

Take, for example, the Lord's Prayer. What are the first two requests we make when we pray it? "Thy kingdom come" and "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." What is the essential desire in both these requests? Isn't it an invitation for God to do things His way here where we are, just like He does where He is? If that is so, how might God involve us in this disciple-making enterprise?

I have a suspicion that God would not necessarily start by moving us to some other continent to be a missionary or even by sending us to a church to be its pastor. While these are definite and effective ways to build God's church, it is hardly the beginning of the "enterprise." Too many biblical heroes did the big thing for God and lost their family at the same time. Among them is the incredible story of Eli the priest, whose two sons sinned in the temple itself. God sent young Samuel to pronounce judgment and the sentence of death on Eli's sons. The final tragedy is that Samuel's sons turned out little better than Eli's. What a shame if we win the world as we lose our families.

"Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." To the degree that we practice Kingdom character within our home, we work to answer our own prayer. Herein is the beginning of the matter, not that we go elsewhere, not that we train for some other life, but that the way we now serve our God reflects the Kingdom to come.

How else does God desire to work with us in our homes? The Old Testament ends with God turning the hearts of the fathers back to their children. Get out a concordance and look up verses on father, husband, wife, mother, family, teach, home, etc. God's will for your family is neither hidden nor hard to find.

God bless you as Kingdom conditions come to your home.

Pastor Robert Alcumbrack,  
Oregon, IL.

# Pastors' Dilemma

by Eunice Pearson  
West Milton, OH

It is not realistic to expect full-time pastors to work for less than adequate wages.

**J**IM: "I hear you are leaving the ministry. We supposed everything was going well over there. You had so many conversions at your last church."

Harry: "That's true, and I expected it would be the same when we got here. But the situation is entirely different."

Jim: "What do you mean, how different?"

Harry: "In many ways. There was real cooperation there. The congregation looked to me as the leader of the church. They had their own ideas and presented them to me. We discussed them pro and con. If we decided it was something that would benefit the church, they took over and implemented the project. I was not expected to see that it was accomplished.

"They were caring people. Each was concerned for the welfare of others in the community whether they belonged to our church or not. They often sacrificed time, money, and equipment to help those who were experiencing difficult times. It was all done in the name of Jesus, after much prayer singly or in groups.

"Our get-togethers were times of rejoicing and telling what the Lord had done for and through us. It was a great joy to work with those people."

Jim: "You did not find the same spirit here?"

Harry: "No, quite the opposite. When one person suggested a project there would be two or three with reasons why it could or should not be undertaken.

"Many times the one who was doing the most work was being cut down by those who did less.

"I was constantly being called upon to listen to complaints about other members. I needed the wisdom of Solomon. Too many sleepless nights, and loss of appetite while trying to preach and

counsel have taken a toll on my health. I just have to get out of the ministry."

Jim: "They tell me Bill is quitting the ministry too. That's too bad; he was just getting started. Wonder what happened."

Harry: "He told me he was not allowed to preach what he felt God wanted him to say. He had been censured by the Board for preaching against sin. He was told to preach only about the joy and hope of all who have accepted Jesus as Savior. 'Oh, well,' he said, 'Maybe I wasn't called to preach anyway!'"

Jim: "That's really sad."

Harry: "Yes, it is. And with Christian love, consideration, and encouragement he might have served the Lord for many years and led many people to Christ. He really loves the Lord.

"Matt has left the ministry too. He went back to trucking. It was a hard decision for him to make. But the church did not pay enough to support his large family. They said they could not pay more.

"When he mentioned tithing in one of his sermons he was accused of preaching only for money. . . . There were several well-to-do families in that church, too."

## Let Us Consider

The pastor is God's special gift to the church. I would like to recount a few thoughts about this very special group of individuals—God's gift to the church.

The pastorate should be one of the most enjoyable and satisfying and fulfilling of all vocations. Pastors have the privilege of preaching the Word of God, and the joy of leading people to Christ, and then helping them mature spiritually.

But the work of the pastor is not all sunshine and roses. It seems that pastors are special targets

(Continued on page 31)



---

# The Virgin Birth, a Basic Teaching of Scripture

by Pastor Ray Hall  
Kentwood, MI

How do you create something independent, so that it can choose to love you, without risk?

**T**HE VIRGIN BIRTH of Jesus is a great Church of God doctrine that brings to light the wonderful truths we have in the unity of God, the role of Jesus, God's only begotten Son, the plan of salvation, and the eternal glory of God. These are basic doctrines which produce our own joy and celebration in the glory of Christ at His coming. (2 Thes. 1:10-12; Rom. 8:17, 30.)

Every doctrine or teaching must connect soundly with all other biblical teachings or the Scriptures will have no foundation or base on which to stand, let alone be that in which to have faith. Perhaps the vagueness of faith today is the product of not thinking through and understanding properly how it all connects and fits together. As we celebrate the birth of Jesus we should be able to do it with appreciation and understanding of the elements of salvation that have been designed to glorify God through the gift of His Son Jesus Christ (Luke 2:10-14).

The virgin birth of Christ plays a prominent role in God's plan of the ages. Jesus Christ was born to a virgin, and thereby became the Son of God, and was not a son through any other means. (See Note, "Virgin.") Jesus was conceived as promised by God, "the seed [offspring] of a woman" (Gen. 3:15).

Firstly, because of its significance, God Himself (the Father) is responsible for the birth of His "only begotten Son," and consequently through that birth and gift to the world, God takes ownership of the plan of salvation.

Secondly, the Bible is most clear that the origin of the "seed," or offspring, would be the

woman. That Jesus was born to a virgin testifies to the fact that Jesus was the Son of God (see Note, "Blood[s]"), yet was very human in that He was the offspring of the woman.

## The Father of our Salvation

That God was not vague in regard to His need for a Son is clear. How could God, who knows the future as He knows the past (Isa. 46:10), start a creation that required a Savior, if He had not thought it through? Jesus said that men don't start construction without counting the cost to see that they have enough materials to finish (Luke 14:28). It would seem impossible, then, for God to begin a creation without considering the whole cost. The Bible says without the need of Jesus there was nothing created that was created. That God didn't even begin to contemplate a creation without first devising a plan of salvation is obvious as one reads Ephesians 3:8, 9:

"Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ: and to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, *which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God.* (See Note, Eph. 3:9.)

It is clear that God always had a plan of salvation; as a matter of fact, it is most apparent that the plan of salvation preceded the concept of creation, rather than the reverse. The plan of salvation is the preliminary part of creation, or perhaps it is better to say, creation became necessary in order that God's plan of salvation might work the way

He intended. The Bible defines salvation as being the first plan of God, and that creation followed—creation being the product of the plan of salvation.

It was God's desire to create life that would choose Him. Creation of man was

of the world (John 17:5). Christ's prayer is a petition for the fulfillment of God's intent in Christ.

God's holiness, goodness, and love demand a response—require that He be loved and worshiped. Consequently, His

creature He wanted to respond to Him. The choice seems too great for a creature who by his own ability would stagger in the face of such a choice. Yet there could be a proper choice through the inner groanings of his spirit—the longing of

## To be the Son of God by birth, as Jesus is, is to be

undoubtedly a love choice of God. This is the GREAT purpose and plan of God: that His love and goodness would permeate the universe and that He would be loved and praised for His being.

creation had to be able to think for itself and be totally independent, with sound, rational minds. This would make possible a choice based upon reason, love, and devotion rather than being robotic—

his heart to love, worship, and serve Him. For those who loved Him and chose Him there would be a way provided, but not until they had selected Him over this life and all other loves.

## totally unique from all the rest of creation.

"And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God..." (John 17:3).

"... for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. **HEREIN IS LOVE**, not that we loved God, but **THAT HE LOVED US**, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:7-10).

"**WE LOVE HIM, BECAUSE HE FIRST LOVED US**" (1 John 4:19).

The plan, that God would have a Son who would glorify Him, was devised by God before the concept of creation.

"Foreknown indeed, before the foundation of the world, but manifested in these last times on your account" (1 Pet. 1:20, Diaglott).

"... of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev. 13:8).

The plan of salvation WAS NOT an afterthought of God's, but the very premise upon which all things were created. That is why Jesus could pray that God would glorify Him with God's own love, grace, goodness, holiness, "glory." Christ was in the plan of God before the creation

that which has been harassed or bludgeoned to love—which is impossible. So God created man, a totally free agent and independently able to survive in the environment which He had created for him.

That is the reason God created planet earth and the universe. Creation of the universe and the creation of man were designed so that man might be empowered with the ability to select for himself whom he would love and please—whether it would be God unto righteousness, or self unto destruction. That might help answer someone's age-old question: Did God create sin? No, God did not create sin; God created a choice: the choice was to respond to His goodness, holiness, and love. The opposite of that choice is contrary to the will of God and consequently sin. God didn't create the bad choice; He created an opportunity for Himself and man to be joined together through a plan of salvation in His Son Jesus Christ. How do you create something independent, so that it can choose to love you, without risk? God determined that it would be worth the risk if someone would in fact choose Him out of love, and worship Him for His goodness and truth.

God foresaw that some would choose Him, though indeed the choice would be too great for most. But there must of necessity be independence in the type of

They would become His own dear children, modeled after the perfect one that would demonstrate to the creatures God's undying love and devotion to them. The perfect one would be so unique that He would be able to relate to the creatures the great longing God Himself has for them. That one would have to share God's interests and God's feelings about the whole matter—yes, God's very Spirit. That person would indeed be unique, but such a person could make it all work. And the creatures would understand His love, crave His fellowship and communion, and search after Him. To that class of people who so loved Him He would provide eternal life and a perfect creation. These people He would cleanse—make white and pure through the perfect one. They would be brought into sweet fellowship with Him and the perfect one, share the same Spirit with them, empowering them to make right choices, and perform righteous works! They, too, would be like the perfect one! It would be great! He would make it last forever and ever!

God saw into the future, that indeed there would be those who would accept such a plan.

"According as he [God] hath chosen us in him [Christ] before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,

to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved" (Eph. 1:4-6).

To understand that thus Christ came into being is more than just a significant aspect of a plan. It is the very heart and core of God's hope for us in Christ. Jesus is the only perfect one through whom the plan of salvation could come together. That makes the virgin birth a significant aspect that needs to be considered to appreciate rightly God working through Jesus to accomplish our salvation.

According to Genesis 3:16, the pain of childbirth became part of the curse of man; but childbirth is also the wonderful solution to sin. For it was by the seed of the woman that God was able to be directly associated with the plan of salvation for man through the birth of His Son Jesus. If it has ever been asked once why procreation should be in this manner, it has been asked a million times by as many youngsters. If procreation as we know it isn't meaningful to some, let this be the joy of the concept: That God through the virgin birth of Christ became participant in our salvation through the birth of His own dear Son, "And thou shalt call his name Jesus."

First, it should be established that God, our heavenly Father, is the author of our salvation (see Note, Hebrews 12:2) and should be glorified for the gift He has given. That God should be acknowledged as the giver of all "good and perfect gifts" is no secret according to James 1:17. That God should be the one who is ultimately credited with a glorious acknowledgment for all that He has done and is, is a fundamental principle of truth. That Jesus Christ existed from His birth to bring due glory and praise to God is clearly taught in 1 Corinthians 15:24-28:

"Then the end will come, when he [Christ] hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he [Christ] has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy

to be destroyed is death. For he [God] 'has put everything under his [Christ's] feet' [Psa. 8:6]. Now when it says that 'everything' has been put under him [Christ], it is clear that this does not include God himself, who put everything under Christ. When he has done this, then the Son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all."

The Lord's Prayer concludes with: "Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen" (Matt. 6:13). Jesus Christ existed from His birth to bring that glory to God.

The three factors of salvation are God's grace, Christ's death, and man's faith. The Bible is most clear that God from the

we have been adopted into sonship. (See Note, "Begotten.")

### Who Is This Son We Are Patterned After?

The love of God, that fostered the plan of salvation and creation by it, has only two requirements of man: 1) that man acknowledge God and respond to His love through Jesus Christ,\* and 2) respond to His holiness through adoration and worship of God. It is clear in the Bible that God needed to be identified through the Savior of men. God Himself (the Father) is responsible for the birth of His only begotten Son, and consequently through that birth and gift to the world, God takes ownership of the plan of salva-

## The Bible says without the need of Jesus

very beginning, prior to creation, had in mind the plan of salvation as we have it today. The plan of salvation calls for man to make a choice in faith, believing in the moral and physical characteristics of God,

tion. Not just anyone could pay the price of death for man's sin. It had to be a person so closely identified with God and associated with Him that God would receive the glory, praise, and love for

## there was nothing created that was created.

those characteristics that make Him not only supreme, but desirable. Salvation is a choice man makes to respond to God's love by embracing a relationship with God through the atoning sacrifice of His Son Jesus Christ. As we do that, we fulfill all of God's greatest hopes and desires for us, and fulfill God Himself as we comply with the love with which He has loved us. God's role in the universe is as one who searches for the one He loves.

In Jesus' theology, God is the author of salvation, and is Jesus' own Father. The words Jesus spoke were not His own, but the Father's. He testified not of Himself, but of another, His Father.

As we look at our own hope in Christ, the Father/Son relationship becomes even more significant. We have been brought into that family tie with God through Jesus. By our faith in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, God's only begotten Son,

salvation, and not the man himself. To that end the Christ was named "JESUS," "For he shall save his people from their sins" (Matt. 2:21b). God chose the name for His Son, and in doing so chose to be identified by Him. "Jesus" is Greek, same as Jehoshua, and comes from the Hebrew word *Yeh-ho-shoo'ah*, or Joshua, which means "Jehovah saves." Jehovah God, our Heavenly Father, is responsible for all the doctrines of salvation: God forgives, God justifies, God reconciles, God redeems, God sanctifies, etc. All concepts of salvation originate in God's grace, based upon Christ's sacrifice.

To be born of a virgin gives credence

\*Jesus is the only way to the Father. If a man does not honor Jesus, God's gift of love, neither can he honor God (John 5:23; 12:26).

to the Fatherhood of God and parental ownership. Understand that it was indeed possible for God to create a Son without that Son being conceived by natural means. Luke 1:35 is rather clear: the reason He would be called the Son of God is

because He is a Son of God. He is a pious person? The answer would have to be, Absolutely NOT; He could not have. First, He would have been born under the Adamic curse; as the Son of God He wasn't. Second, God needs the glory ascribed to Him as He did the works

reason to make exceptional cases for the Father and Son relationship in reference to God and Jesus. God planned that relationship from the very beginning, and then created the world to conform to His purpose. Since God is the author of parent/child relationships and author of His own Father and Son relationship, our creation has to conform to His plan and purpose. We are modeled after His ultimate Father/Son relationship, which, in His thought and priority, preceded our creation. If He had the idea of a Son, a Savior, before the world was created, why shouldn't our creation be like the relationship of His original concept? Indeed, the relationship is the same, and it should be, or else God is the Creator of confusion. (See Note, "Father/Son.")

## The virgin birth of Christ plays a

because "the power of the highest shall overshadow thee: *Therefore* also that holy thing [being] which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."

According to this verse the Sonship of

through Christ. Third, no other human being could have so qualified in the eyes of God to be perfectly filled with His Holy Spirit as was His only begotten Son. We understand that Jesus was empow-

## ered and blessed of God in a way no other human being could be—that is, until the day we are transformed when Christ returns. To be the Son of God by birth, as Jesus is, is to be totally unique from all the rest of creation. To be the Son of God by birth, as Jesus is, is to have a totally unique relationship with the Father. God found great pleasure to love, support, empower, bless, influence, and share the secrets of the universe with His beloved Son. So strong is that relationship and love, that God found great joy to bestow on Jesus His Son the destiny of planet earth and the hope of all mankind.

ered and blessed of God in a way no other human being could be—that is, until the day we are transformed when Christ returns. To be the Son of God by birth, as Jesus is, is to be totally unique from all the rest of creation. To be the Son of God by birth, as Jesus is, is to have a totally unique relationship with the Father. God found great pleasure to love, support, empower, bless, influence, and share the secrets of the universe with His beloved Son. So strong is that relationship and love, that God found great joy to bestow on Jesus His Son the destiny of planet earth and the hope of all mankind.

"For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him. The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John 3:34-36).

That's a pretty strong connection between Father and Son, huh? But it should not be a connection we are foreign to, as it is rather characteristic of father/son relationships. The concept and elements of salvation were never meant to be difficult to understand. A very important part of creation and nature as we know it had its origin of purpose to glorify God and produce man's salvation. There is no

Christ is based on the fact that God was responsible for the conception. In other words, because Jesus was born to Mary as a result of the Power of God "overshadowing" her, He qualified to be the Son of God. Jesus could not have existed before His mother Mary, because it was through her miraculous conception that Jesus is the Son of God.

There has been no logic or profound reasoning here that you haven't thought of yourself. It was never God's intent that salvation should be so complicated that its basic elements could not be comprehended. What we need, then, is assurance that such simple thought holds the key to the hope that is in us through Christ Jesus our Lord. God intends for us to grasp the elements of salvation as we accept His gift to us (John 3:16).

Why should God choose to have Christ "made of a woman, made under the law"? (Gal. 4:4.) (See Note, "Made.")

Jesus was indeed the promised offspring of a human woman, a brother to all Israel, the first one like us to experience the glorification God planned for man from the very beginning.

### Could Another Have Served This Cause?

Could Jesus' sacrifice have paid for the sin of the world had He not been the Son of God, and was instead only a righ-

### NOTES:

#### "Virgin"

Quote from Isaiah 7:14, Hebrew *almah* = "a young woman"; Matthew 1:23, Greek *pathenos* = "a virgin technically."

#### Blood(s)—John 1:13

This verse in most translations is linked to "them that believe" in the preceding verse. A closer scrutiny of the verses in the original language, though, shows verse 13 referring back to "his name" in verse 12. The Greek text shows that the word for "born" or "begotten" is singular, not plural; consequently several scholars—Irenaeus (A.D. 178), Tertullian (A.D. 208), Augustine (A.D. 395) and others—interpreted it to read "who was born," "who" agreeing with "his name" (v. 12).

In Benjamin Wilson's *Emphatic Diaglott and the Englishman's Greek New Testament*, the word "blood" is translated in the Greek text "bloods"—plural, not singular; thus it is referring to parents, or two humans, as in dissemination and conception. The thought here then would be that it was NOT two bloods that produced the life of Jesus, but only one, Mary's, fulfilling Genesis 3:15, "her seed." And it was not of her will, but "the will . . . of God" (John 1:13; see also Luke 1:35).

### Ephesians 3:9

The King James and New International Versions both have a phrase not found in the better translations of this verse: (who created all things by Jesus Christ) . . . end of Ephesians 3:9. This phrase, not found in the Vulgate, Syriac, Coptic, or in several other ancient manuscripts, was probably inserted here by some transcriber.

### Hebrews 12:2

To say that God and not Jesus is the author of salvation does not contradict Hebrews 12:2 where the KJV and NIV and other translations wrongfully translate the Greek word "*archegos*" as "author," referring to Jesus. An author is one who originates a work, as in creating something. I believe God is the creator of salvation for men. Jesus Christ is the leader of that cause, as God has given Him power, prominence, or authority to perform that work. A better translation

for Hebrews 12:2 would be, "Looking unto Jesus the captain, or leader, or prince and finisher of our faith." (B. Wilson, Emphatic Diaglott translates the word, "Leader.")

### "Begotten"

(Greek, *gennaō*) another word used to describe Jesus' birth, could be used to describe even the believer's new birth in Christ in 1 Peter 1:3 and James 1:3. The thought, however, becomes much narrower when the term "Only Begotten" (Greek, *monogenes*) is applied to Jesus. There are many sons born to God through Jesus Christ, but there can be only one "Only Begotten." There is no need to play with semantics when translating this term. "Only Born" must refer to the fact that Jesus is the Only Son of God to be born a Son of God by conception (Luke 1:35).

### "Made"

When the Bible uses the word "made"

to describe Jesus' birth, the word is derived from *ginomai* in the Greek. The word is used with great latitude or can be applied in a great variety of expressions. As a primary verb it would be safe to translate it as it would appear to mean: to come into existence, be created, to begin to be, as implying origin. Romans 1:3—"Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh"; Galatians 4:4—"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law."

### Father/Son

If God identified His first concept as a Father/Son relationship and then designed the earthly father/son relationship, why would God use the same term when in fact two different types of relationships were represented? That would make it sound as though God didn't think it all the way through.

---

## Precious Lord, Take My Hand

**T**HOMAS ANDREW DORSEY was a black jazz musician from Atlanta. In the 20's he gained a certain amount of notoriety as the composer of jazz tunes with suggestive lyrics, but he gave all that up in 1926 to concentrate exclusively on spiritual music. "Peace in the Valley" is one of his best-known songs, but there is a story behind his most famous song that deserves to be told.

In 1932 the times were hard for Dorsey. Just trying to survive the depression years as a working musician meant tough sledding. On top of that, this music was not accepted by many people. Some said it was too worldly—the devil's music, they called it. Many years later Dorsey could laugh about it. He said, "I got kicked out of some of the best churches in the land." But the real kick in the teeth came one night in St. Louis when he received a telegram informing him that his pregnant wife had died suddenly.

Dorsey was so filled with grief that his faith was shaken to the roots, but instead of wallowing in self-

pity, he turned to the discipline he knew best—music. In the midst of agony he wrote the following lyrics:

*Precious Lord, Take my hand,  
Lead me on, let me stand,  
I am tired, I am weak, I am worn,  
Through the storm, through the night,  
Lead me on to the light;  
Take my hand, precious Lord, Lead me home.*

If you live long enough, you will experience heartache, disappointment, and sheer helplessness. The Lord is our most precious resource in these hours of trauma. "The Lord is a refuge for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble" (Psa. 9:9). Tom Dorsey understood that. His song was originally written as a way of coping with his personal pain, but even today it continues to bless thousands of others when they pass through times of hardship.

—*Pulpit Helps*, May, 1992.



# God Will Supply

by Susan Lapp  
Minneapolis, MN

**J**AY LOOKED OUT the window, his chin propped up on one hand. He was just staring into space thinking, "Buffy sure was a good old dog. She always had an extra wag in her tail for me. I sure miss seeing her when I get off the bus. She used to come running to greet us. Then even when she got old and stiff, she'd still struggle down the lane with that ole tail awaggin'. Things just aren't the same without Buffy." Jay sighed deeply as he gradually focused his eyes on something dark, moving slowly down at the end of the road. "What is that?" He ran downstairs to grab a coat. It had been especially cold lately. "Mom, I'm going outside. I just saw a wolf or something down the road."

"A wolf!" exclaimed Mother. "Well, you'd better be careful and not get too close."

"What's going on? What's all this about a wolf?" inquired Nate.

"I saw something down the road and I'm going to check it out," said Jay.

"I'll come with you," said Nate, grabbing his winter jacket and following his little brother out the door, adding with a smile as he closed the door, "We'll be careful, Mom."

Later around the dinner table the boys excitedly shared with their parents what they had seen. "I thought it was a wolf, but it's a stray dog," said Jay, reaching for his milk.

"We couldn't get anywhere near it," added Nate. "It seems to be pretty afraid. That dog is pretty thin, too."

"I've seen it lately, too. Looks like a female German shepherd. And it looks like it hasn't had a decent meal in weeks," said Father.

"The poor thing! I'll give you some table scraps to set out for it after we're done eating. I wonder who she belongs to," said Mother as she buttered another hot biscuit.

"I'll ask around. Maybe some of the neighbors or some of my customers will have heard about a lost dog," Father offered.

In the weeks that followed many attempts were made to befriend the lost dog, but

it always kept its distance. The table scraps disappeared, but the dog looked weaker and more gaunt as the weather became bitter cold.

One day, Father was outside splitting wood when the dog appeared. "You poor thing; you're so thin you can hardly cast a shadow," said Father, talking quietly and soothingly to the dog, making no sudden moves. Gradually the German shepherd inched closer; when she was within reach, Father quickly put out his hand and touched her shoulder. She yelped loudly, jumping back, and then seemed to be weighing her decision. In a few minutes she returned, evidently deciding she had grieved for her "lost family" long enough, and it was time to get on with living. From then on she followed Father everywhere he went. The boys were overjoyed to have a dog again.

"Yes, she is a well-behaved dog. She's a stray, but she has very ladylike manners," Father told one of his customers. "We call her Minnie."

"We called her Toby. She was our dog, but we were moving into the city and didn't think it would be fair to her as she's always been a country dog," said the customer. "We found a good home for her on a farm about 20 miles away. She must have come back trying to find us and we'd moved."

Father broke the news to the family. Mother said, "Oh, Kurt, do you think the other family will want her back? She's a part of the family now."

Jay and Nate scratched Minnie's ears and cried, "Do we really have to give her up? She's our dog now!"

"She's not really our dog; we just found her," said Father. "We'll just have to wait and see what the other family decides."

You know, I've found out Minnie is very valuable—she's a purebred German shepherd."

A feeling of sadness, mixed with hope, filled the hearts of the family, as they each prayed daily about their situation. "Lord, we want to thank you for providing this dog for our family, even if it was only for a little while. Please let Minnie stay with us, but only if it's your will," prayed Mother as she washed the dishes. A truck pulled into the driveway. Minnie gave her usual "somebody's here" bark and then politely waited for the shop door to open.

A man and his wife and children came through the shop door. "Toby!" the children cried, as they petted the dog. She politely waited for them to finish petting her and then went over to Kurt and sat down beside him.

"Well, it looks like Toby's made her own choice. We just wanted to see if she'd come back with us willingly. We wanted to make sure she had a good home, too," said the man.

"We sure do enjoy having her as a part of our family. She's a good watchdog and is very well behaved. She's as loyal as you could ever ask for," beamed Kurt, scratching Minnie's ears.

Mother saw the truck pull out as Father and Minnie came running toward the house. The boys looked up from their after-school snack as Father said joyfully, "We get to keep Minnie! She really is our dog now!" Jay and Nate let out a cheer.

Mother smiled and said, "God knew that we needed another dog after Buffy died. Minnie was given to us by God." Minnie barked twice, wagged her tail, and everyone laughed together.

"And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:19, NIV).

---

## Pastors' Dilemma

(Continued from page 24)

for those "spiritual hosts of wickedness." He often lives under great stress, which brings on ill health. This should not be.

The work of the church is the responsibility of each member. The pastor should not try or be expected to do it all (Rom. 12:5-8). Much work can be allocated to individuals who would share the joys of service with the pastor.

Pastors have been given skills other than preaching. They can be used as a part of his ministry when shared with friends and neighbors. Outside the ministry, would these same skills be used to God's glory?

There is a great need for *full-time* pastors in the Church of God. There is a great work to be done.

Small churches need full-time ministers so they can become large churches.

There are so many unsaved neighbors.

There is a great work to be done.

It takes more than a steering wheel to make a car run. It can run only as long as the gas holds out. It is not realistic to expect full-time pastors to work for less than adequate wages.

They should receive at least the average wage of the congregation.

When a minister's family is plagued by bills he cannot pay, medical and dentist needs of his family which cannot be met, and the lack of money to live the proper style befitting his position, he cannot do his best for God and the church and the community. His time and energy which should be used in service and study must be used to solve the dilemma.

Pastors, please don't leave us. Bear with us; we need you. No, we don't have

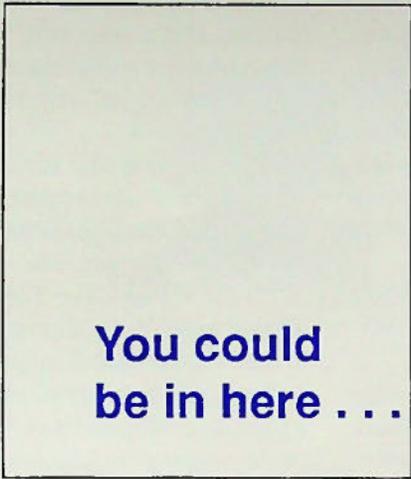
you on a pedestal, but we do honor you as God's special gift. If sometimes we don't seem as friendly and close to you as we might, forgive us. We know the pain of getting to love too much, only to have you move away.

When we older folks drag our feet when a change is suggested it is not that we want to be obstinate. We only want to be sure, for we are afraid of change. We have witnessed so much disaster.

Don't expect complete fulfillment. It will come only in the Kingdom.

We thank God for our pastors who are preaching the Word and practicing what they preach. We pray that God will keep you strong in the face of temptation, spare you discouragement, and guard you against temptation.

# PICTURE THIS!



You could  
be in here . . .

... as we are getting ready for our new ABC video.

## ATLANTA BIBLE COLLEGE

For more information write:

Kent Ross  
Atlanta Bible College  
P.O. Box 100,000  
Morrow, GA 30260

### Subscription Expirations

The three-digit number on the top right of your address label identifies the renewal date of your subscription. If the number is 93.0, it expires with the February/March issue, 1993. A 93.2 number means a June, July, expiration. This method will assist the subscriber in keeping tabs on his expiration date and serve as a reminder for renewal.

Church of God General Conference  
P.O. Box 100,000  
Morrow, GA 30260

Address Correction Requested

U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
PERMIT 21  
Oregon, Illinois  
Nonprofit Org.

Dear RESTITUTION HERALD,

I am writing for the following reason:

- My address label is incorrect; please note the changes.
- I am moving in the next six weeks; please send the magazine to my new address printed below.
- I wish to send a gift subscription to the person listed below. Enclosed is \$12 payment.
- Subscription renewal, payment enclosed—1 yr. \$12, 2 yr. \$21, 3 yr. \$30. [British subscribers send U. S. funds.] Thank you.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: THE RESTITUTION HERALD, P.O. Box 100,000, Morrow, GA 30260.

Please check the mailing label to the left for your RH expiration date and renew promptly to keep THE RESTITUTION HERALD coming to your home bimonthly.

# IS IT TIME TO RENEW?

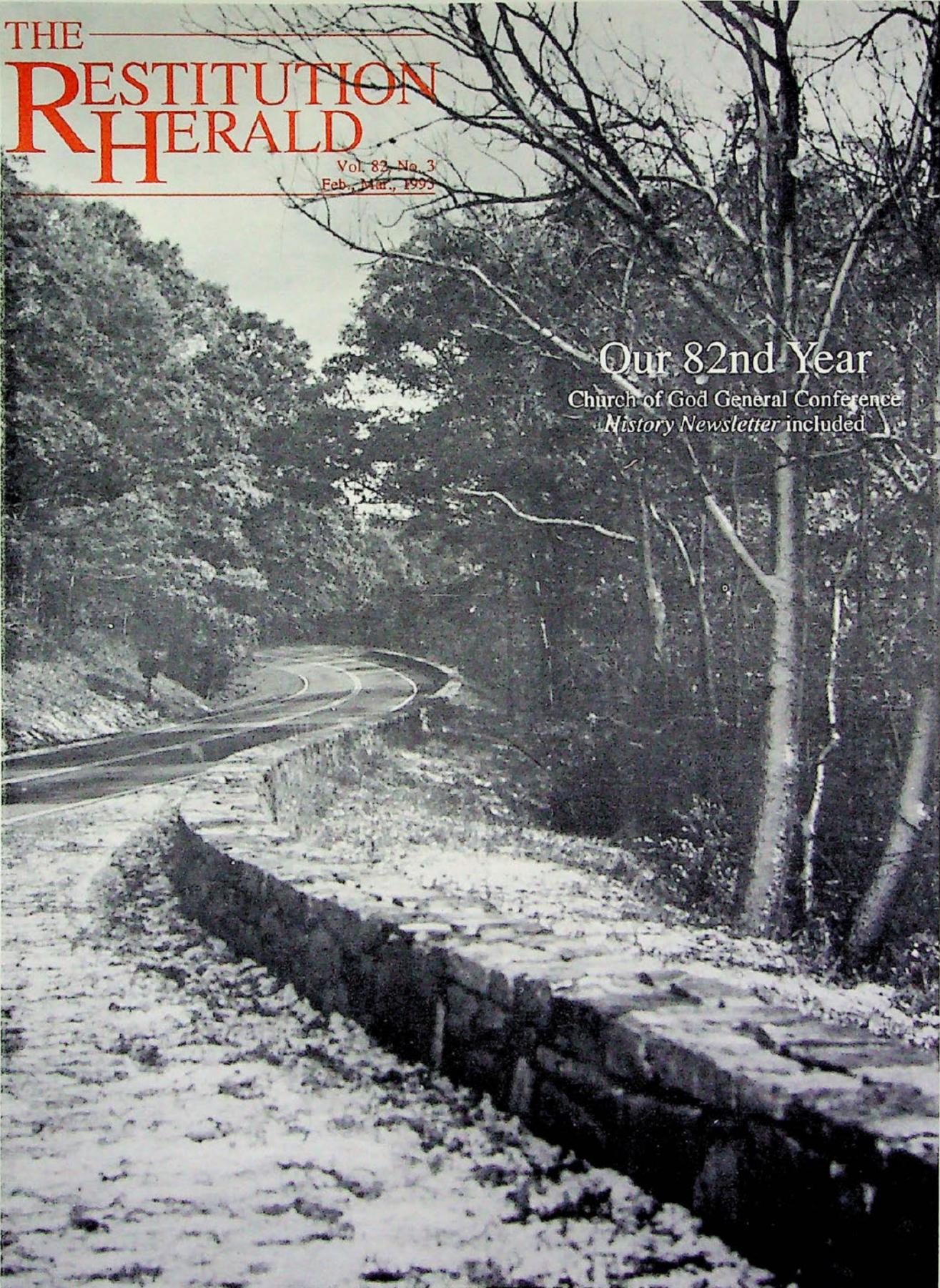


THE  
**RESTITUTION  
HERALD**

Vol. 82, No. 3  
Feb., Mar., 1993

**Our 82nd Year**

Church of God General Conference  
*History Newsletter* included



Fall scene along the scenic Skyline Drive, near Front Royal, VA



## THE EDITOR'S OPINION

**B**ILLBOARDS ALONG ISRAEL'S highways, yellow neon signs mounted on cars, and glossy posters slapped on city walls announce, "Prepare for the coming of the Messiah." Apparently, this subject is getting quite a bit of attention these days in Israel.

The campaign was begun by followers of New York-based Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, 90, who believe their charismatic leader is the Messiah and will soon come to Israel.

It has set off anger between rival ultra-Orthodox Jewish sects and has become the subject of TV talk shows and newspaper articles.

Schneerson, the grand rabbi of the Lubavitch Hasidic sect, has said the Messiah is coming soon, announcing, "The time of redemption has arrived." He has not claimed to be the Redeemer, but has not discouraged the idea either. In addition, a million pamphlets have been distributed announcing that Messiah's arrival is imminent.

Sad to say, Messiah has already come, and Israel in her blindness did not recognize Him. As it is written, "He came unto his own, and his own received him not" (John 1:11).

Messiah was rejected by His brethren and was turned over to the Romans for crucifixion. The Jews chose Ceasar over their Messiah. They will remain in spiritual darkness as a nation until the church is completed. "A partial blindness has happened to Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles has come in" (Rom. 11:25, NASB). Yes, when the church is completed, God will turn to His wayward wife (Israel, Isa. 54:5; Jer. 3:14), and finish her redemptive plan which was interrupted when she rejected God's only begotten Son as her King.

When the Jews look upon Christ at His second coming, they will ask Him a question, "What are these wounds in thine hands?" Jesus will answer: "Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends" (Zech. 13:6). When they look upon Him "whom they have pierced," the remnant of Israel will "mourn for him as one mourneth for his only son" (Zech. 12:10).

This is a picture of sincere repentance of the believing remnant of Israel which was sadly missing at Jesus' first coming. At this time, the fountain that flows from Calvary is opened for the "inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness" (13:1). "And so all Israel shall be saved"—all twelve tribes, the believing remnant within the whole nation (Rom. 11:26).

However, before Israel is restored to God in a covenant relationship, she will go through a purifying process in which two thirds of her people perish, and one third is saved (Zech. 13:8, 9). This period of unprecedented suffering (Dan. 12:1), which Jesus called "great tribulation" (Matt. 24:21), is also called "the time of Jacob's [Israel's] trouble" (Jer. 30:7). Apparently its main purpose is to show Israel her deep need of her Messiah which her ancestors crucified nearly 2000 years ago. The infamous antichrist will deceive the nation and make an agreement with Israel which he breaks. One is reminded of Jesus' words to the Jews, "I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive" (John 5:43).

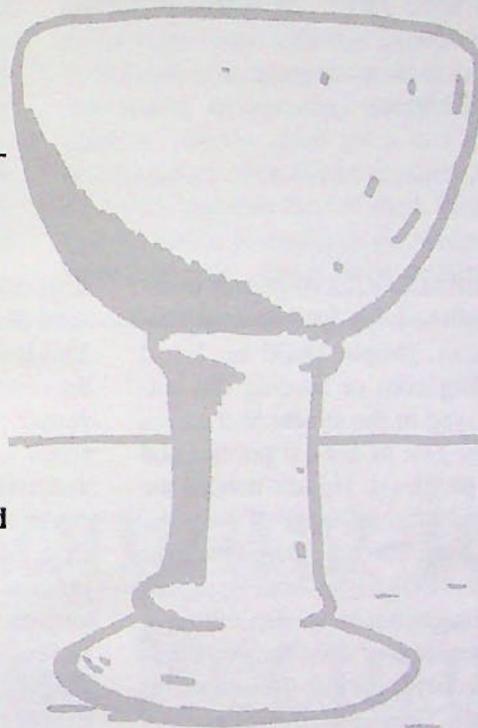
### Jesus' Warning

A Messiah that needs neon signs and advertisements of men could hardly be seriously considered God's anointed one. As we witness the "Schneerson Syndrome" we may safely conclude that it is just another episode in a long list of messianic pretenders who have come and gone and have deceived many. Schneerson will leave behind a multitude of disillusioned followers.

But isn't this exactly what our Lord predicted would happen in the end time? Listen to Him: "Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. . . . And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many" (Matt. 24:4, 5, 11). Our hearts go out to all, Jew and Gentile alike, who are stumbling along in spiritual ignorance not knowing that a Savior has died for them and been raised for their justification (John 3:16; Rom. 4:25). R11

# Contents

- 4 Dangerous Focus**  
*David Richert*
- 5 Man's Longing for Peace and Security**  
*Linford W. Moore*
- 7 A Tempest in a Teapot?**  
*William Wachtel*
- 8 Prerequisite to Teaching—A Proper Attitude**  
*Dick Eldred*
- 10 Forgiven**  
*F. L. Austin*
- 11 We Must Be Born Again**  
*James Mattison*
- 13 "To the Top of the Hill and The Valley Below"**  
*Ed Goit*
- 16 The Gift of Languages**  
*Sid Hatch*
- 20 The Lord's Supper**  
*Rex Cain*



Page 20

- 21 The Days of Reckoning**  
*J. Arlen Marsh*
- 23 Beyond the Vanity of Earthly Greatness**  
*Michael P. Brown*
- 24 Israel and the Church—Two Separate Groups**  
*Hollis Partlowe*
- 27 Shipwreck**  
*Nancy Rankin*
- 28 Success? Happiness?**  
*E. Richard Smith*

---

## FEATURES

- 2 EDITOR'S OPINION**
- 22 BIBLE STUDY**  
**Territorial Domain of the Kingdom of God**  
*Delbert Rankin*
- 30 CHILDREN'S PAGE**  
**More Blessed**  
*Susan Lapp*

THE  
**RESTITUTION**  
**HERALD**  
Vol. 82, No.3  
February, March, 1993

Cover picture by Paul A. Newell, Oregon, IL.

THE RESTITUTION HERALD is owned and published by the Church of God General Conference, a non-profit Christian corporation located at 131 N. Third St., Oregon, Illinois 61061. THE HERALD is mailed six times a year.

THE RESTITUTION HERALD advocates: the oneness of God (1 Cor. 8:6); the Holy Spirit is God's power (Acts 1:8); Jesus Christ is God's only begotten Son (Matt. 16:16), and is our Mediator (1 Tim. 2:5); the Bible is the inspired Word of God (2 Tim. 3:16); the mortality of man (Job 4:17; Psa. 146:4); the near return of Christ (Acts 1:11), and life only through him (Col. 3:3); the literal resurrection of the dead (John 5:28); the immortalization of those in Christ (1 Cor. 15:53, 54); the destruction of the wicked (Rev. 21:8); the final restoration of Israel as the Kingdom of God under the kingship of Christ (Luke 1:32), the church to be joint heirs with him (Rom. 8:17), and Israel to be made head over Gentile nations (Isa. 60:1-3); the "restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began" (Acts 3:21). It also firmly advocates repentance and immersion in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38), and a consecrated life as essential to salvation.

**Editor:** Hollis Partlowe  
**Associate Editor:** Gordon Landry  
**Make-up Editor:** Mark Cain  
**Typesetter:** Becky Hall  
**Proofreader:** Barbara Landry  
**Contributing Editors:** Richard Alcumbrock, Susan Lapp, Dr. Alva G. Huffer, Delbert Jones, Paula Kirkpatrick, Gordon Landry  
**Mailing and Subscriptions:** Becky Hall, Terri Tschaeen, Judy Myers, Harry McMiran

Address all correspondence to: THE RESTITUTION HERALD  
P.O. Box 100,000  
Morrow, GA 30260

## SUBSCRIPTIONS

One Year, \$12  
Two Years, \$21  
Three years, \$30

Most subscriptions begin with the February or August issue. Readers may begin full-year subscriptions at any time. Use the form on page 32 when corresponding concerning your subscription.

---

# Dangerous Focus

by Pastor David Richert  
Eden Valley, MN

Noah became a  
freak. Noah  
became a  
social outcast.

**T**HE SMALL VILLAGE was buzzing with activity. Just like any other morning, people could be found grinding corn or feeding the animals. Children played in the streets as the men gathered at the city gate to discuss politics and solve the world's problems. No one heeded the hurricane warnings. After all, none of the other rumors ever came true. The only hurricane ever remembered in the village was from its oldest resident. But they laughed at his stories, telling of mass destruction and loss of life. They couldn't find the old man, probably off into the mountains with his family again. They scoffed at his naivete. Such stories! Such nonsense!

By that afternoon the laughing had stopped. The little village was being torn apart by unbelievable winds and torrential rains. Mudslides and flooding soon followed, leaving in their wake death and destruction. Where once laughter and scoffing ran free, wailing and screaming could be heard. "How could this be?" they would ask. "It was so unexpected," they exclaimed. The old man again entered the village with his family in tow. Shaking his head, he admonished them for not listening to his stories—his nonsense.

It's interesting to watch how people react to news of imminent catastrophe. Time has a way of deadening our consciences and reflexes when it comes to safety. This is especially true for people who have never gone through a disastrous event. Like the people in the small village, we tend to laugh at warnings and become more and more careless with our lives.

The Bible warns of terrible times to come. Again and again we read in the Scriptures of horrible consequences to man's sins. Left unchecked, man would destroy the earth and every

inclination of his heart would become evil all the time. This is why a long time ago God sent a flood. This is also why He has said that He will cleanse the earth again, but this time with fire. But again people will scoff at repeated warnings. Peter states it well. He said, "First of all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires. They will say, 'Where is this coming he promised? Ever since our fathers died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation'" (1 Pet. 3:3, 4). But the terrible fact still remains. God will cleanse the earth with fire. So let us look deeper into what conditions will arise—and in fact are arising—to bring about this prophesied catastrophe.

In Matthew 24:37-39 Jesus said, "As it was in the days of Noah, so will it be at the coming of the Son of Man. For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark; and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man." Most people looking at this passage will think of the "eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage" as something sinister and evil. Perhaps it was, but something more prominent is being said here. Self-absorption!

In the days of Noah, people were only concerned about themselves. They cared nothing for others' rights or for others' comfort. At any price they would gain for themselves what looked good or felt good. They ate and drank when, where, and however much they pleased. They were married and given in marriage to anyone they saw available. God was soon left out of the decision-making process, and the world grew more beau-

tiful in their eyes than God. No longer was it important to ask God's will or to consult Him in any subject matter. The situation then simply snowballed.

Without the godly example of parents, children would learn to depend even less on God. Human nature would be the catalyst to carry man into total depravity as generation after generation moved farther away from their Creator. Soon it became the social norm to "feel good," to sin. Noah became a freak. Noah became a social outcast. His ideas were too strict and binding. The only god that truly existed for the people of that time was the human individual. This person was controlling his or her own destiny, no matter what the cost to others.

With this self-absorbed attitude, it isn't too hard to see why the people were so surprised by the flooding of the earth. They were blinded to the things of God. They had most likely heard nothing from heaven for a very long time and even if they did, they probably reasoned it all away as to coincidence. So as they went on with their everyday lives, suddenly and unexpectedly the floods came and swept them away. Life was snuffed out.

The real scary thing about all of this is that history is repeating itself. In the Book of Timothy, Paul gives us a look into the future: "But mark this; there will be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobe-

dient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy" (2 Tim. 3:12). Paul seems to be describing the twentieth century. Self-absorption is becoming the "in thing." Society is promoting sin and demoting church. The Word of God is becoming rare, and God is being explained away through evolutionary theories and other scientific dodges. Indeed, people are becoming their own gods. And so people in this world go on with their eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage. And they will continue this right up until the time when the earth will be destroyed. To most it will be unexpected. To most these unbelievable prophecies will become terrifying truths.

*(Continued on page 12)*

# Man's Longing for Peace and Security

*by Pastor Linford W. Moore,  
Waterloo, IA*

**M**AN'S GREATEST LONGING is for peace and security, both in this life and in the eternal sense. We know that this longing can only be fulfilled in Christ. Some of our writers have emphasized the terrible troubles and uneasy circumstances that are to come upon the earth in "the last days." Indeed, the Scriptures support the idea that "the last days" or the "day of the LORD" will be gloomy days of judgment. (See Joel 1:15; 2:1, 2; Isa. 13:6-9; Rev. 6:17.)

The "last days" will be very unsettling to the world and bring quite the opposite of peace and security. (See Isa. 2:17-21 and Luke 21:25, 26.) But the Christian need not be troubled by these events, for he finds his peace and security in the Lord. He knows that these events portend the

return of his Lord and the establishment of God's Kingdom on the earth to bring about eternal peace and security. (See Luke 21:27, 28 and Psa. 72:7.)

In fact, the very expression "the last days" takes us beyond the judgment and includes the Kingdom of God. In this article we will be examining Isaiah 2:1-4 and Micah 4:1-4 and emphasizing that a great time of peace is in store for this earth under the reign of King Jesus.

We note first, then, that both Isaiah (v. 2) and Micah (v. 1) use the expression "in the last days" and then write of this marvelous time of peace. This is to be the time of the "millenium" when Christ is to reign on the earth for one thousand years to put all enemies under His feet. (See Rev. 20:6; 5:9, 10; and 1 Cor. 15:24-28.) The Wycliffe

Bible Commentary says, "We must look to the time of Christ's return at the end of our present age for the ultimate fulfillment of this prophecy" (p. 613).

This Kingdom is to start at Jerusalem (even as did the church) and is to grow and spread over all the earth. It is to be like a mustard seed (Matt. 13:31, 32) or like a stone that grows until it fills "the whole earth" (Dan. 2:35, 44).

Jerusalem is to continue as the center of God's Kingdom and is to be a center of education as well as the political capital. With regard to education, our

text says, "Many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD . . . and he will teach us of his ways . . . and the word of the LORD [shall go forth] from Jerusalem" (Isa. 2:3; Micah 4:2). With regard to the political center, our text says, "Out of Zion shall go forth the law" (Isa. 2:3 and Micah 4:2).

## Israel is to play a dominant role in this

text says, "Many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD . . . and he will teach us of his ways . . . and the word of the LORD [shall go forth] from Jerusalem" (Isa. 2:3; Micah 4:2).

## teaching (as is the church).

These predictions are supported by many other scriptures. Concerning education, Jeremiah 50 tells us that "in those days . . . they shall go, and seek the LORD their God. They shall ask the way to Zion with their faces thitherward, saying, Come, and let us join ourselves to the LORD in a perpetual covenant" (vv. 4, 5). That is spoken of the children of Israel, *but* the teaching of the Kingdom shall extend to many Gentile cities and nations as well. (See Zech. 8:20-23.) Israel is to play a dominant role in this teaching (as is the church). We can only imagine the depth of Israel's role from such scriptures as Romans 11:15 where the apostle asks the question, "If the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?"

Regarding Jerusalem's being the political capital of the world, we remember

that Jesus was born to be "The Prince of Peace," to take the government "upon his shoulder," and to sit "upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever" (Isa. 9:6, 7).

Again, as we think of Jerusalem as being the center of God's Kingdom, our text says, "All nations shall flow unto it" (Isa. 2:2; Micah 4:1). The word "flow" is the same word as *stream* in Jeremiah 31:12 and carries the thought of a running stream. In Isaiah 66:12, 18, 19 the

prophet speaks of the glory of the Gentiles flowing into Israel like a flowing stream; there will be both a coming up to Jerusalem to learn the way of God and a sending out from Jerusalem to the Gentiles the knowledge of the Lord. Eventually "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea" (Isa. 11:9).

Further, there is a definite connection between this learning the knowledge of the Lord and the righteous living and peace that will result from it. Study that link in Isaiah 11:9; Psalm 72:7; and Isaiah 32:15-18. The latter text states that "the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever." Man's deep longing for peace and security will only be satisfied in God's great Kingdom.

These things are to come about under Christ's reign. But man and human governments will not give up their authority easily. That is why our text says of Jesus, "He shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people" (Isa. 2:4; Micah 4:3).

Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown, in their Commentary on the Whole Bible, say of the word "judge" that Jesus will be "a sovereign umpire, settling all controversies" (p. 507). This will He do under

God's Spirit with equity, fairness, and faithfulness. (See Isa. 11:1-5.) But to bring the nations under subjection it will be necessary to "smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked" (Isa. 11:4). Indeed, it will be necessary to "break them with a rod of iron" (Psa. 2:8, 9).

The thing we want to remember, however, is that the end result of this judging and rebuking is that "they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (Isa. 2:4). The Companion Bible says that "Swords and spears" is the figure

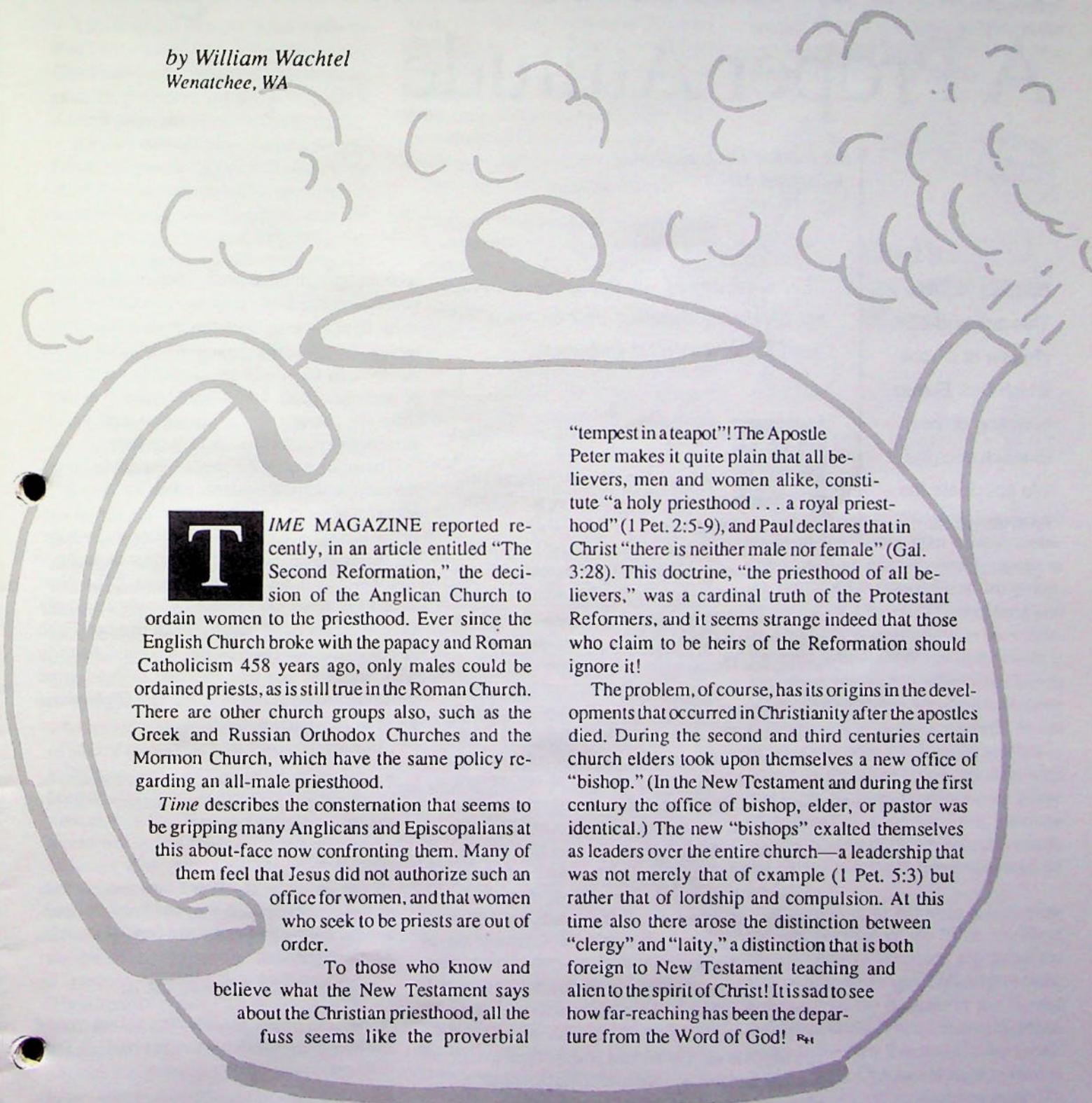
synecdoche (a part for the whole) to represent all the implements of war and that "plowshares and pruninghooks" is the same figure for all the implements of peace. It boggles one's mind to think what the billions of dollars spent on weaponry could do in the field of health, education, and the good of mankind! Such will be a time of "abundance of peace" (Psa. 72:7) and "of the increase of . . . peace there shall be no end" (Isa. 9:7).

"Jehovah will impose his rule upon the earth and compel the nations to practice justice and fairness toward each other. There will therefore be no international strife, no aggressor nations; all countries will dwell together in peace" (The Wycliffe Bible Commentary, p. 613).

The prophet Micah adds one little but powerful thought to what is written in Isaiah which speaks volumes about the peace and security which will be ours in God's Kingdom. "They shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid" (Micah 4:4). This was the very expression used to describe Solomon's reign of peace after David's (the man of war) conquest of all the surrounding nations. (See 1 Kings 4:25.) It speaks of the most prosperous tranquility, everlasting peace, and joy. What a blessed time that will be! How such a hope can sustain us in these troubled end times! Thank you, Isaiah and Micah. Thank you, Heavenly Father. Thank you, Jesus. Amen. ❧

# A Tempest in a Teapot?

by William Wachtel  
Wenatchee, WA



**T**IME MAGAZINE reported recently, in an article entitled "The Second Reformation," the decision of the Anglican Church to ordain women to the priesthood. Ever since the English Church broke with the papacy and Roman Catholicism 458 years ago, only males could be ordained priests, as is still true in the Roman Church. There are other church groups also, such as the Greek and Russian Orthodox Churches and the Mormon Church, which have the same policy regarding an all-male priesthood.

*Time* describes the consternation that seems to be gripping many Anglicans and Episcopalians at this about-face now confronting them. Many of them feel that Jesus did not authorize such an office for women, and that women who seek to be priests are out of order.

To those who know and believe what the New Testament says about the Christian priesthood, all the fuss seems like the proverbial

"tempest in a teapot"! The Apostle Peter makes it quite plain that all believers, men and women alike, constitute "a holy priesthood . . . a royal priesthood" (1 Pet. 2:5-9), and Paul declares that in Christ "there is neither male nor female" (Gal. 3:28). This doctrine, "the priesthood of all believers," was a cardinal truth of the Protestant Reformers, and it seems strange indeed that those who claim to be heirs of the Reformation should ignore it!

The problem, of course, has its origins in the developments that occurred in Christianity after the apostles died. During the second and third centuries certain church elders took upon themselves a new office of "bishop." (In the New Testament and during the first century the office of bishop, elder, or pastor was identical.) The new "bishops" exalted themselves as leaders over the entire church—a leadership that was not merely that of example (1 Pet. 5:3) but rather that of lordship and compulsion. At this time also there arose the distinction between "clergy" and "laity," a distinction that is both foreign to New Testament teaching and alien to the spirit of Christ! It is sad to see how far-reaching has been the departure from the Word of God! **RW**

# Prerequisite to Teaching— A Proper Attitude

by Pastor Dick Eldred  
Blanchard, MI

**EDITOR'S NOTE:**  
This article is a chapter of a book which Dick Eldred is writing on how to teach doctrine. We anticipate the finished product.

*"Let not many of you become teachers, my brethren, knowing that as such we shall incur a stricter judgment."*

—James 3:1

**P**AUL HIT THE NAIL on the head when he said, "I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because He considered me faithful, putting me into service" (1 Tim. 1:12).

What a privilege it is to be called of God to help others understand His Word. With that privilege comes a great responsibility. We who teach will receive a stricter judgment (Jas. 3:1), so we must not take our calling lightly. "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son." God is sincere about reaching the lost and having His Word taught in a way that will transform minds and hearts. We dare not trifle with human lives.

Before discussing the methods of teaching doctrine, it is necessary to look at our attitude toward teaching. Remember, we are representing Jesus Christ, who commissioned us to "Go make disciples . . . baptize them . . . and teach them" (Matt. 18:19, 20). Unless we establish credibility as sincere disciples of Christ and develop a relationship with those we wish to reach, our effectiveness in communicating God's Word will be greatly hindered.

*First, we must convey a sincere love for the truth.* One of the hardest things to do is to come to the Bible with an open mind. It is essential that you instill in the learner that you are open to new learning and that he must overcome preconceived ideas and prejudices and try to approach the Bible

with an open mind as well. They must perceive you as a serious Bible student—one who is stable in his thinking and willing to examine the Scriptures open-mindedly without being "tossed here and there by the waves and carried by every wind of doctrine" (Eph. 4:14). Instill a desire to carefully sift through the Scriptures, weighing the evidence as conflicting doctrines emerge.

The student must be challenged not to ignore the mass of biblical evidence when it differs from his preconceived point of view, or a verse or two of conflicting Scripture. Keep sifting and weighing the evidence in search of the true meaning.

I have read such statements as, "The New Testament doesn't teach such and such; we simply have to accept that by faith." Faith in what? Faith in our opinions? Faith in our feelings? Faith in what someone has told us? Our faith must be grounded in the Word of God. **The Bible alone must be our final authority.**

Consider the words of Paul:

" . . . God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to **come to the knowledge of truth**" (1 Tim. 2:3b, 4, emphasis mine).

Jesus Himself says:

"If you **abide in My Word** then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you shall know the truth, and **the truth shall make you free**" (John 8:31, 32, emphasis mine).

Paul again warns that there will be:

"those who perish, because they did not receive **the love of the truth** so as to be saved" (2 Thes. 2:10, emphasis mine)

Knowing the truth is not an option. How far can



one stray from God's Word and still expect to find salvation? Consider the words of John:

"Anyone who goes too far and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God; the one who abides in the teaching, he has both the Father and the Son" (2 John 9).

I am inspired by a statement made by Rex Tilly, Pastor of the Gatesville, Texas, Church of God. Holding up his Bible he said, "If it doesn't come out of here, it doesn't come out of me!" Good advice!

*Second, we must have a love for people.* People who come into a Bible study from other than our own churches (and some of those within the church) will be in one of two categories. 1) lost and with little or no Bible knowledge. 2) knowledgeable of the Bible but likely confused over doctrine. In either case you must assure them of your love. Often we have a greater compassion for those who are lost than we do for the one who holds a different view of the Scriptures. In either case they are not the enemy; they are the victims of the enemy. They are neat people with a desire to learn more. Joe Aldrich says, "If they don't know how much you care, they will never care how much you know." Whether they are lost or misled and in need of direction, unless they feel genuine love and support from you, they may not stick around long enough to hear what you have to say. They are not your project, they are people—love them; be excited about their desire to learn.

*Third, be tolerant.* Almost everyone who comes to study with us in the Church of God of the Faith of Abraham will have a different point of view. Either they have been taught from a distorted Christian view or they have been influenced by the world which has been deceived by the orthodox view. Many teaching opportunities have been destroyed by a well-placed kick. I've seen people crushed by an insensitive, careless remark that left the one stating his point of view or asking a question defeated and embarrassed. When a person presents a different thought or he speaks out of *his* understanding of the text, we must be careful to acknowledge him and discuss his point of view. Learn to be more tactful. I am reminded of

the words of Brother William Wachtel, Pastor of the Wenatchee, Washington, Church of God, "We want to 'convict' them; not 'defeat' them." We must have the same love for those who are misguided as we do for those who are lost.

In a loving way we must be able to say things like, "I used to believe that very thing, but here are some texts that have caused me to study deeper. Let me show you a verse . . ." Don't try to change everything they believe in one sitting. Make them welcome even if they don't completely agree with you. Give them time to grow, but above all **LOVE THEM**.

Remember the words of Peter:

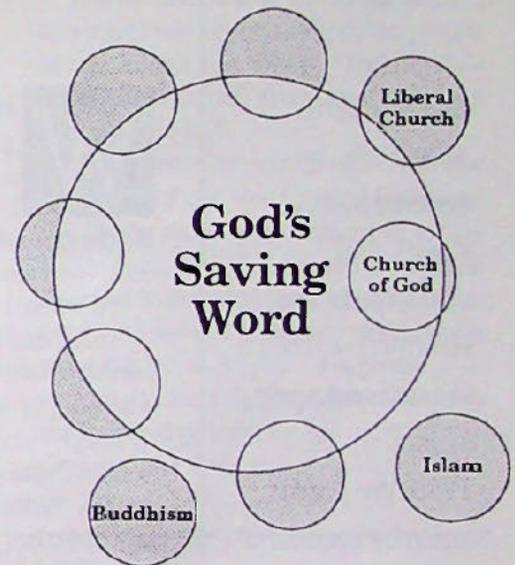
"Sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reference" (1 Pet. 3:15, emphasis mine).

*Fourth, be humble.* I will never forget the embarrassment and anger I felt at a "Christian" men's breakfast a few years ago. I had been invited to come and meet weekly with some area Christian men who met every Thursday morning. One of the men in the group had some understanding of the doctrines I taught. He publicly told the rest of the group: "Dick comes here thinking he is a brother in Christ, but I tell you this man is no brother." Those words "stung!" Even if I thought this man was right in his understanding of Scripture (which I don't), he had destroyed any possibility of ever persuading me of his view. He had made me out to be his enemy. According to Scripture, he should love me and have compassion for my lost condition, if in fact he believed I was lost. He had embarrassed and attacked me. This is certainly a violation of Scripture. I refuse to be guilty of such unkindness. Consider the words of Paul:

"And the Lord's bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged, **with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition**, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth, and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to

do his will" (2 Tim. 2:24-26, emphasis mine).

*Fifth, be systematic in your presentation of doctrine.* More detail on the proper sequence of presenting doctrine will come later, but for now suffice it to say (we must begin to build on common ground. Notice the diagram below. The larger circle represents God's infallible Word. The smaller circles represent the denominations of the world [estimated at 20,800].)



Notice, some of the denominations are more in the circle than others. Some denominations more accurately represent the Word of God than others. No group, including the Church of God of the Faith of Abraham, is completely in the circle. To claim to be in the center of the circle is arrogance. However, I believe the Church of God of the Faith of Abraham to be more in the circle than most other groups. Much of what orthodox Christianity teaches is outside of the circle, it does not align with true Bible doctrine. Usually we are guilty of a negative approach. We confront people in areas of disagreement (outside the circle) and build barriers instead of bridges.

If we expect to influence people with the true doctrine of the Bible, we must have a positive approach and focus on areas where we do agree. Most agreement will come on the doctrine of the second coming of Christ. Three hundred eighteen verses in the New Testament alone speak of His return. One would have to ignore  
*(Continued on page 27)*

# Forgiven

by F. L. Austin  
in *The Restitution Herald*, 1922

## EDITOR'S NOTE:

This article, an editorial by F. L. Austin, first appeared in *THE RESTITUTION HERALD* in 1922 and again in January 25, 1955. We print it again by request of Pastor Harry Goekler, Harlingen, Texas.

**W**HAT MEANING to this word, "Forgiven"!

By whom?

By the one who has the power.

By the one who has been wronged, even grievously wronged.

To whom?

To the one who is powerless; who is wholly at the mercy of another. To the one who has injured; who has put self under obligation.

Forgiveness is a necessary provision of God. Without it the world must forever grope in wretchedness. Without it there can never, throughout any time, be "peace on earth." Forgiveness is as essential to the achievements of God's purposes as is resurrection.

Sin is the necessitating cause. As "all have sinned," therefore all stand in need of the revivification that results from forgiveness. Also, all need the benefits that accrue from the exercise of the power to forgive another.

Forgiveness is the key that unlocks the great door that opens the age of restitution. God, through Jeremiah (31:31-34), announced a new covenant unto "the house of Israel and with the house of Judah." Under that new covenant, "they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord."

Why so? Because His "law is in their hearts"?

No. Hear Him: "For I will forgive their iniquity and I will remember their sin no more."

Read again of this largeness of God's mercy: "I will cause the captivity of Judah and the captivity of Israel to return, and will build them, as at the first. And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity . . . whereby they have sinned, and whereby they have transgressed against me" (Jer. 33:7, 8). Surely these sins and iniquities which they have sinned are not some which they will have committed after the new law is "in their heart." No, Jehovah will first cure them. "Be-

hold, I will bring it health and cure, and I will cure them, and will reveal unto them the abundance of peace and truth" (v. 6). "Cure them"? Cause captivity to return? Build them? Cleanse them? Pardon iniquities? Surely by such time all, from the least to the greatest, should "know the Lord," and should receive his "law in their heart."

See the great work accomplished in the breadth of its results, once forgiveness becomes effective upon Judah and Israel. In no other way can Christ ever hope to "reign over the house of Jacob." It is unthinkable that He will reign forever over an unrighteous nation. They are powerless to right their own wrongs. But God avouches, "I will cleanse"; "I will cure"; "I will pardon"; "I will forgive"; "I will remember their sin no more." "In those days, and in that time, saith the LORD, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found" (Jer. 50:20).

Why?

"For I will pardon them whom I reserve" (v. 20).

Not only will the great good of this fruitful forgiveness bring joy to the once rebellious, iniquitous race of Israel; its brilliancy will radiate around the earth. And God's name will be greatly praised. "It shall be to me a name of joy, a praise and an honour before all the nations of the earth, which shall hear all the good that I do unto them: and they shall fear and tremble for all the goodness and for all the prosperity that I procure unto it" (Jer. 33:9; see also vv. 10-18). Little wonder that the voice of gladness shall proclaim, "Praise the Lord of hosts: for the Lord is good: for his mercy endureth for ever!"

But without Jehovah's word "forgiven," no such fruitage could possibly result—to Israel or to nations or to individuals.

And Jesus, the coming recipient of David's throne over Israel, proved Himself in fullest ac-

cord with this, the Father's purpose, when He, in His own stead, breathed forth that wonder prayer of the ages: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Forgive whom?

The few who executed the will of many of Judah and the many who were represented by the few who wrought the rejection and crucifixion of Judah's promised Messiah.

This, too, was a necessity to the coming establishment of God's Kingdom. For how could God forgive and rule a nation in mercy through a king who in his own person might refuse, or even refrain to forgive said people. Surely, Christ's power and service and forgiveness were essential!

Was His prayer answered? Were they forgiven? Yes! From Him the forgiveness was immediate, though for the moment, like a parent's love enveloping a wayward, heedless child, it fell upon hardened, impenetrable, and unreceiving hearts. Forgiven by Him, but not received by them! Fifty days later, however, on the

Day of Pentecost, about three thousand of them "were pricked in their hearts" and, first repenting, received the proffered, waiting gift.

Now God reveals a plan to include others with His Son in the forgiveness, restitution, and reign of His Kingdom subjects of the Coming Age. Those thus included to reign "with him" are now being made ready to be presented to Him "a glorious church without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing." Surely, for such perfect cleansing the word "forgiven" must abide indelibly upon the memory of each one. By no other possible means could one of them be spotless, "for all have sinned."

"Forgiveness," then, is a key also that opens the door to all who have "boldness to enter into the holiest, by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us." None can enter there with sin, and none can be freed from sin without "forgiveness." Nor is that "new way" for any who refuse from the heart to "forgive every one his brother their trespasses."

The power to forgive is needed by everyone who would unite with the King of Kings to forgive, restore, and reign.

Provision for all this has been completed by our Savior.

Across the archway of heaven, awaiting reception by whomsoever will accept, stands recorded one of the sweetest words for mortal lips, one of those dearest to mortal life:

"Forgiven"

It is as essential as life itself. In fact, resurrection holds no assurance to you, or to me, unless one word—"forgiven"—has been accepted from the "Giver of every good gift."

Would-be Christians, taste oft the sweetness of one word passed from your lips to the weak, yea weakest of erring souls. Turn, then, often to the heavens of God and with vision clear and bright discern the beautiful radiance of that same word passed on to you—Forgiven!

This day truly, fully, pass it on to every soul! This day accept it to yourself from God and His Son. ❧

# We Must Be Born Again *John 3:1-5*

by Pastor James Mattison  
Pelzer, SC

*"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God"*

**J**ESUS WAS SAYING that a spiritual birth is necessary if we are to enter the Kingdom of God when He returns. Men cannot effect this new creation themselves. It must be by means of the Holy Spirit. We have our part to do, yes. Peter showed this as well as the Spirit's work in our regeneration when he said we should repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus for the remission of our sins, and we would receive the gift of Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38).

"That which is born of flesh is flesh; and that which is born of spirit is spirit." Flesh is carnal and corrupt, and therefore at enmity with the Spirit. Flesh cannot inherit the Kingdom of God. Paul brings this out so plainly in Romans 8: "Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his" (8:9). Flesh refers to our natural, sinful nature. When we live according to our sinful nature, we have our minds set on what that nature desires. But when we are born again, and live according to God's Spirit, we have our minds set on what that Spirit desires.

So it is necessary for our salvation that a new creation take place, a creation by the Spirit of God.

This creating influence comes from our God and from our Lord Jesus. It is a change of control over us; from a life controlled by us to a life controlled by the Spirit. We allow this to happen because we *want* this to happen. Jesus said, "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness." This is a motive behind conversion. We are disgusted with sin and want to have a higher form of life. We also want *eternal* life in God's coming Kingdom.

### The Spiritual, or Divine, Nature

This is the kind of nature God has. It is the kind of nature Christ has. It is different from the nature we have when we are born into this world. It is high and lifted up. It seeks right, not wrong. It is a renewing of our minds. It is seeing things through the eyes of God. It is a seeking for righteousness. It is a life led by the Spirit of God—a life transformed by that Spirit.

### Being Born Again Is a Process

It is of interest to note that in the normal birth process the man's part (to beget) and the woman's part (to give birth) are from the same Greek word, *gennao*. This indicates that the actual birth of a baby is a PROCESS. It is begun by the father and finished by the mother. A mortal life has come into being.

It is the same with being born of the Spirit. We are *begotten* by the Word of God, the gospel about Christ and the invitation to the glorious Kingdom of God (Jas. 1:18). Peter calls it "being born again" by incorruptible seed, by the Word of God (1 Pet. 1:23). At the resurrection from the dead to eternal life, faithful men will have spiritual bodies to go along with spiritual minds (1 Cor. 15:42-44). Then the whole spiritual birth process will be complete. It begins today with God's Spirit being sought by us to guide our lives, and ends when Jesus Himself will make us completely incorruptible in every way.

### Whosoever is Born of God Does Not Commit Sin 1 John 3:9

The reason a true child of God does not practice sin is because God's nature is in him. He cannot continue to sin because of

his longing to live by God's standards, and because he is asking Jesus to give him the strength he needs to combat sin in his life. Jesus can do this. He is a Savior who needs to be in our life every day to help us resist sin. If this does not happen in our lives—that we seek Jesus' help every day to overcome sin—we lose our "born-again" status. It is very possible to fall from grace (Gal. 5:4; Heb. 12:15; Rom. 11:21, 22).

### Being Born of God

John said, "Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well (1 John 5:1). How do we prove our love for God? By obeying His commands (and they are not burdensome). Everyone born of God overcomes the world.

This same John said, "To all who received him [Christ], to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God" (John 1:12, 13).

### Application

Unless a person has a new nature given him by the Spirit, which is being born of the Spirit as he accepts the Christian reli-

gion offered him and is baptized (born of water), he cannot see (understand, or also share in) the Kingdom of God. Unless we are born again and *continue* in that state (constantly being *renewed* by the Holy Spirit, Titus 3:5) we cannot be saved.

This shows the absolute necessity of *hungering and thirsting* after righteousness. It shows that Jesus meant it when He said we should seek first *GOD'S KINGDOM* and *HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS*. If we will do this, all our needs will be supplied; we do not need to fear that we will suffer because of being regenerated. Not only will we not suffer; all things will work out for good for us. God will supply every need.

Oh, how wonderful Jesus' teaching is, that we must be born again! With Jesus' help we can come into that condition, and we can stay in it. Praise God! Who can resist such promises? If you haven't been, be born again. And if you have slipped and fallen, come back into that condition of close fellowship with God and rejoice in Him. When we *are* truly born of God today, every day is springtime; every day is wonderful; and we look forward with great anticipation to our bodies being made spiritual when Jesus comes. How fortunate we Christians are to have such a heavenly Father and such a Savior who offer such good things! ❧

## Dangerous Focus

(Continued from page 5)

But what about us? How do we keep from being swept away with the world? Well, we simply need to take our eyes off ourselves. And one way to do that is to bring God into every decision we make. James states it well: "Now listen you who say, 'Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money.' Instead you ought to say, 'If it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that'" (Jas. 4:13, 15). In taking this advice, we keep our eyes on heaven and God's business. Otherwise the oceans of this world will become too distracting for us and their

ideas can easily pull us under. So whom do you marry? Ask God. Where do you live? Ask God. Do you eat when, where, and however much you want, or do you go as far as to give even your stomach over to God?

Yes, this world is becoming very frightening. And yes, it will someday be destroyed. Nobody seems to respect the Christian value system anymore. We are becoming social outcasts. But hey! We don't need to worry; we have something that the world doesn't when it comes to floods. We float!!! ❧

# “To the Top of the Hill and The Valley Below”

by Pastor Ed Goit  
North Tonawanda, NY

**L**IFE'S STRUGGLES speak of different individuals' endeavors to climb "to the top of the hill." Abraham Lincoln's rise from a log cabin to the presidency of the USA, the struggle of Saul of Tarsus to Paul the apostle, and the climb of Moses from the baby in the ark of bulrushes to a prince in Egypt are but a few. Consider this prince, Moses, who chose "to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." (See Heb. 11:25-27.) Visualize this Moses, the deliverer, as one who endured. Reflecting on Moses' life, I observe that his struggle to the top of the hill required the intercession of others and the hand of God to lift him up along the way.

Join with me in looking at an incident in Moses' struggle and see the helpers at his side and the battle-sharers in the valley below. Unite with Jesus Christ to defeat the Amalekites of our age. Fight the good fight of faith! (See 1 Tim. 6:12a.)

Corrie ten Boom said, "If God sends us on stormy paths, He provides strong shoes." God provided for Moses, and He will supply our needs today.

## "Then Came Amalek"

Moses, inspired of God to record God's provision of water from the rock for Israel's thirst, wrote these words, "Then

came Amalek, and fought with Israel in Rephidim" (Ex. 17:8). This was Israel's first involvement in warfare. This was after they had tasted God's goodness displayed in the defeat of Pharaoh and his gods through a series of ten plagues, the parting of the waters of the Red Sea, the provision of quail, manna, and water. Through it all, Israel had but to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. These are our examples and are written for our admonition. (See 1 Cor. 10:6, 11.)

It is much the same in a Christian's life. Jesus Christ has won all the battles. He has obtained our peace and the forgiveness of sins. Jesus died on the cross, was buried in a grave, and rose from the dead to accomplish mankind's justification. (Heb. 1:3; 2:14.) He overcame Satan! Jesus Christ, the Son of God, accomplished all this apart from any achievement on the part of mankind. After the Christian tastes the goodness of God through the spiritual gift of the Holy Spirit, the warfare begins. (See Eph. 1:13, 14; 2 Pet. 1:4.) Paul admonishes believers: "Put on the whole armour of God" (Eph. 5:11-18). This will equip for life's struggles

## Believers' Two Natures

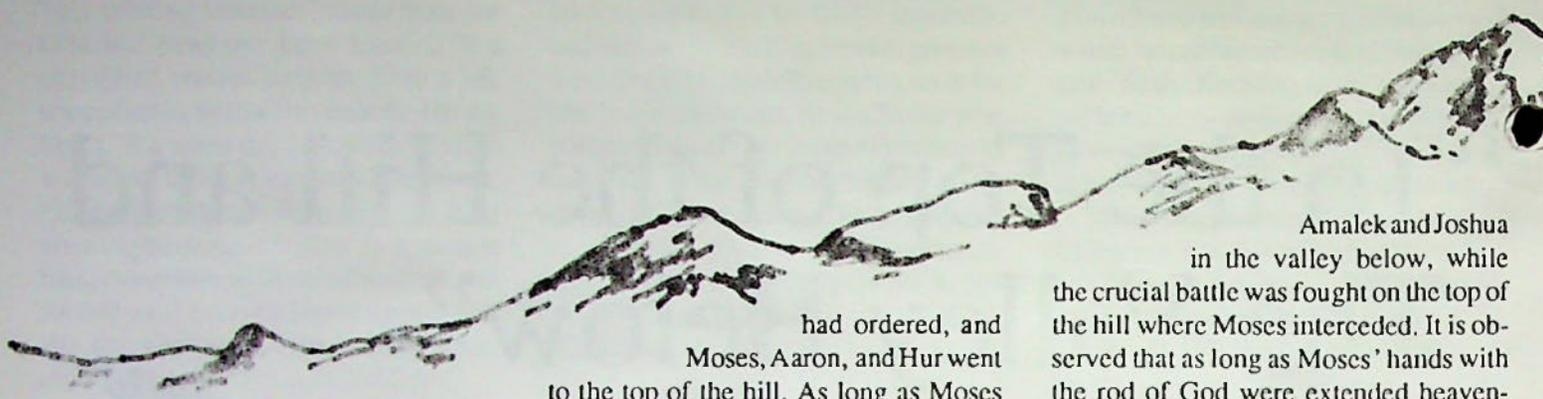
Some Christians are under the impression that when they accept Jesus as their Savior the conflict ends. The opposite is true. Until Amalek attacked, God had

fought Israel's battles. It is after man hears the Word of truth, the gospel of salvation, trusts God, and is sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise that he is confronted by the enemy and becomes aware of Satan, symbolized by Amalek. Israel's battle with Amalek parallels the struggle the individual believer in Christ has because of his two natures. Concerning these two natures, it is written, "The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy: such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly" (1 Cor. 15:47, 48).

If mankind possessed only the first Adam's nature there would be no conflict. If man had only the second Adam's nature (the new nature in Christ) there would be no conflict. However, because the believer has two natures, there is a constant struggle between the two. Paul describes this conflict, "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other" (Gal. 5:17a).

There is a way of victory in this struggle and it is this: "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh" (Gal. 5:16).

God does not change a person's nature. A changed nature is not taught in God's Word. God does not improve or repair the old (flesh) nature. Nothing is done to man's old nature. God leaves it as it is. God does give man another nature, the new man (nature). Paul states, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature [creation]: old things are passed



away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor. 5:17). This new nature is given the believer at salvation, i.e., acceptance of Jesus as one's personal Savior. This new life (Spirit) is Christ dwelling in the believer's heart, not the old life (flesh) made over. (See Gal. 2:20.)

Although a new nature is given the believer, the old nature, or sin nature, remains until this corruptible puts on incorruption and this mortal puts on immortality. (See 1 Cor. 15:51-58.) This will be accomplished with the resurrection of the dead at Jesus' second coming.

Based on the foregoing Scripture teaching, I affirm that every Christian has two natures. One is sinful and one is sinless. One is born of the flesh after the first Adam, whereas the second or spiritual nature is begotten of God. These two natures differ from each other in origin, character, temperament, and the behavior they generate. These two natures have absolutely nothing in common and are in complete opposition to each other. Scripture records this struggle in many stories. Consider Ishmael and Isaac, Esau and Jacob as representatives.

### Victory's Way

It has been already noted that Israel did not attack Amalek; Amalek attacked Israel. As Amalek attacked Israel, God revealed through Moses a means of victory for Israel. This way consisted of two aspects as recorded in the account of the battle at Rephidim.

"Moses said to Joshua, 'Choose some of our men and go out to fight the Amalekites. Tomorrow I will stand on top of the hill with the staff of God in my hands.' So Joshua fought the Amalekites as Moses

had ordered, and Moses, Aaron, and Hur went to the top of the hill. As long as Moses held up his hands, the Israelites were winning, but whenever he lowered his hands, the Amalekites were winning. When Moses' hands grew tired, they took a stone and put it under him and he sat on it. Aaron and Hur held his hands up—one on one side, one on the other—so that his hands remained steady till sunset. So Joshua overcame the Amalekite army with the sword" (Ex. 17:9-13, NIV).

The two aspects of God's way for victory were

1. warfare and
2. intercession.

In the foregoing record of the battle at Rephidim we note that Moses instructed Joshua and he did as instructed. Joshua chose men of Israel and fought with Amalek in the valley and Moses, Aaron, and Hur went to the top of the hill. Together these two groups fulfilled God's plan for Israel's victory over Amalek. Joshua and his soldiers fought in the valley below, a picture of the valley of life's daily battle. Moses, Aaron, and Hur fought the good fight on the top of the hill, a picture of the Christian's spiritual struggles in the ongoing battle against the downward pull of the old nature.

The Christian life is one of warfare—a spiritual battle. Ephesians 6:12-18 describes this and it is noted in verses 17 and 18 the two necessities for the Christian. They are described as

1. the armor of God and
2. prayer.

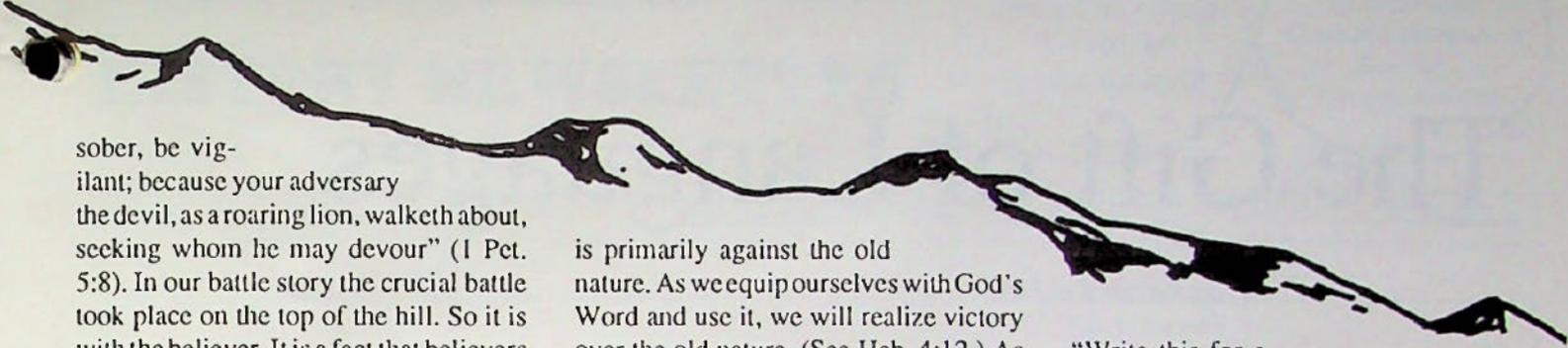
In the story of the battle at Rephidim, the two aspects of spiritual warfare are evident—Joshua with the sword (symbolic of the Word of God) and Moses with the uplifted hands of intercession and prayer. There was warfare between

Amalek and Joshua in the valley below, while the crucial battle was fought on the top of the hill where Moses interceded. It is observed that as long as Moses' hands with the rod of God were extended heavenward in prayer, the Israelites prevailed. When his hands became heavy and he let down his hands, the battle went in Amalek's favor. When Aaron and Hur held up Moses' hands the Israelites prevailed in the battle.

The mutual actions of Moses on the top of the hill and Joshua and soldiers down in the valley below revealed the means God has made for mankind to combat the flesh. The team effort of Moses' intercession and Joshua's fighting resulted in victory for the children of God. The Israelites had to fight before they could be victors, whereas believers are declared victors over sin because of what Jesus accomplished for them. The Christian must appropriate by faith the victory that Christ has made available. This principle of faith is seen in the battle at Rephidim. Both aspects—actual warfare and intercessory prayer—are outlined in Exodus 17:10.

Christians are not to be completely passive in this spiritual warfare. Some think a believer is to do nothing but stand still and let God do it all. It is true that victory comes from God, but God expects believers to be involved in appropriating the victory. It was not sufficient that Moses interceded on the top of the hill. Joshua had to do his part by fighting the enemy down in the valley. God does provide, but mankind must go forth and take what God supplies. It is recorded that the Lord God told Israel, "Every place the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that I have given unto you" (Josh. 1:3). Israel had to cross the Jordan and appropriate the promised land. In like manner, a believer must appropriate God's promise of victory.

Peter admonishes Christians: "Be



sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Pet. 5:8). In our battle story the crucial battle took place on the top of the hill. So it is with the believer. It is a fact that believers do grow weary in prayer but God's Word exhorts, "Men ought always to pray, and not to faint" (Luke 18:1). It was no different with Jesus' disciples as He looked toward the cross. (See Matt. 26:40, 41.) It is no different with Christians today. However, there is promised help for this weariness in prayer. Moses became weary as he held his hands high interceding for Israel, but Aaron and Hur willingly assisted him in his time of need. I note that Aaron was later consecrated and served as Israel's High Priest as they worshiped God. So this event speaks plainly of the High Priest and his work of intercession. Believers have a High Priest who makes intercession for them—the Lord Jesus Christ. (See Heb. 7:25.) This provides believers with the needed spiritual strength as we engage in spiritual warfare.

Not only does Jesus intercede for us, but the Spirit of God also helps our infirmities. (See Rom. 8:26, 27.) Indeed, "Life's shadows are lifted by the wings of prayer."

### Using God's Way

Joshua and his soldiers battling in the valley completes God's plan for victory. Exodus 17:13 declares, "Joshua discomfited Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword." This was possible because Moses, assisted by Aaron and Hur, was on the top of the hill interceding.

Christians can do battle in the valley below against the old nature by using the sword as Joshua did. Whereas Joshua used an actual sword, we are to use "the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God" (Eph. 6:17). A believer's struggle

is primarily against the old nature. As we equip ourselves with God's Word and use it, we will realize victory over the old nature. (See Heb. 4:12.) As we engage in spiritual warfare, we must remember that it is not by prayer alone, nor by the use of the sword alone, that we win spiritual battles. Both parts of God's plan must be used.

### Our Role in Christ

Through God's Word a believer learns his role in Jesus Christ and what He achieved for us when He died in our place. Knowing our position in Christ we are then responsible to live accordingly. Proper teaching determines right living. Romans 6:3-6 reveals what we are to know; Romans 6:11 teaches that we are to count on it by an act of faith; Romans 6:12, 13 discloses that we are to present ourselves to the Lord to carry out His will in us. This consecration of ourselves is a result of what we know and accept, and is realized through the Holy Spirit. Romans 8:13 states, "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." The Holy Spirit enables the believer to live victorious over sin.

Mankind's old nature cannot be changed, corrected, or made over in any way. Mankind is totally depraved and his old nature can do nothing that pleases God.

Although God does nothing to change the old nature, He has provided a way for believers to secure victory over it. God gives the Holy Spirit to believers when they accept His Son as their personal Savior and, by its guidance, they experience victory over the desires of the flesh. (Gal. 5:14, 17.)

After Joshua defeated Amalek and his people by Moses' intercessory prayer on the hilltop, the Lord instructed Moses,

"Write this for a memorial in a book, and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua: for I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven" (Ex. 17:14). Although Amalek would ultimately be blotted out, Israel had to contend with him and his descendants for generations. So, too, even though the believer will eventually be delivered from the presence of sin, he must struggle with the sin nature as long as he is mortal. When this mortality is replaced by immortality, the vile body shall be changed and thus delivered from sin's presence. (See Rom. 8:23; Phil. 3:21.) Scripture teaches that this change will be accomplished at the second coming of Jesus Christ. (1 Thes. 4:13-18; 1 Cor. 15:51-58.)

So, consider this. A Christian believer can have victory over sin's dominion now and possess the glorious hope of deliverance from its presence at Jesus' return.

After God instructed Moses to record the Amalek incident, Moses built an altar and called it Jehovah-nissi. (Ex. 17:15.) The name Moses gave this altar literally means "the LORD our banner." Moses stood tall in the might and power of God over Amalek.

Believers are likewise to "be strong in the LORD and the power of his might" (Eph. 6:10). We must not spare the flesh as Saul spared Amalek. (1 Sam. 15.) Indeed, obedience is far better than sacrifice!

May we not spare the flesh and its works, but rather by the indwelling Christ put to death everything that has to do with the old nature. God has provided this way for the believer to achieve victory. There is no other way! <sup>141</sup>

# The Gift of Languages

by Pastor Sid Hatch  
Sherwood, OR

"They . . . began to speak with other tongues" (Acts 2:4).

**O**NE OF THE MOST remarkable gifts of the Acts period was the gift of "tongues." Acts 2:4 says: "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues."

The Greek word for "tongue" is *glossa*. Literally, *glossa* meant the organ of speech, the tongue. Then, by metonymy,<sup>1</sup> it meant "speech, talk" or "language."

The disciples were filled with spiritual power "and began to speak in other languages."

Further evidence that the "tongues" of Pentecost were actual languages, and the languages of mankind, is the experience of the pilgrims in Jerusalem. Fifteen places of geographic origin are mentioned, yet each one heard the disciples in his own "language" or "dialect."

In these passages (verses six and eight) Luke uses, not the word *glossa*, but the word *dialektos*. This meant the dialect of a particular country or district. The disciples spoke not only from the principal language groups of that part of the world, but from various provincial dialects within those language groups.

The pilgrims who had assembled in Jerusalem for Pentecost were Jews. But, like the Jews of today, they spoke the languages and dialects of the countries in which they lived. They needed to hear the message in their own speech.

The phrase "wonderful works of God" indicates that the disciples who were speaking gave a definite message. As to the content of that message, we can only surmise from Scripture, but it was a message understood by the people. And these were people who were not as yet believers in Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah.

Obviously, then, the gift of tongues was not an emotional experience for the personal gratification of the speaker. Nor was it intended to demon-

strate his spiritual prowess. Even in that day, Paul makes clear, not all received the gift of tongues or languages.<sup>2</sup>

The gift of tongues was one miracle among many during a remarkable epoch in human history. It was the miracle of languages. It enabled the speaker to communicate in a language he had never learned, that others might hear the message.

## The Cessation of the Gift of Tongues

During the days of the book of Acts, there existed the miracle of "tongues" or "languages." It was a unique and wonderful gift that enabled believers to overcome a language barrier and communicate God's Word to others.

Is this special gift in evidence today? This question must be considered in the light of 1 Corinthians 13:8, "Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away."

Here Paul points out the transitory nature of those gifts in operation during the time of the Book of Acts. Prophecy will "fail" or "be brought to an end." Knowledge will "vanish away." And the gift of tongues will "cease."

The Greek word for "cease" is *pauso* which means "cause to stop, restrain, prohibit," etc. In the middle voice, as here, it simply means to stop, cease, or come to an end.<sup>3</sup>

Hence Paul clearly says that the gift of tongues will come to an end. That it has done so is clearly evident. Missionaries today, of all persuasions, must go to language school. The Apostle Paul, on the other hand, was enabled to speak in the language of each city or province that he entered without benefit of language school. "I speak in languages (*glossais*) more than you all," he said.

Those manifestations which occur today in



Atlanta Bible College  
Box 100,000  
Morrow, GA 30260

Church of God  
General Conference  
Box 100  
Oregon, IL 61061

## Announcement to Readers

Although Adventism has been one of North America's most influential religious movements, surprisingly little academic study has been devoted to its various manifestations in comparison with other religious movements. With this fact in mind, we are anxious to remedy this situation through the creation of an Adventist Movements Historical Association. We believe such an association should hold annual conferences and promote the publication of works relating to the history of Adventism. Therefore, we would like to invite you personally to help in the formation of AMHA and to become a sustaining member thereof.

To help you determine the parameters of our proposed society's interests, we suggest the study of the Millerite movement (and antecedents thereof) and all movements which have grown out of the Millerite experience, either directly or indirectly. Such movements include—but are not limited to—the Advent Christians, Second Adventists, Seventh-Day Adventists, Seventh-Day Church of God (Denver, Colorado), Church of God (Seventh Day), Church of God General Conference (Oregon, Illinois and Morrow, Georgia), Christadelphians, Jehovah's Witnesses, and various Bible Student groups such as Pastoral Bible Students, the Layman's Home Missionary Movement, Dawn Bible Students, Divine Plan Bible Students, Christian Believers, Free Bible Students, and the Christian Millennial Church. However, AMHA will not promote the theology or doctrines of any of the above; it will be an academic society only with no "denomination ax" to grind.

It is our intention to hold a brief organizational meeting to form an ad hoc executive committee and to prepare bylaws which will later be ratified by the general membership. We hope to meet in Chicago near the end of March, 1993, for this purpose. If you are interested, please respond to Mark Mattison, 3880 Jefferson SE, Wyoming, MI, USA 49548. Feel free to send the names and addresses of others who may also be interested.

*Editor's Note: Here follows Part 2 of David Graham's article from the last HN 5(2), '92, which gave a brief history of our privilege in America to dissent and the COG's shying away from that privilege. In leaning toward a unified statement of faith leading to a reorganization of the General Conference in 1921,*

*it also precluded that, from this point on, any members who heretofore dissented doctrinally might be invited to leave the fellowship. This compilation puts excerpts from early writers "side by side" for comparison. Readers' response invited.*

### OF JESUS CHRIST, CONCERNING HIS TRUE NATURE

*Selected by David Graham from  
several Age-to-Come writers.*

**JOSEPH MARSH**  
(1802-1863)

"We have carefully read Brother Henry Grew's article on the pre-existence of Christ. . . . We will say in reference to his quotation from the Gospel by John, on the phrase, 'come down from heaven' and etc., that 'come down' is derived from the Greek *Katabaino*, and among its first significations, means to descend.—Christ descended not from Adam, but from God His Father, consequently not from this world, but from heaven. Matthew and Luke, in their genealogies of Christ, have proved this beyond dispute."—Joseph Marsh, *Expositor and Advocate*, Volume 28, Number 19, page 527, March 1, 1858.

**MAURICE JOBLIN**  
(1832-1907)

"Beclouded must be the mind that cannot see that Jesus was an adopted Son; and that if no REAL SON had been sent forth, there could have been no sons adopted.

"By virtue of His SONSHIP Jesus was HEIR; and the Heir gave the power to become sons and heirs to all 'who believed into his name.' John 1:12. He gave this power by offering Himself, His offices and work, as the object of their faith.

"Paul in Romans 1:16 says it is the Gospel of this same Christ, that is the power of God unto salvation to all who believe it. The very Gospel Jesus referred to when He said, 'He

that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.' Mark 16:16. This is being led by the Spirit, Rom. 8:14, and constituted sons of God—Jesus' words were spirit and life.

"The system we oppose practically places Jesus on a level with other men; and shows how far away from the truth it is when it says there was no cleansing power in His blood, through faith.

"The Scriptures above quoted are invulnerable. The heaviest artillery of the enemy cannot affect them, nor those who trust in them. And the next reference we shall make will infallibly endorse what we have just said respecting His Sonship and heirship; and the adoption of sons, and their joint-heirship with Him who is heir of all things.

"John 3:14-16 reads as follows: 'And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his ONLY BEGOTTEN Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.'

"This beyond question settles it:

"1. That there is no other Son of THAT CLASS; and

"2. That God is the Father of Jesus in a sense in which He is Father to NO ONE else, and

"3. That it is for His EXISTENCE He is indebted to God in the manner set forth, not for any other relationship. His paternity is here settled independently of Matthew and Luke.

"4. That He did not become the Son of God, when He was baptized. The announcement of His Sonship to God was then made.

"5. That He did not become Son of God at His resurrection. He was then AGAIN DECLARED to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of Holiness, BY the resurrection from the dead, instead of orally.

"6. That He became Son of God at His birth, because He was made of a woman by God; and that again accounts for His EXISTENCE. And

"7. The promise of Gabriel that the Holy Thing to be born of Mary should be called the Son of God, was actually and literally fulfilled—as the words of Jesus, John 3:16 prove.

"Of course the last quotation will be objected to, as not authentic; but the objectors can throw out whatever they please, and welcome; but since they have confessed they are obliged to do so on an opinion it would be folly to allow them to do any calling for us. . . ."—*The Paternity of Jesus*, pages 38, 39, Maurice Joblin, n.d.

#### WILEY JONES (1835-1898)

"Dear Bro. Wilson:—I have before me the *Banner* of June 15th, containing an article from your pen, on the nature of Christ, in which you say that you have nothing to do with the question of his pre-existence. On which allow me to make a few suggestions for the readers of the *Banner*. And in the first place, I will repeat a well known truth which we are all too often disposed to forget, namely, 'The secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but those things which are revealed belong unto us, and to our children forever.' Deut. xxix. 29. Yes brethren, 'those things which are revealed'; no less than these, and mark it well, nothing more. 'Remember the days of old.' 'Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example.' There was Daniel whom our Saviour

speaks of in exalted terms as 'The prophet Daniel'; and to whom Gabriel said, 'Thou art greatly beloved'; and whose wisdom was so proverbial, that it became a piece of bitter irony to say that a man was wiser than he, (Ezekiel xxviii:3) and yet this eminently wise man would say, 'I heard, but understood not.' There too was Job, 'That man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God and eschewed evil.' In those days there was 'none like him in the earth.' Job i:1, 8. And yet he, with self-aborrence, confesses to have uttered things which he 'understood not,' and 'things too wonderful' for him, which he knew not. Job xlii:3, 6. Conspicuous in the shining array of ancients, was David also, who, so far from being ashamed of it, seems to take comfort from the fact, that he had not exercised himself, in great matters, or in things too high for him, Psa. cxxxi. Inspired by these examples, with cautiousness and a mistrust of self, in handling sacred subjects, especially such as border so imminently on the prohibited territory of 'unlearned questions,' (2 Tim. ii:23) I am yet constrained to say, that, in my humble judgment, it seems very unscriptural to deny either directly or by implication, 'The pre-existence of Christ. . . .'" "The Pre-existence of Christ."—Wiley Jones, *The Gospel Banner*, Volume 10, Number 17, September 1, 1864.

#### RALPH VINTON LYON (1809-1891)

"Respected Friends: Various and vague have been the opinions of men, relative to Jesus of Nazareth, who was born of Mary and made both Lord and Christ. But I have become fully satisfied, from a thorough examination of organic and revealed law, that he is not the Eternal Father! From the fact that the Bible speaks of him as the 'seed of the woman,' 'the seed of Abraham,' 'the seed of David,' 'the offspring of David.' It also names the place of his birth, the time when he was born, and how he was cradled 'in a manger!' That he was made like unto his brethren—made a little lower than the angels (Adam and Eve were never made for the suffering of death.) It states positively, that he was 'the second Adam,' 'the son of man,' 'the son of David,' 'the son of God.' And subsequent to his being immersed by John in Jordan, and on the Mount of Transfiguration, God acknowledged him as His Son. And this saving truth, He reveals to Peter, (Matt. xvi:16, 17). 'Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.' And he is 'declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.'

". . . Neither did he pre-exist previous to his conception and birth, as a conscious being; for this would trample underfoot organic law, and contradict the teachings of the whole Bible. It is true, that in the beginning was the Logos\*—the word—the promise—'The seed of the woman,' 'the seed of Abraham.' (Gen. i:3; iii:15; xxii:17, 18.) 'And the Logos'—the word—the promise—'was with God, and the Logos'—the word—the promise—'was God;' because it is His language or thoughts expressed—the development of the plan of redemption—the person named who is to bruise effectually the head of the

\*By 1876, however, Elder Lyon had changed his views relative to the Father of Christ.

He expunged that portion of the record of Christ's birth which relates to His virgin mother, and to His having been begotten by the Holy Spirit.

He repudiated Matthew's application of the prophecy of Isaiah

serpent, and thereby remove the effects of the fall from the universe of God! Hence it is spirit, life, light, and knowledge; and all who receive it will have 'authority to become the children of God.' 'And the Logos was made flesh and dwelt among us.' And Luke informs us how it was done: 'And the angel said unto Mary, the Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God. [Not something that existed prior to His conception and birth, as a conscious entity, but that holy thing!] And the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of His Father David. . . .'"—"Jesus of Nazareth—His Offices and Character," Lecture Number One, R. V. Lyon, *Gospel Banner*, Volume 15: Number 14; July 15, 1869.

**BENJAMIN WILSON  
(1817-1900)**

" . . . In the first place I would remark, that the phrase 'Nature of Christ' is not a scriptural one, and consequently is open to speculative opinion. However I will endeavor to answer your queries in brief.

**"1st. The scriptural meaning of the word Nature.**

"The word in the original which is translated nature is that which comes from to beget, to generate, produce; from which we may I think correctly define nature to be,—The actual state of anything, or that which makes it what it is. Hence we read of 'Jews by nature'—of 'a natural body'—'natural face,' etc. This use of the word in the Scriptures is according to the commonly received meaning.

**"2nd. How many natures did Christ possess previous to his resurrection?**

"I only read of one—that he was of 'the seed of Abraham,' and 'of the seed of David according to the flesh'—that he was 'the man Christ Jesus'—that he was 'made a little lower than the angels'—that he 'was made in the likeness of men,' etc.; and all this prior to his resurrection. He was 'made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.' As to the question which

some have mooted about his pre-existence, I have nothing to do. The 'man Christ Jesus' had no existence prior to his generation. That blaze of glory which at times was manifested through the mighty works which he performed, and which has given rise to the idea of a duality of natures possessed by him, was a consequence of his being 'anointed with the Holy Spirit and with power' at his baptism, and not because he had two natures. This was an addition to his natural state as a man. The Spirit was given to him without measure; to all other sons of Adam,—as Moses, Elijah, Isaiah, the apostles, etc.,—it was measured. Hence his pre-eminence.

"3rd. The third query is mainly answered in considering this;—**Did he possess any more or better or different nature or natures than we possess?**

"I think it is evident that he had only one nature, but probably possessed a superior organization, and placed in that respect equal to the first Adam when he came from the hands of his Creator. It is no proof that he was Divine and human from his birth, because he was begotten by the power of the Holy Spirit, any more than Adam was divine because he was made by the Elohim. He was formed a man and Jesus also was made a man, and was found in fashion as a man, and the apostle says that it was necessary for him to be made like to his brethren in all things. His nature then was one, and essentially the same. In some respects, no doubt it was better, just as some men's natures now are said to be better than others—through organization at birth, favorable circumstances for development, and a good training.

Hoping that these few lines may be of some service, and that I may yet have the pleasure to hear of your obedience to the faith, I am, yours, truly." B. Wilson, *Gospel Banner*, "Queries on the Nature of Christ, and Answers." Volume 10, Number 12, page 143, June 15, 1864.

**Special thanks to:**

Bro. Arlen Rankin  
Bro. Daniel Smead  
Bro. Mark Mattison

---

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor:

The time line in the last HISTORY NEWSLETTER was very well done and should be most useful for those studying Church of God history. However, a couple of items were unclear or slightly overstated.

For example, the statement that Charles Russell joined with A. J. Eychaner "to preach throughout Iowa at Age-to-Come meetings" implies far too much. All we really know is that Russell preached at the Iowa State Conference in 1895.

The statement that the "term Church of God [was] first used" in 1847 may also be misleading. You meant that a local congregation was called a "Church of God," right? The term "Church of God" had been used by Marsh years before in the

---

in which he says, "Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us."

He expunged the last seven verses of the first chapter of Matthew. Lyon reasoned in reference to the genealogy of Christ, to give Him a legal title to David's throne and kingdom. Of course, that would be the same as throwing out Luke 1:34, 35.

Ralph Lyon rested upon the hypothesis that Joseph was the natural father of Christ. "Journal and Labors in the Gospel." James M. Stephenson, *Restitution* 25:39 (September 27, 1876).

*Christian Palladium* when he began forming his ideas about what the Church was.

Lastly, I appreciate the fact that you toned down the part describing John Thomas' interaction with us, but it still sounds as if we're trying to say that Thomas was rebaptized as a result of learning about the Kingdom of God from us. In both the *Journal from the Radical Reformation* and the HISTORY NEWSLETTER we have explicitly claimed this, but as you know, we have unearthed many reasons to revise our view of how we interacted with Thomas. David Graham and I hope to produce an article soon on this point so that we may correct our error.

Thanks again for the good work.

Yours in Christ,  
Mark M. Mattison, Editor  
*Wisdom and Power*

**Editor's Note:**

Thank you for your kind and rapid response to the HISTORY NEWSLETTER's time line. In response to point one, I do not have the original 1892 Eychaner journal before me, but recalled that C. T. Russell had preached in Iowa additionally to the State Conference. However, we do know conclusively he was active in preaching to Age-to-Come congregations in 1895. Point two: regarding use of "Church of God," you are right—the term was

first applied to a local congregation at that time. Point three: if the dates and data are incorrect, we have at least established a scholarly relationship between Marsh, Thomas, and Field. I was aware that Marsh's ideas developed for a number of years after he broke with the Millerite Movement, but needed more information regarding the development of J. Thomas' idea on the Kingdom. On the rebaptism issue: Thomas was deliberately vague about it which provides us with a delicious nugget for research. We are looking forward to your article on the topic.

—J. Stilson.

Dear Editor:

Here are my notes and thoughts regarding the interesting chart you designed for the HISTORY NEWSLETTER last quarter.

Sincerely,

D. Graham.

Chicago.

Point One—William Miller began preaching the "Time Theory" Doctrine of '43, regarding the Second Coming of Christ, in 1824. The erroneous date given instead, for the commencement of that important event (1831), has been seriously overlooked by the writers of at least two current publications, viz., Clarence Kearney's *The Advent Christian Story*, and Winthrop S. Hudson's *Religion in America*. Apparently from, and subsequently to, the present time, other writers of the *Advent Story* have, for some mysterious reason, failed to recognize this same mistake. "The first time I ever spake in public on this subject was in the year 1824. The Lord poured his grace on the congregation, and many believed to the salvation of their souls. From that day to this, doors have been opened to me to proclaim this doctrine of the Second Coming of Christ."—William Miller. (Himes, Joshua V. "Memoirs of Wm. Miller." *Midnight Cry* 1.1 [Nov. 17, 1842]: 1-2.)

Point Two—J. V. Himes himself "bolstered" the Advent Movement, which really didn't begin until after 1839. Himes organized what afterwards became known as the "first Conference of Adventist believers." This Conference met October 14th, 1840, at Chardon Street Chapel, in Boston.

Himes first learned of Miller's claims regarding the "imminent Coming of Christ in 1843," when he personally invited Miller to speak on this Momentous Subject in his (Chardon Street) Chapel in 1839, which he (Himes) at that time and at that place imbibed with a deep and abiding sense of Christian duty. Wellcome, Isaac C. *History of the Second Advent Message and Mission, Doctrine and People*. [1874]: 177.

Point Three—John Thomas was rebaptized in 1847—not in 1843 as indicated in the Chart. Thomas, John. "Elpis Israel's Wandering Star." *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*. 3.1 [Jan., 1853]: 18-19.

Point Four—The term "Church of God" was used by Marsh in all of his journals and sermons throughout the period before and/or prior to 1839. It is not possible that this term was first uttered in the *Voice of Truth* between 1846-'47, as indicated in the HISTORY NEWSLETTER. Marsh, Joseph F. "Church of God." [Fifteen editorials] *Christian Palladium*. [Feb., 1839/Oct., 1840.]

Editor's Response: Thank you, David, for your continual interest.

Point One—If you are correct you need to publicize the data with a serious article which will be recognized by Millerite scholars as a Revisionist work on the early years of Miller's ministry. Generally, most Millerite scholars look to 1831 as the commencement of his public preaching ministry. I quote:

"Of particular importance for the history of modern sectarianism, not only for the United States but throughout the world, were the writings and subsequent preaching, of William Miller, a farmer, who by 1818 had convinced himself that the date of the second advent could be deduced from scriptures. . . . Miller did not give public expression to his views until 1831."<sup>1</sup>

And, from David Rowe's *Thunder and Trumpets* referring for the request to preach at Dresden in 1831, "The request took him completely unawares, but in spite of his long reluctance to preach, he was no longer in a position to demur. Just an hour before the invitation arrived an unusually powerful impression to 'go and tell it to the world' had suddenly seized his mind . . . [and] within the hour his nephew arrived with the Dresden invitation."

"Because we must rely almost exclusively upon Miller's own recollection of these events, we will never know how accurate they are. The fact that he delivered his first apocalyptic lectures in the home of his sister and brother-in-law suggests that Miller played a more direct hand in arranging it than he would have us believe."<sup>2</sup>

Clyde Hewitt, the Advent Christian's historian concurs with 1831.<sup>3</sup>

Point Two—J. V. Himes was associated with Miller before 1840, but his role during the year mentioned on the time line was to "whip" the movement into a frenzy of camp meetings and preaching tours.

Points Three and Four are discussed in regard to M. Mattison's letter.

—J. Stilson.

<sup>1</sup>Wilson, Bryan, *Religious Sects, A Sociological Study*, London, 1970, p. 97.

<sup>2</sup>Rowe, p. 26.

<sup>3</sup>Hewitt, *Midnight and Morning*. Venture Books, 1983, p. 29.

## NOTES AND QUOTES

Interest in Joseph Marsh continues to increase. Just when we think we finally have a definitive handle on his life and thought, another aspect of mystery crops up and away we go. I encourage this. I also encourage interaction with historians from our sister denominations, which are asking some of the same questions we are. I also encourage you to respond to supposed errors you find in this HISTORY NEWSLETTER. The HN will be a clearing house of thought as I find it published amongst the writers. Not everyone will agree with everything or every date, but please document your findings. I will also include articles on local church history, memoirs of pastors, and photo essays. Out of everything, we will eventually gain a synthesis of Kingdom of God history in America.

Next issue: April/May 1993—We will feature the first part of a major article on Joseph Marsh by Mark Mattison. Hopefully this will answer some questions of the chronology of the development of his thoughts on the Kingdom of God. We will also have a photo essay furnished by J. W. McLain.

Follow-up on Eisenhower: The name listed in *Glad Tidings*, 1893, W. H. Eisenhower, who is not the parent of the President. Mr. Tom Branegan, the genealogist specialist at the Eisenhower Center in Abilene, Kansas, says W. H. Eisenhower is not a close family member—but could be a distant cousin. We will continue to pursue this interesting tidbit.

"Pentecostal" or "charismatic" meetings cannot be construed to be reappearances of the biblical gift of tongues. The basic requirement, a language barrier, does not prevail in these gatherings.

Paul said that tongues would "cease." History confirms the fulfillment of this prediction.<sup>5</sup>

### Did Men Only Preach at Pentecost?

The prophecy of Joel, which Peter quoted at Pentecost, predicted that the power from on high would be poured out upon "all flesh." Both the sons and daughters of Israel would "prophesy."<sup>6</sup>

Yet, the narrative of Acts Two indicates that only men received the gift of tongues or languages that day. "These [men] are not drunken," Peter said.<sup>7</sup>

## languages was in total control of his mental faculties.

In the Greek text the pronoun "these" is masculine plural: "These men." This is the way it is translated in various editions of Scripture such as The Moffatt Bible, The New English Bible, the Revised Standard Version, and also in *The Interlinear New Testament* by Alfred Marshall.<sup>8</sup>

The testimony of the listeners confirms the masculine nature of the preachers at Pentecost. "We do hear *them* speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God."<sup>9</sup> Here both Moffatt and the Montgomery translation of the New Testament have "these men."<sup>10</sup>

Acts 2:1-4 would seem to include women speaking in tongues. But the words "all" and "them" in verse four are both masculine plurals: All the men were filled with power from on high, and began to speak in other languages as the Spirit gave them (the men) utterance.

Women were included in the prayer meetings and prophesying ministry of Acts.<sup>11</sup> But none of these occasions required a woman speaking in tongues. Paul distinguishes between "prophecy" and "tongues."<sup>12</sup>

The "bottom line" in this discussion is the fact that the Scriptures forbade a woman to engage in public speaking.<sup>13</sup> This principle is often overlooked today, but it was

the standard and custom in that day. It is difficult, then, to imagine Mary or Mary Magdalene preaching in Jerusalem with the gift of tongues.<sup>14</sup>

It is possible that during the days of the Book of Acts a woman received a gift of tongues or languages. But it would necessarily have been restricted to the smaller meetings.<sup>15</sup> Again, however, there is no

## The one who received the gift of

instance of this in the New Testament.

The narrative of Acts Two indicates that the gift of tongues was experienced by men. This principle may apply to the entire New Testament, for nowhere do we

means of communicating the Word when there is a language barrier. Paul wishes that they may all have the language gift, but only in order that they may convey the message.

What passes for tongues today can hardly be the language miracle of the book of Acts. The secular word for this phenomenon is "glossolalia," formed from

*glossa*, "tongue," and *laleo*, "to speak." However, the Greek word *laleo* did not necessarily mean to speak sensibly. It was used of the noises which animals make and the sounds of inanimate things, as

read that women spoke in tongues.

### Do Tongues Indicate Superiority?

Does speaking in tongues indicate spiritual superiority? Some in ancient Corinth apparently thought so, hence Paul gave the instructions of 1 Corinthians 12-14.

"I would that ye spake with tongues," he wrote, "but rather that ye prophesied: for greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues."<sup>16</sup>

The Greek word here for "greater" is *meizon*, the comparative form of *mege* which meant "great, important," etc. Just as today, this word was used in different ways: great in regard to size, intensity, rank, amount, etc.<sup>17</sup>

In the context of 1 Corinthians 14:5, *meizon* means "more useful." The one who prophesies is "more useful" or "more helpful" than the one who speaks in tongues. This is the sense in which the word is used in 1 Corinthians 12:31 and 13:13. In 12:31 Paul exhorts his readers to covet the "more useful" gifts. In 13:13 he says that "charity" or "love" is "more useful" than faith or hope.<sup>18</sup>

The one who prophesies is more important or more useful because prophecy is a setting forth of the Word of God. The gift of tongues or languages is only a

well as the speech of men.<sup>19</sup>

Glossolalia has been around for a long time. The *Encyclopedia Britannica*, in its article on tongues, mentions Plato's reference to the enthusiastic ecstasies of the ancient *mantis* or soothsayer. So also the Roman poet Virgil graphically described the ancient prophetess "speaking with tongues." In more modern times, in the Hawaiian Islands, the priest of the god "Oro" revealed the will of the god with shrill cries and violent indistinct sounds. Attending priests duly interpreted all this to the people.<sup>20</sup>

In his interesting book, *Pentecostalism*, the late Pastor William Campbell of New Zealand writes that a form of "speaking in tongues" is found in all primitive religions. He also mentions the fact that Josef Stalin, a ruthless atheist, often passed into a trance and spoke with tongues—but not from God, Mr. Campbell adds!<sup>21</sup>

The evidence at hand indicates that the person who practices glossolalia is either the victim of speech automatism or, in extreme cases, is under the influence of spirit-beings beyond his control.<sup>22</sup>

By way of contrast, the one who received the gift of languages in the apostolic age was in total control of his mental faculties and speech centers. He knew

what he was doing. He understood himself and was not in an ecstasy. This is indicated by careful exmination of the entire text of 1 Corinthians 14, especially such verses as 4, 15, and 32. It is also in keeping with the principle established by our Lord: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with *all thy mind*."<sup>23</sup> In Christ our mind should reach its full capacity, it should not be wafted away.

Unfortunately, however, even in the days of Acts and 1 Corinthians when the genuine miracle of languages was occurring, some people had the idea that it was a sign of spiritual superiority to speak in tongues. This was apparently because of its remarkable nature. Hence Paul found it necessary to resort to a plain statement: "Greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues."

### Should Christians Pray in Tongues?

The gift of tongues was the miraculous ability to speak in a foreign language. Its purpose was to convey God's message to those who spoke that language. This gift, along with the other special gifts of the Acts period,<sup>24</sup> ended with the close of the apostolic age and especially the appeal to Israel nationally.<sup>25</sup>

Yet, we understand, there are those today who make an effort to pray in tongues. This practice must be considered in the light of 1 Corinthians 14:13, "Wherefore let him that speaketh in an unknown tongue pray that he may interpret."

The Greek word for "interpret" is *diermeneuo*. It means "to explain, interpret, translate" or "be able to interpret."<sup>26</sup>

It is interesting that this same word is used in Luke 24:27 where Jesus "expounded" or "explained" to the Emmaus disciples "in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself." That is, He unfolded to them the meaning of what the Scriptures said.<sup>27</sup>

Obviously, then, the one who spoke in tongues or languages was to have the gift of expounding or explaining the meaning of what he had said. Both gifts were to be possessed simultaneously. Interpretation was not simply a matter of translation.

It is quite evident, then, that the gift of tongues was not something intended for

private devotions. One does not need the gift of a foreign language to pray to God. He understands all languages! Nor is the simultaneous gift of interpretation or exposition needed for His benefit. He understands the meaning of what a Christian prays.

Tongues, Paul said, were "a sign . . . to them that believe not."<sup>28</sup> Therefore we should hardly dare to speak in tongues to God! He is not an unbeliever!

Since the gift of tongues ceased long ago,<sup>29</sup> the whole question of whether or not one should pray in tongues is really a dead issue. But since this is often overlooked, some instruction in this area is necessary

### Will the Gift of Tongues Appear Again?

*"It shall come to pass afterward."*  
—Joel 2:28.

On the day of Pentecost the little flock of Jesus' disciples was filled with "Holy Ghost" or power from on high.<sup>30</sup> As a result, they began to speak in other languages and dialects as this new power "gave them utterance" or enabled them "to speak forth." (The Greek word here indicates that they preached like Old Testament prophets!)<sup>31</sup>

Yet, with the close of the apostolic age and especially the witness to Israel, this gift ceased. This was as Paul predicted: "whether there be tongues, they shall cease."<sup>32</sup> The question then may be asked, Will this remarkable gift ever appear again?

In his comments that day at Pentecost, Peter said, "This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel." Then he began to quote Joel: "And it shall come to pass in the last days . . . I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh."<sup>33</sup>

Now let us turn to Joel and read his words: "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh."<sup>34</sup>

The key word in Joel is "afterward." It is our translation of the Hebrew phrase *'achare-ken* which literally means "after so" or "after thus." According to Gesenius' lexicon, it literally means "after that things had so happened."<sup>35</sup>

After certain things had happened or come to pass, God said, He would pour

out His spirit. Now we may ask, after *what* has happened, after *what* has come to pass? We only need to look at the preceding verses in Joel to see what he has been talking about.

In these verses Joel draws a beautiful picture of the Millennial age or, as the Jewish people would say, of the Messianic era.<sup>36</sup> A new era has been born for the land and its people. "The northern army" has been destroyed. The pastures and fields have turned green. "The former rain" or the Messiah has come, and God's ancient people, the Jews ("my people," He says), will never be put to shame again. It is a beautiful picture to which the reader himself must turn.

Here, then, is the answer to our question. In the Messianic age or the Millennium, God will pour out His Spirit upon the entire nation of Israel. After the great events of Joel 2:21-27 have been fulfilled, a spiritual inspiration will descend upon the Jewish people in the land, and they will become the world's spiritual leaders or teachers in the Millennial age.<sup>37</sup>

The apocalyptic judgments which Joel mentions will have taken place—wonders in the heavens, "blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke . . . the great and the terrible day of the LORD." But the restored remnant has called upon the name of Jehovah and been saved, and there is deliverance in Jerusalem.<sup>38</sup>

Peter's quotation in Acts 2:17 must be understood in the light of what Joel has said. Peter said "in the last days." Joel said "afterward." They both refer to the same time, the Messianic era or Millennial age.

When Peter said "in the last days" he was not misquoting Joel, or changing the text. He was speaking exactly as a Jew would speak of the Messianic age. He was using the usual expression for this future time.<sup>39</sup> Both Isaiah and Micah speak of that day as "in the last days."<sup>40</sup>

In the Millennial age, not in this present dispensation in which we live, the Holy Spirit will be poured out upon the restored and regenerated nation of Israel. Pentecost and its promises belong to them. So Peter said to the Jewish pilgrims assembled at Pentecost: "The promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off [the dispersion], even as

many as the Lord our God shall call."<sup>41</sup>

We must remember that the day of Pentecost recorded in Acts Two was a Jewish feast day. A representative number from all the nation was there. In chapter Three, after the healing of the lame man at the gate called "Beautiful," Peter made his great appeal to them in which he said in effect: "Repent, so that the times of refreshing may come from Jehovah, and He may send the Messiah appointed for you, even Jesus."<sup>42</sup>

Had the nation of Israel repented at Peter's call, the prophetic program outlined by Joel and Peter would have continued on uninterrupted. It would have culminated in the return of the Messiah and the establishment of His kingdom. In the four Gospels, the Lord Jesus and His kingdom were offered to Israel. This program was offered to them again during the Acts period, both to those in the land and to those in the dispersion. But since they rejected it again, this wonderful time, including the outpouring of the spirit upon Israel, is postponed until a future Day.<sup>43</sup>

Here, then, is the basic error of the charismatic movement, especially its claim to the gift of tongues. It claims for itself not only that which has been set aside, but also that which is reserved for a future day. It claims for itself something which rightfully belongs to the converted nation of Israel in the age to come.

Here also is the danger implicit in the term "spiritual Israel," an expression not found in Scripture. To some it is an innocuous term of convenience. To others, however, it implies that "the church" is "a new Israel" and has become heir to all the promises given to national Israel.<sup>44</sup>

If we want to use the term "spiritual Israel," let us give it to whom it belongs: not to ourselves as Christians, or to "the church," but to the people of Israel in the age to come. They will be the true spiritual Israel, the new Israel, for as Isaiah has said, "A king shall reign in righteousness," and "The spirit [will] be poured upon us from on high."<sup>45</sup>

It has not entered into our hearts the things which God has prepared for all of us in the age to come.<sup>46</sup> That will include the new nation of Israel carrying out its intended role as the head among the na-

tions and the spiritual teachers for the world.<sup>47</sup> Jewish missionaries, like Paul of old, will have the gift of languages to go out and evangelize the world and teach the nations. That little flock in Acts, which receive the outpouring of the Spirit and the gift of languages, is illustrative of the new nation of Israel in the age to come. <sup>48</sup>

Selected from *Brief Bible Studies*, Fall 1992, Vol. 23, No. 3. Used with kind permission.

<sup>1</sup>E. W. Bullinger, *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible: Explained and Illustrated* (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1898), p. 546.

<sup>2</sup>1 Corinthians 12:30.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. *The Analytical Greek Lexicon [etc.]* (New York: Harper & Brothers, n.d.), p. 313, and other lexicons.

<sup>4</sup>1 Corinthians 14:18.

<sup>5</sup>Cf. Pastor William Campbell, *Pentecostalism, Is It of God, Man, or Satan?* (Auckland, N.Z.: The Churches of Christ, Life and Advent, 1967), pp. 63-70 and *passim*. Cf. also *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 1954, ed., article "Tongues, Gift of" (Chicago: *Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc.*, 1954), XXII, 282-83.

<sup>6</sup>Acts 2:17; Joel 2:23-32.

<sup>7</sup>Acts 2:15.

<sup>8</sup>Alfred Marshall, *The Interlinear Greek-English New Testament* (London: Samuel Bagster and Sons Limited, 1958), p. 467.

<sup>9</sup>Acts 2:11.

<sup>10</sup>Helen Barrett Montgomery, *The New Testament in Modern English* (Philadelphia: The Judson Press, 1924), p. 314.

<sup>11</sup>Acts 1:14; 2:1; 18:26; 21:9; 1 Corinthians 11:5.

<sup>12</sup>1 Corinthians 14:1-5.

<sup>13</sup>1 Corinthians 14:34, 35.

<sup>14</sup>For a discussion of this subject of women speaking in the public assemblies, see Charles Hodge, *An Exposition of the First Epistle to the Corinthians* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1953), pp. 304-05.

<sup>15</sup>1 Corinthians 11:5; 16:19.

<sup>16</sup>1 Corinthians 14:5.

<sup>17</sup>Abbott-Smith, *A Manual Greek Lexicon of the New Testament* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1937), p. 281. *The Analytical Greek Lexicon* (New York: Harper & Brothers, n.d.), p. 260.

<sup>18</sup>Charles Hodge, *op. cit.*, pp. 275-76.

<sup>19</sup>Joseph Henry Thayer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament [etc.]*, corrected ed. (New York: American Book Company, 1889), p. 368.

<sup>20</sup>*Encyclopaedia Britannica, op. cit.*, article "Tongues, Gift of," XXII, 282-83.

<sup>21</sup>Campbell, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

<sup>22</sup>*Encyclopaedia Britannica* (1953 ed.), article "Automatism," II, 798. Cf. Ephesians 6:12-13; 2 Corinthians 11:14.

<sup>23</sup>Matthew 22:37. Cf. Hodge, *op. cit.*, pp. 280-81, 289-90, 302-03.

<sup>24</sup>Mark 16:17, 18.

<sup>25</sup>Acts 28:25-28. Cf. also such passages as 1 Corinthians 13:8; Philippians 2:27; 2 Timothy 4:20.

<sup>26</sup>Cf. G. Abbott-Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 115; *The Analytical Greek Lexicon, op. cit.*, p. 100, and the various lexicons.

<sup>27</sup>Cf. Thayer, *op. cit.*, p. 147.

<sup>28</sup>1 Corinthians 14:22.

<sup>29</sup>1 Corinthians 13:8.

<sup>30</sup>Acts 1:5; 2:4; Luke 24:49.

<sup>31</sup>The word is *apophthegomai*, also used in Acts 2:14 and 26:25. According to Thayer's lexicon it was a word which belonged to dignified and elevated discourse, and was used not only of prophets but also of wise men and philosophers. In the Septuagint it was used for the Hebrew word *naba'*, "to prophesy." Cf. Thayer, *op. cit.*, p. 69. Abbott-Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 56.

<sup>32</sup>1 Corinthians 13:8.

<sup>33</sup>Acts 2:1, 2.

<sup>34</sup>Joel 2:28; 3:1 in Hebrew.

<sup>35</sup>*Gesenius' Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon [etc.]*, transl by S. P. Tregelles, (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1950), p. 33. The Septuagint text of Joel, literally translated, says, "And it will be after these things."

<sup>36</sup>Joel 2:18-27.

<sup>37</sup>Joel 2:28, 29.

<sup>38</sup>Joel 2:30-32.

<sup>39</sup>Rabbi Dr. S. M. Lehrman, *Joel, Introduction and Commentary, in The Twelve Prophets [etc.]*, The Rev. Dr. A. Cohen, ed. (London: The Soncino Press, 1961), p. 72.

<sup>40</sup>Isaiah 2:2; Micah 4:1.

<sup>41</sup>Acts 2:39.

<sup>42</sup>Acts 3:19.

<sup>43</sup>In general terms, Acts 1-12 tells of the ministry of the twelve in the land, and Acts 13-28 tells of the ministry of Paul to the dispersion. When Paul arrived in Rome, he did not arrange for a Bible conference of Christians at his lodging. Rather, he arranged a meeting with the Jews and expounded and testified to them of the kingdom of God and of Jesus as the Messiah. When they could not agree among themselves, the Book of Acts comes to an end.

<sup>44</sup>Since the early centuries of the Christian era, "mainstream" Christianity has believed that the Christian church is the fulfillment of the Kingdom promises, and that the glorious predictions of the prophets concerning Israel have had, and will have in the main, their fulfillment in the church. So in effect writes Oswald T. Allis in *Prophecy and the Church* (Philadelphia: The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1945), p. v in the Preface. (Yes, as a student in seminary I read this entire work!) This position, I believe, is the ultimate outcome and danger in even accepting the "spiritual Israel" idea. It has seemed to me, during my years in Christian work, that the "spiritual Israel" concept also can lead to a negative attitude toward the State of Israel. "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump" (Gal. 5:9).

<sup>45</sup>Isaiah 32:1, 15.

<sup>46</sup>Isaiah 64:4; 1 Corinthians 2:9.

<sup>47</sup>Deuteronomy 28:13; 32:43; 33:26-29.

# The Lord's Supper

by Pastor Rex Cain  
Bedford, OH

**T**HE ONLY PERSONAL request Jesus ever made of His disciples was in connection with their observance of His Memorial Supper, which He instituted the night before His crucifixion. He gave many instructions with regard to His worldwide program of spreading the gospel, of making Him known to every creature. But the only thing He ever asked His disciples to do for Him personally was to observe the Memorial Supper: "This do," He said, "in remembrance of me."

Hence, through all the years since then, the Lord's Supper has been a central feature in the worship services of our churches. There is a beauty and solemnity about it, when properly observed, that we do not find in any other form of worship. As we hold in our hands the bread and the fruit of the vine, symbols of the body and blood of Jesus, we feel more deeply the marvels of His love. For it was for our sins He suffered the death penalty of the cruel cross—His body was broken and His blood was freely shed.

Surely no true disciple of Christ should absent himself from the table of the Lord. This is his unspeakable privilege of proclaiming the Lord's death for our sins to a world that is lost in sin. This is his opportunity of witnessing to his faith in the atoning work of Christ on the cross and in His triumphant return to this earth to claim His own. What a privilege! "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come" (1 Cor. 11:26).

Jesus said further: "Drink of it, all of you [my disciples]; for this is my blood of the covenant which is poured out for many FOR THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS. I tell you, I shall not drink again of this fruit of the vine until THAT DAY when I drink it new with you IN MY FATHER'S KINGDOM" (Matt. 26:27-29). <sup>RH</sup>



---

# The Days of Reckoning

by Pastor J. Arlen Marsh (retired)  
Cleveland, OH

Despite the constant picture of death and destruction following upon sin, we give little heed to what the Bible has to say.

**N**OW THE DAYS of reckoning have come," wrote Hosea (9:7); according to the Jerusalem Bible, "The days of reprisals are here."

While it is true that Hosea, whose predictions were anything but minor, was referring directly to times not long after the ones in which he lived (roughly 750 to 720 B.C.), it is just as true that his ideas apply to our own period as well.

"'The prophet is mad,' Israel protests, 'this inspired fellow is raving.' Ah yes, but only because your iniquity is so great, your apostasy so grave."

Hosea's mention of ancient Israel's reaction to his warnings of disaster to come is made much more bluntly by the King James Version: "The prophet is a fool." In whatever translation one prefers, the language foreshadows Jesus' condemnation of the Pharisees seven centuries later. "Ye build the sepulchres of the prophets, and your fathers killed them." (Luke 11:47.) Jesus went on to add that the religious leaders of his day actually supported the ancient reaction to prophetic admonitions.

After briefly considering the events which had surrounded Israel during its beginnings, Paul declared that "all this happened to them as a warning, and it was written down to be a lesson for us." (1 Cor. 10:11, Jerusalem Bible.) This indeed should be the purpose behind study of all history: not to gather facts alone, but to amend conduct in accordance with the mistakes and triumphs of the past.

Unfortunately, we fail in our study. Despite the constant picture of death and destruction following upon sin, we give little heed to what the Bible (or secular history, for that matter) has to say.

In 1948, the *Journal* of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences published a thorough study of religion in America. It noted that those Christian denominations which showed the fastest growth were those which insisted on two facts: the world is growing more sinful all the time, and the coming of Christ is "near, even at the doors" (Matt. 24:33). These two convictions drove believers into continuous effort to convert others—to "rescue" them from the consequences of their evil ways.

Is this still true almost a half century later?

Rural churches have closed in droves. Membership in the Church of God has remained static, if we view it through traditional rose-colored glasses. Other groups, except for some notable independents, have experienced substantial losses and simultaneously have loosened doctrinal and moral standards.

Homosexuality and lesbianism have become the accepted norm in many denominations, and it is considered gauche to question the activities of sexual deviates. This, despite the biblical injunctions in both Old and New Testaments to avoid such deviations as nothing less than sin! (1 Cor. 6:9.) Even the groups described fulsomely in the *AAAS Journal* are, in the main, having difficulty coping with the efforts of the out-of-the-closet deviates—and have made newspaper headlines accordingly.

"Living together" in place of marriage is so common that most people in most communities, urban and rural, no longer raise eyebrows over it. Single parents—in some cities, they preside over six to eight of every ten families—are the bane of public welfare organizations; and a high percentage of them represent unmarried mothers. (A girl in a high school in Cleveland recently took time

off for another birth, after having three abortions. She is now seventeen.) Jails, crowded beyond measure from the flood of drug abusers, sometimes refuse to take more prisoners.

The world as a whole is in turmoil, as

Jesus suggested it would be. Luke recorded Jesus' remarks in Luke 21; Matthew, in Matthew 24. Students of the Bible who once named the Sultan of Turkey as the Antichrist, who once named Hitler or Stalin as the Antichrist, have

generated a great deal of laughter as empires and the powers of Communism and Nazism have decayed. Africa, Asia, Central and South America are torn by endless revolutions. The European Eco-  
(Continued on page 29)

## BIBLE STUDY

# Territorial Domain of the Kingdom of God

by Pastor Delbert Rankin  
Ladora, IA

**C**HURCH MEMBERS are heirs of the promised Kingdom (Jas. 2:5). Now an heir remains an heir apparent until the time appointed of the father, having obtained only the guarantee of receiving his inheritance. Upon entering into the inheritance, the heir becomes an inheritor. For the people of God their Kingdom inheritance is received *after* Jesus comes and becomes King (Matt. 25:31-34).

For the time being, followers of Christ are instructed to pray to the Father—"Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven" (Matt. 6:9, 10)—and preach to the world concerning the Kingdom (e.g., Acts 28:23, 31).

The day is coming when present domains of kings and rulers will become the proclaimed possession of God and His Son Jesus. "And the SEVENTH Angel sounded his Trumpet; and there were loud Voices in HEAVEN, saying, "The KINGDOM of the world has become our LORD'S and his CHRIST'S, and he shall reign for the AGES of the AGES" (Rev. 11:15, Emphatic Diaglott).

Christ will rule Israel and possess the Gentiles to "the uttermost parts of the earth" (Luke 1:31-33; Psalm 2:2, 6, 8). His rule shall be "from sea even to sea,

and from the river even to the ends of the earth" (Zech. 9:10). Study and compare the Messianic Seventy-second Psalm. The Kingdom which it foretells will involve "all nations" and "the whole earth."

To Abraham was promised land (Gen. 12:1), specifically the Middle East "from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates" (Gen. 15:18ff.) and the territory "northward . . . southward . . . eastward, and westward" (Gen. 13:14-17). Abraham, whose faith we are, stood as an heir, indeed of the world (Rom. 4:13, 16; Gal. 3:16, 27, 29). This promise has not yet been fulfilled (Acts 7:5). He and the faithful are asleep, waiting for future fulfillment through resurrection (Heb. 11:13-16, 35, 39, 40). Some day "Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets" will be "in the kingdom of God" and "they [the faithful] shall come from the east . . . the west . . . the north, and . . . the south, and shall sit down [with them] in the kingdom of God" (Luke 13:28, 29).

These references, and the following ones, show the location of the territory of God's promised Kingdom.

Isaiah 45:18—The earth was formed to be inhabited (cf. Psalm 115:16; Acts 17:26).

Proverbs 10:30; 11:31—The righteous

are never removed, are rewarded in the earth.

Matthew 5:5—The meek shall inherit the earth (Psalm 37:3-7, 9, 11, 22, 29, 34, 39, 40; Isaiah 60:21).

Isaiah 35; 51:11; 55:12, 13; 60; 61:3-11; 62; 65:17-25; etc. Restitution of righteousness and the land is forecast.

Daniel 2:44—God will set up a Kingdom. It will consume all nations and stand forever.

Daniel 7:26, 27—Greatness of the Kingdom under the whole heaven is given to the saints.

Amos 9:11-15; Isaiah 11:4-16—Israel is restored and rebuilt.

Habakkuk 2:14—The earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord.

Matthew 5:35; Isaiah 66:1 60:13; 51:1-3—God's footstool, THE EARTH, is to be beautified like Eden.

Zechariah 14:9; Revelation 5:9, 10—And the Lord shall be king over all the earth, the saints participating therein.

2 Peter 3:13—"We, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

A lot of territory has been covered and the groundwork laid for the understanding from the Scriptures that the promised Kingdom is the coming Kingdom of God on earth! ❧

*The tusks that clashed in mighty brawls  
Of mastodons, are billiard balls,  
The sword of Charlemagne the Just  
Is ferric oxide known as rust.  
The grizzly bear whose potent hug  
Was feared by all, is now a rug.  
Great Caesar's bust is on the shelf,  
And I don't feel so well myself!*

**T**HE PRECEDING POEM by Arthur Guiterman in 1930, "On the Vanity of Earthly Greatness," bears similar thought to King Solomon's words in Ecclesiastes written three thousand years ago. As the rich and famous Solomon reflected upon his wisdom, wealth, and wives, he ironically concluded, "Vanity of vanities, said the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all is vanity" (Eccl. 1:2). Guiterman's reference to vanity echoes the futility of earthly greatness represented by mastodons, swords, griz-

lasting value such as the earth (Eccl. 1:4) and time (Eccl. 3:1-8). And although it is true that houses, vineyards, gardens, and priceless treasures have been torn apart, burned down, dug up, and taken away, the earth has never ceased to remain filled with them. As for the animals, objects, and kings of the past, we at least have lasting mementos which will never fade from human minds. Billiard balls, swords, bear rugs, and busts are like pictures: they provide immortal images depicting greatness in past eras.

Lasting greatness is also seen in the biblical concept of God and time. Divinely inspired writers of sacred Scripture have recorded the permanency of the earth, life after death at resurrection time, God's eternal nature, and the everlasting age to come. Solomon's father, David, declared, it was God "who laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed forever" (Psa. 104:5). In Genesis 8:22, God promised to Noah after the great flood that the seasons "shall not cease."

Throughout the Bible, immortality is promised to those who are faithful to God, giving believers hope that has been kept alive from one generation to the next (1 Pet. 1:3, 4; Job

# Beyond the Vanity of Earthly Greatness

*by Michael P. Brown,  
Columbia Station, OH*

zlies, and renowned men like Caesar since they have all come and gone.

The words of both the poet and the king are evidence that they are merely looking at one side of the proverbial coin. And what do they see? Solomon's keen observation is that earthly pleasure like houses, vineyards, gardens, and priceless treasures fall short of providing lasting happiness in this temporary life (Eccl. 2:1-11). Likewise, Guiterman's view is that tusks become billard balls, great Charlemagne's sword has turned to rust, the ferocious grizzly bear is now a rug, and nothing is left of mighty Caesar but his bust on a shelf.

So much for greatness when all it produces is entertainment for human folly, a rusty ornament on a wall, an object to be trodden under human feet, and a conversation piece that gathers dust on a shelf—not to mention the fact that when you die, "You can't take it with you!" Writing of these things, Guiterman adds, "And I don't feel so well myself!"

But lest we sound too pessimistic, there is another side of the coin. The same Solomon who said, "All is vanity," also spoke of some things with

19:26; Psa. 17:15; 1 John 5:11; 1 Cor. 15:51-55). Both God and His Word are described as "everlasting" and "eternal," indicating that He has existed forever as much in the past as He will exist forever in the future (Psa. 90:1, 2; Isa. 40:8; 57:15; 1 Tim. 1:17; Rev. 21:6). The Bible also predicts an eternal age on the earth where there will be perfect justice, beauty, and peace forevermore (2 Pet. 3:13; Micah 4:3-5; Isa. 9:7; 35:1-10).

Beyond the vanity of earthly greatness, there is much to value for a long time to come as the following poem I have written explains:

*The earth with objects rich and rare  
And land and sea, are always there.  
Eternal life beyond these tears  
Will last and last for years and years.  
The Father of the world and sky,  
Was never born and will not die.  
So time survives the wound-up clock  
Past constant change, and each tick-tock.*

# Israel and the Church— Two Separate Groups

by Hollis Partlowe

**T**HE HISTORIC POSITION of the Church of God of the Abrahamic Faith is that Israel and the church are two separate entities. It is well that our founding fathers took this position in opposition to most other conditionalist groups, because it is based squarely on the Scriptures.

Our General Conference Statement of Faith in part reads as follows:

“G. The Church of God: We believe that the Church of God is the Scriptural name for that body of people who have been called out from among all nations through obedience to the gospel plan of salvation. Christ is the Head of the church; and the nature, work, and government of the church are set forth in the New Testament.”

“I. Israel: We believe that ‘Israel’ is the name of the literal descendants of Abraham through Jacob. As God’s chosen nation, Israel was given the land of Palestine, but because of disobedience they were scattered throughout the world. In accordance with God’s covenant with them, they will be restored to Palestine as the head of the nations in the kingdom of God.”

Most of our local churches have accepted the Conference Statement of Faith as a part of their constitutions and rightly so. We have agreed on the things “commonly believed among us.” Our motto is, “Doing together what we cannot do alone.”

When the Bible writers use the word “Israel,” they refer to the physical descendants of Abraham through his grandson Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel. The church is a different group. Israel began with Abraham. The church

began at Pentecost. Even from a casual reading of the Bible, it should be obvious that a new era was launched in Acts 2. Israel was being set aside temporarily and the Kingdom of God would be postponed till the end of the times of the Gentiles (Luke 21:24). In the meantime, there would be a spirit-directed testimony of Christ crucified, risen, and coming again to all peoples of earth (Acts 1:8; Matt. 28:19, 20). All who come to Christ can now become a part of the church (*ekklesia*), a brand new entity made up of Jews and Gentiles.

There is no difference between the two in this dispensation (Rom. 10:12, 13).

“For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks [Gentiles], whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit” (1 Cor. 12:13, NASB).

We never read of this work in the Old Testament. The baptism of the Spirit is a New Testament teaching. God takes both believing Jews and Gentiles and unites them into one body of which Christ is the head (Col. 1:18). This is a brand new family in which:

“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus” (Gal. 3:28; cf. Col. 3:11).

This revelation is a “mystery, which was kept secret since the world began” (Rom. 16:25b). The church is not in view in the Old Testament. It was a secret hidden then and not revealed until the time of the apostles. Paul speaks of the dispensa-

tion or administration of God's grace, "the mystery of Christ," the church (Eph. 3:2-4).

"Which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; that the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel: whereof I was made a minister. . . . That I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; and to make all men see what is the fellowship [dispensation or administration] of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God" (Eph. 3:5-9).

Again in Colossians, Paul focuses on Christ's body, the church, "Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints" (1:26). The church age is a parenthetical period between the two advents of Christ, hardly noticed by Old Testament writers.

The word "mystery" in the New Testament means a new revelation, something not revealed in former ages. The aforementioned passages show that Paul went to great lengths to reveal that the church—Jew and Gentile baptized into one body—did not exist in the Old Testament but is a New Testament entity, the body of Christ, the bride of Christ, while Israel is God's wife (Jer. 31:32; Isa. 54:5). It seems evident that Israel and the church are two separate groups. At the same time, both are God's people and one would expect the same or similar terminology to be used of both.

<i>Israel in Old Testament</i>	<i>Church in New Testament</i>
God's elect	God's elect
God's covenant people	God's covenant people
Kings and priests —Ex. 19:6	Royal priesthood —1 Pet. 2:9
God's wife—Isa. 54:5; Jer. 31:32	Christ's bride —2 Cor. 11:2
Passover instituted —Ex. 12	Christ, our passover —1 Cor. 5:7
God's firstborn —Ex. 4:22, 23	Jesus, God's only begotten—John 3:16
Saints	Saints

God is the "I AM" in the Old Testament (Ex. 3:14). Christ is the "I am" in the New Testament (John 14:6; 11:25, etc.). None of us would suggest that they are the same or even equal. John the Baptist is called Elijah because he came in the spirit and power of Elijah, but none of us would suggest that they are the same person (Mark 9:11-13). Israel and the church are just as separate and distinct as Elijah and John the Baptist, although they have many similarities and the same phraseology is used of both.

## new patch on an old garment, but a

At His first coming, Jesus didn't come to the church. There was no church then. He came to His own and His own (Israel) received Him not (John 1:11). After that God turned to the nations to take out from among them a people for His name—the church (Acts 15:14). Jesus said, "I will build my church" (Matt. 16:18). Jesus spoke of the church as being then future.

### The Sabbath

The Sabbath was given to Israel to commemorate her deliverance from Egyptian bondage (Deut. 5:15), but it does not apply to us.

"Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever" (Ex. 31:16, 17).

If we are Israel, should we not keep the Sabbath? The church is not Israel but a new family. Jesus indicated that He did not come to patch up Judaism and make it work in the church age by His illustration of a new patch on an old garment (Mark 2:21-28). Christianity is not a new patch on an old garment, but a brand new garment.

The Sabbath is Saturday. It never was Sunday and no one has ever changed it. The Sabbath was a "sign" between God and Israel, while Christians worship on

Sunday in commemoration of Christ's resurrection to immortality. The Sabbath keeper's biggest stumblingstone is mixing Christianity with Judaism, trying to

## Christianity is not a

make the church Israel and justify Sabbath keeping. Christianity is not Judaism.

The promises of Israel are a matter of national position and could not be ful-

filled in the church which is called out of all nations where salvation is on an individual basis. When the Bible writers use the word "Israel," they refer to the physical descendants of Abraham through his

## brand new garment.

grandson Jacob—whose name was changed to Israel.

### The Seed of Abraham

Abraham was not a Jew. He was a Chaldean (Gen. 11:31). God called him out of heathenism and idolatry and started His worldwide plan of evangelism (12:1-3). His physical descendants through Jacob became known as Israel. Abraham has other descendants: the Arabs through Ishmael; Christ through Mary; the church through Christ (Gal. 3:16, 29).

"The people of Israel were chosen of God to be his people. The church, the called-out ones, were chosen in Jesus to be saints, the 'body' over which Jesus is the head, the bride. . . . Any Israelite who accepts Jesus in this age will become one with the Gentiles in the 'body.'"<sup>1</sup>

### The Three Groups of Mankind

All of mankind is divided into three groups—the Jews, the Gentiles, and the Church of God (1 Cor. 10:32). God has a program for each. In studying the Bible,

we have to determine which group is in view in any given passage. Then, too, we must determine who is speaking, to whom he is speaking, etc.

### Two Views to Avoid

**Amillennialism:** This view sees the prophecies of Israel's future and the millennium fulfilled in the church today. Obviously, this conclusion is reached by spiritualizing Scripture which consistently literal expositors avoid.

**Covenant Theology:** Covenant Theology attempts to develop the Bible's philosophy of history on the basis of covenants. They see the total history of mankind covered by the covenants. Covenant Theologians disagree among themselves concerning the number of these covenants. Some say there are two: the covenant of works and the covenant of grace. Others say there are three: the covenant of redemption, the covenant of works, and the covenant of grace. Those who propose only two covenants combine the covenant of redemption and the covenant of grace.<sup>2</sup>

To make a long story short, Covenant Theologians see the church in the Old Testament and the New Testament as a further development of it. They make no distinction between Israel and the church and are antidispenational. They just blur the two into one program, which can be really confusing.

Seeing Israel and the church as two separate groups with two separate programs is based on consistently literal interpretation. Literal interpretation means to explain the original sense of the Bible according to the normal and customary usages of its language. This includes parables, metaphors, similes, taunts, hyperbolies, poetic descriptions, etc. When Isaiah refers to Israel as Sodom and Gomorrah, he is saying that Israel's character is like those wicked cities. (Isa. 1:10-15.) We don't misunderstand the meaning. In place of saying "literal interpretation," perhaps we should just say normal interpretation.

*"Respect the Text:* It is important to respect the Bible's every word. One of the most disturbing examples of disregard for the words of the Bible is seen in

the popular notion that 'Israel' and 'the church' are synonymous terms. To assume that the Old Testament means the church when it speaks of Israel, or that the church is Israel under a different name in the New Testament, is to bring confusion to Bible study."

*"Watch the context:* Another principle of Bible study, often neglected, is the necessity for observing the context in which a verse appears. Miles Coverdale, who prepared a translation of the Bible in 1536, said, 'It shall greatly help ye to understand Scripture if thou mark not only what is spoken or written, but of whom, and to whom, with what words, at what time, where, to what intent, with what circumstances, considering what goeth before and what followeth.'<sup>3</sup>

In comparing Covenant Theology with Dispensational Theology, Showers wrote: "First, the different dispensations are different ways of God's administering His rule over the world. They are not different ways of salvation. Throughout history God has employed several dispensations but only one way of salvation. Salvation has always been by the grace of God through faith in the Word of God, and God has based salvation on the work of Jesus Christ.

"Second, a dispensation is not an age of history, even though a dispensation may cover the same period as an age. A dispensation is a particular way of God's administering His rule, but an age is a particular period of time.

"Third, a dispensation may involve a particular way of God's administering His rule over all mankind, or over only one segment of mankind. For example, the Dispensation of Human Government was over all of mankind, but the Dispensation of the Mosaic Law was over only the nation of Israel."<sup>4</sup>

"In contrast with the Covenant Theology view, Dispensational Theology declares that the church did not begin until the Day of Pentecost of Acts 2. Thus the church did not exist in Old Testament times. Rademacher wrote that 'the church did not come into functional existence until the day of Pentecost.' Although the church was an essential part of God's plan for history which He determined in

eternity past, God did not put that part of His plan into effect until ten days after His Son ascended from earth to Heaven."<sup>5</sup>

The "Gentiles would be accepted by God without their becoming Jews first. . . . This group (the church) became separate from Israel and Gentiles alike (1 Cor. 10:32). Not a new Israel but a NEW FAMILY was what God had prophesied."<sup>6</sup>(D).

"There is no reason for Christians to be jealous of Israel's privileges, for we have been given an even greater hope than they—to be made immortal, partakers of the divine nature (2 Pet. 1:4), when Christ returns. . . . God is still calling out from both Israel and the Gentiles 'a people for His name' " (Acts 15:14).<sup>7</sup>

The church is not Israel and the church's program should not be confused with Israel's. To call the church "spiritual Israel" or "the new Israel" is based on spiritualizing Scripture. To ignore or deny that the church (*ekklesia*) and Israel are two distinct groups with two separate programs is a major blunder in Bible interpretation. <sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Burnett, Francis, third in a three-part series, "The Israel of God," THE RESTITUTION HERALD, April-May, June-July, August-September, 1990.

<sup>2</sup>Showers, Renald, There Really Is a Difference (p. 8), The Friends of Israel, P. O. Box 908, Bellmawr, NJ 08031.

<sup>3</sup>Coder, Maxwell, The Final Chapter (p. 243), Tyndale House Pub., Wheaton, Illinois.

<sup>4</sup>Showers, pp. 31-32.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., pp. 169-170.

<sup>6</sup>(A) Rankin, Dartell, Delbert, Russell, Series in THE RESTITUTION HERALD: "Mercy on Whom I Will Have Mercy" (A Look at Romans 9-11), April-May, 1991.

(B) "Peace and Mercy" (A Textual Study of Galatians), August-September, 1991.

(C) "Peace in Unity" (A Textual Study of Ephesians), April-May, 1992.

(D) "The Peter Principle" (Peter's Concept of the Family of God—An Exposition of 1 Peter 2:9, 10), June-July, 1992.

<sup>7</sup>Wachtel, William, "Zechariah's Vision of Israel at the End of the Age," THE RESTITUTION HERALD, February-March, 1992.

---

# Shipwreck

by Nancy Rankin  
Ladora, IA

**C**HRIST WAS ABLE to change and still changes the lives of disciples. The Lord converted and transformed Paul and worked in Paul's life very step of the way. It was through Paul's proclamation, "Christ liveth in me" (Gal. 2:20), that caused Paul to be such a strong leader in the early church.

Paul went on many trips that involved transportation by ship. He mentions in 2 Corinthians 11:25 that he suffered shipwreck three times. He knew the physical sufferings that went with such tragic experiences. One harrowing experience of shipwreck involving 276 souls is recorded in Acts 27.

Paul admonishes Timothy: "This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare; holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made a shipwreck: of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme" (1 Tim. 1:18-20). In this text Paul is saying that there are those who have tragically done away with their faith and good conscience, thus becoming

"shipwrecked." By being shipwrecked, they drown or are made to sink spiritually. Hymenaeus and Alexander blasphemed. And Hymenaeus also promoted a false doctrine, saying the resurrection was already past. This even caused the faith of some others to capsize. (See 2 Tim. 2:15-18.)

"But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses" (1 Tim. 6:9-12).

What are our priorities in life? Do we sink into worldly things or do we seek that which leads us to eternal life? Are we "fighting the good fight of faith"? How important it is to rightly understand and apply the Word of Truth!

—*Search Light Newsletter*, Iowa State Conference.

---

## Prerequisite to Teaching—A Proper Attitude

(Continued from page 9)

Scripture completely to disagree that His return is our "blessed hope" (Titus 2:13).

I suggest four reasons for emphasizing the second coming as a beginning place of study:

1. That is where Jesus started. He continually spoke of the coming Kingdom of God, the time when He would put all authority and power under His feet.

2. People are interested in their fu-

ture. They want to know what is ahead for them. What their hope is.

3. The longer your students agree with you, the more credibility you will gain as a Bible teacher and the more they will trust you.

4. Relationships are developed through fellowshiping in the group. Often they will continue in the study because they want to continue the friendships. Through the long-term involvement you are able to expose them to major Bible truths.

### Summary

Show by your example that you love God and are serious about His Word. Be a true servant to the people God has sent. Show them love and be glad they are seeking to understand His Word. They are not the enemy, they are good people desiring to learn; let them have the freedom to learn at their own pace. Don't try to correct every wrong thought. Begin where Jesus began and build on that foundation. **RH**

# Success? Happiness?

by Pastor E. Richard Smith  
Pelzer, SC



**EDITOR'S NOTE:** E. Richard Smith graduated from Oregon Bible College (now Atlanta Bible College) in 1942. He has pastored churches in Michigan, Missouri, Illinois, Ohio, Indiana, Louisiana, and South Carolina. After 47 years of pastoral ministry he "retired" in 1989. Currently he serves as Associate Pastor of the Bethel Church of God, Pelzer, SC. Articles by him will appear regularly in THE HERALD.

**A**N OUTSTANDING CITIZEN has died at age 47. The obituary names his surviving wife, children, and other relatives.

Then follows a listing of business achievements, service organizations, his church affiliation, and the time of memorial services.

Highly successful, respected, and loved—yet we ask, "Did he really live?"

We live in a "seeking" world, where the desire for material things and achievements becomes the driving force. Happiness seems to be dependent upon that which we possess, where we live, and the social level where we find ourselves. Our wants and desires soon become our necessities, so we drive ourselves to the point of despair trying to attain our so-called dreams.

I found this clipping recently, attributed to a person named Spencer:

What comes from man will never last,  
It's here today, tomorrow past;  
What comes from God will always be  
The same for all eternity!

The purpose of life is to find a degree of happiness within the time frame of our mortal existence and to prepare ourselves and those we meet day by day, for life everlasting in the Kingdom of God.

Our main business in this world is to secure an interest in the next—that new world—the Kingdom of God—which is to become a reality when Jesus returns to this earth.

I personally do not feel that to gain some of this world's goods is wrong; nor do I feel that to be poverty-stricken is a sign that a person belongs to God. An empty purse or a zero bank balance is upsetting.

However, it is through the difficult experiences that we gain a greater appreciation of God's providence.

I recall a story told by the late S. J. Lindsay. He and his wife were walking to church for a mid-week Bible Study. As they walked, their conversation dealt with the financial dilemma in which they found themselves.

"How much longer can we remain here, pastoring this church? Let's pick up the mail at the post office."

In the mailbox was one letter—from a friend in another state. The simple note said something like this: "Knowing that God's people in the church do not always provide the money needed by God's servants in the ministry, enclosed find five dollars. God bless you." Pastor Lindsay read the note to his wife. She simply said, "Sam, we're staying in the ministry."

Often, when we face questions about our future, if we do not carefully seek the direction of the Lord, if we are not tuned in to the leading of His Spirit, we stray far from the real purpose of our lives.

Many years ago I met an elderly couple who were successful farmers. I helped them return from a homecoming in the community where they were born and at the church where they married.

After their children were born, they had decided to move to where farmland was better—to develop a better life for the family.

In their quest for the good life they grew away from God and the church.

We drove along the highway to the church reunion. They told me of those 50 years of the good life. Almost in unison they said that their greatest regret was that their children were not brought up to know God, Jesus Christ, and to experience the joy of service in the church.

I greatly enjoy Bible reading. The Psalms and Proverbs are favorites because they deal with the practical messages—praise God, serve God, God leads, God rewards. Practical instruction is given about ways to enjoy life and avoid evil. Psalm



119:11, 105—"Thy word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against you. . . Thy word is a lamp unto my feet." Proverbs 22:1—"A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold."

Jesus said, "What shall it profit a person, though he gain the whole world and lose eternal life?"

In our search for the good life of this age, we often find ourselves in the description of this little poem:

We squander health in search of  
wealth  
And then with might and main  
We spend our wealth to regain our  
health  
So we can do it all over again.

We are now in the year 1993. We do not know that which it will bring. God's people will find real joy, and the abundance of the riches that are in Christ Jesus, when they commit their lives completely to Him. Corrie ten Boom wrote:

Look around and be distressed  
Look within and be depressed  
Look at Jesus and be at rest.

There is a peace that passes all understanding through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Life without faith, hope, and the promise of life everlasting in the Kingdom of God is not a life of happiness or success. I have never met a person who said as he lay dying, "I'm sorry that I served the Lord," but I have heard many times, "I've begged God for forgiveness. I'm sorry that I did not serve Him."

Whether we serve the Lord in a small church or large; whether in a seemingly important position or not, whether in a church or in the secular world, matters little. The question is—Are we doing it as unto the Lord?

Using the talents God has given us, we may fulfill the pattern of successful service as Jesus describes it in Matthew 25. Give the cup of water, the clothing, the housing, the caring, and you shall enjoy God's blessing now, and life to come in the Kingdom.

Jesus never built a mega-church in Jerusalem. He brought together outcasts who learned from Him the meaning of love.

After His crucifixion, His denouncers and slayers thought they had won. The followers of Jesus, disillusioned, said, "We trusted that He would have redeemed Israel."

Resurrection morning proved that the one who seemingly failed, ending His ministry in death, was successful beyond the imagination of any man. Said the angel to the women at Jesus' tomb, "He is not here: for he is risen" (Matt. 28:6).

Today, whether our vocation is ecclesiastical or secular, we will be happy if the statement of Psalm 17:15 illuminates our lives. "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness."

Dr. John Wood Robison wrote the following, based on Ecclesiastes 5:10. I thought it appropriate to the closing of this article.

#### What I Gave, I Have

It is said that once a wealthy but miserly man went to a rabbi to find out why life had no meaning for him.

The rabbi led him to a window. "Look out there and tell me what you see," he said. "People," answered the man. The

rabbi then led him to a mirror. "What do you see now?" he asked. "I see myself," replied the man.

The rabbi said, "Behold, in the window is glass and in the mirror is glass. But the glass of the mirror is covered with a little silver and no sooner is a little silver added than you stop seeing others and see only yourself."

This is not true of all people, but it is true of many. In a world of so many material comforts, it is a temptation to become selfish and to put material things above spiritual. A little "silver" can sometimes do strange things to people.

It is important for each one of us to assume our responsibility for helping the society of which we are a part. A person who thinks only of himself does not really live at all—he only exists. Our reason for living is not to accumulate all that we can and hoard it, but to share, to serve, to help.

<i>What I spent,</i>	<i>I had;</i>
<i>What I saved,</i>	<i>I lost;</i>
<i>What I gave,</i>	<i>I have.</i>

## The Days of Reckoning

(Continued from page 22)

conomic Community seems unable to reach full agreement among its members; Yugoslavia's remnants fight among themselves in a three-way battle of Roman and Orthodox Catholics and Muslims. Canada and the United States try to soothe ruffled racial feelings, black, white, red, yellow.

Above all this, however, comes the nation of Israel, created anew in 1948 and maintained since by a series of wars, external and internal. Britain, ignoring the Balfour Declaration of World War I which "guaranteed" Jews a homeland in Palestine, fought every effort of Zionists to establish that homeland; the British Empire fell to pieces. One of the most powerful combinations of Arab-Muslim nations ever assembled was unable to

prevent Israel's rise or its consequent maintenance.

"Now the days of reckoning have come."

Yet somehow many of us, even in the Church of God, have ignored all these predictive evidences of the return of Christ to pronounce judgment, good and bad, on all mankind.

One minister observed, late in 1992, that he had visited "dozens" of Church of God services in many parts of North America and had not heard Israel mentioned once. The sermons and lessons which, a few decades ago, aimed often at the target of current events and the consequences of heedlessness rarely appear.

Perhaps the winds of change need to appear. R-H

More

Blessed

by Susan Lapp  
Brooklyn Park, MN



**R**YAN LOOKED UP from his homework at the kitchen table and stared into space, deep in thought. "What are you thinking about, Son?" asked his father, laying his screw driver on the counter. The new can opener he had installed for mother hung neatly from the cupboard near the sink.

"Well, I was thinking about this new boy at our school. His name is Tim, and he wears these funny-looking plastic and metal things on his legs," answered Ryan, his brow puckered into a frown.

"You mean leg braces?" asked father.

"Yeah, I guess that's what they are. They make a noise when he walks and he uses these funny-looking crutches—metal ones, not like the wooden ones Uncle Dave used when he broke his leg skiing last winter," said Ryan. Father listened quietly as he picked up his tools. "I feel kind of sorry for Tim, but I don't know what to say to him. I've never met anyone like him before."

Father set his toolbox down on the table and pulled up a chair. "You know, Ryan, many people you already know have some sort of weakness that requires help of one kind or another."

"Huh? What do you mean, Dad?" asked Ryan.

"Well, take Grandma Peterson, for instance; she uses a walker to help her get around ever since she broke her hip. And your cousin, Sara Jean, wears a hearing aid since she was real sick and lost some of the hearing in one ear," answered father.

"Hmmm, I guess I forgot about Grandma and Sara Jean," said Ryan thoughtfully, as he pushed his glasses back up his nose.

"And what about you?" asked father, smiling gently and raising his eyebrows.

"What about me, Dad?" asked the puzzled son.

"Well, your eyes needed some help so you could see well, so we bought you those glasses last fall. Remember how you had to squint to see the blackboard at school? Your glasses do for you what Tim's leg braces and crutches do for him. We all have some kind of weaknesses, and we all need the love and acceptance and help of others," said father.

"That's true, Dad. It must be especially hard for Tim to feel new and different and not to have any friends yet," said Ryan thoughtfully.

"Remember how hard it was for you to be the new kid in your class when we first moved here?" reminded father. "Maybe you could tell Tim how you felt about being new. Just because he wears leg braces doesn't mean that he isn't a person with needs and feelings very much like yours."

"I could invite him to our church's junior boys' sleepover next weekend. Then he could get to know the guys in our group," suggested Ryan.

"That sounds like a great idea, Son. I was reading something in my Bible this morning in Acts 20; let's see if I can find the verse," said father thumbing through his Bible. "Ah, here it is, verse 35. '... we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said, *'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'*" "I'll bet your friendship would be just about the best gift you could give Tim right now."

"You're right, Dad. I'm going to go call Tim right now and see if he'd like to come." Ryan's smile beamed as he looked up at his father. ❧

# Supplies Order Form

Prices effective January 1, 1993

Quantity	Part A	COST
<b>BOOKS AND BOOKLETS</b>		
...	Christ or Confusion (Gospel Pub League)	.95 .....
...	Concerning the Nations (Gospel Pub League)	.95 .....
...	Daniel's Prophetic Outline of History (Partlowe)	.95 .....
...	Daring to Differ: Adventures in Conditional Immortality (Hatch)	9.95 .....
...	Emphatic Diaglott (Wilson)	4.95 .....
...	"Except" (baptism, Bilton)	1.15 .....
...	First Principles (Marsh)	.75 .....
...	Fundamentals of the Christian Faith (Lyon)	.75 .....
...	God's Covenant with Abraham (Lindsay)	.75 .....
...	God's Great Plus Sign to the World (Partlowe)	.75 .....
...	Making the Most of Your Marriage (Partlowe)	1.95 .....
...	"Must Not Fight" (Bilton)	.95 .....
...	One God (Judd)	3.95 .....
...	Prophecies of the End of the World (Mattison)	3.95 .....
...	Russia, Israel, Christ and You (Bilton)	1.25 .....
...	Scripture Searcher's Assistant	.95 .....
...	Systematic Theology, Hard Cover (Huffer)	12.95 .....
...	Systematic Theology, Soft Cover (Huffer)	9.95 .....
...	The Bible: Its Principles & Texts (Huggins)	3.95 .....
...	The Abrahamic & Davidic Covenants	1.75 .....
...	The Coming Kingdom of the Messiah (Buzzard)	4.95 .....
...	The Last Will & Testament of Jesus	.75 .....
...	The Law, Sabbath & N.T. Christianity (Buzzard)	1.95 .....
...	The Miracle of Pentecost (Partlowe)	1.95 .....
...	The Seventh Day Sabbath (Gospel Pub League)	1.50 .....
...	Triumph of the Resurrection, 176 pp., Soft Cover (Huffer)	4.95 .....
...	What Happens When We Die? (Buzzard)	1.95 .....
...	Words of Truth, Subject Concordance	1.25 .....
...	Who Is Jesus? (Buzzard)	1.95 .....
...	Wrested Scriptures	14.00 .....
<b>HYMNALS</b>		
...	Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs	5.95 .....
...	Loose Leaf for Musicians	9.95 .....
<b>CHURCH SUPPLIES</b>		
...	Baptismal Certificates (doz. 5.00)	ea. .50 .....
...	Caring System File Folders	ea. .23 .....
<b>EVANGELISM FLIP CHART</b>		
...	Opportunity of Eternal Life	1.50 .....
<b>RECORDS—OREGON BIBLE COLLEGE CHORALE</b>		
...	Sing to the Lord	3.00 .....
...	Sheltered, Protected	5.00 .....
<b>SUNDAY SCHOOL SUPPLIES</b>		
Please specify starting date for quarterlies		
...	Kindergarten Creative Teaching Aid Packet	8.25 .....
...	Kindergarten Teacher's Guide	2.95 .....
...	Kindergarten Bible-In-Life (for teachers)	1.95 .....
...	Kindergarten Make-It/Take-It (for students)	1.95 .....
...	Primary Creative Teaching Aids Packet	8.25 .....
...	Primary Teacher's Guide	2.95 .....
...	Primary Student's Books (2) grades 1-3	3.65 .....
...	Junior Creative Teaching Aids Packet	8.25 .....
...	Junior Teacher's Guide	2.95 .....
...	Junior Student's, grades 4-6	1.95 .....
...	Junior High Creative Teaching Aids Packet	8.25 .....
...	Junior High Teacher's Guide	2.95 .....
...	Junior High Student's—THE ROCK	1.95 .....
...	Teen-Age Creative Teaching Aids Packet	8.25 .....
...	Teen Teacher's Guide	2.95 .....
...	Teen-Age Lessons I. D. (for High School)	1.95 .....
...	Adult Teachers' Guide	2.95 .....
...	Adult Student's	1.95 .....
...	Sample Kit of all Sunday School Lessons	Free .....
...	Superintendents' and Workers' S.S. Manual	1.95 .....
...	Sunday School Openings Idea Book	2.50 .....
<b>BIBLE STUDY COURSES</b>		
...	Berean Scripture Studies, No 2 (52 lessons)	1.95 .....
...	BYF Focus 10 @ \$1.75 each or	1.95 .....
...	The Nature and Destiny of Man (13 lessons)	1.95 .....
...	Where Do I Fit? (8 lessons—Partlowe)	1.95 .....

## SYSTEMATIC BIBLE STUDY COURSES (29 lessons)

...	Correspondence course (enrollment only)	Free .....
...	Loose Leaf edition	2.95 .....
...	Bound edition	3.95 .....

## ISSUES, Paperback Books

...	The Case Against Pornography (Wildmon)	1.00 .....
...	The Home Invaders (Wildmon)	2.00 .....

## SLIDE-CASSETTE PROGRAMS

<b>God's Plan for This Planet</b>		
...	Oneness of God	10.00 .....
...	Worth of Each Person	10.00 .....
...	Salvation Through Christ	10.00 .....
...	The Empty Tomb	10.00 .....
...	World's Only Hope	10.00 .....
...	Christ's Coming Kingdom	10.00 .....
...	All Six Complete Programs	50.00 .....

THE RESTITUTION  
HERALD

Box 100  
Oregon, IL 61061

Box 100,000  
Morrow, GA 30260

Total Cost of Part A

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Part B:** The tracts listed are available from the Church of God General Conference at \$3.50 per hundred. Please order each tract in lots of 50. You may order single copies at 6¢ each and a minimum of 25.

## EVANGELISM TRACTS

<b>Quantity</b>	...
...	ABC's of Salvation
...	An Invitation
...	An Invitation to Life
...	Better Than Money in the Bank
...	Bible Faith Stands the Test of Time
...	Can God Help Me?
...	Can You Believe?
...	Do You Ever Think About God?
...	Do You Prefer Insurance or Assurance?
...	Have a Good Day
...	Here's My Tip
...	Meet My Friend
...	One Step From Death
...	Puzzled?
...	See What Real Love Is
...	The Blood Bank of the Bible
...	The Guiding Light
...	Traveler's Credit Card
...	Use the Past to Build a Future
...	Why Be Baptized?
...	Your Introduction to the Church of God

...	Newsday 1992
...	Signs of Jesus' Coming and the End of the World
...	Signs of the Times
...	The Kingdom of God
...	The Kingdom of God (Spanish)
...	The Premillennial Coming of Christ
...	The Purpose of the Millennium

## BIBLE DOCTRINE TRACTS

...	Baptism
...	Christian Tithing, An Act of Faith
...	God's Laws Concerning Marriage
...	Is Going to Heaven Our Reward?
...	Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God
...	One God
...	Resurrection
...	Seven Bible Reasons for Christian Baptism
...	The Covenants of Promise
...	The History of Baptism
...	The Marriage God Planned
...	The Meaning of the Word "Soul"
...	The Nature of the Soul
...	Two Hells
...	What Happens After Death?
...	What is Man?
...	Who Owns the Wool?

## MISCELLANEOUS TRACTS

...	Chart of the Ages
...	From One Who Cares
...	How to Grow in Christ
...	How Your Pastor Can Help You
...	What Can We Read Tonight?

## BIBLE PROPHECY TRACTS

...	Death of the Dollar
...	God's Tomorrow

Total Number of Tracts \_\_\_\_\_

Total Cost of Part B \$ \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Postage and Handling</b> Order up to \$10: add \$2.40 Order \$10 to \$20: add 20% Order \$20 to \$99: add 10% Order \$100+: add 5% Overseas: Actual Cost	Total of Part A	\$ _____
	Total of Part B (Tracts)	\$ _____
	Amount of Complete Order	\$ _____
	Postage & Handling	\$ _____
	Total	\$ _____

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

# ABC

ATLANTA  
BIBLE  
COLLEGE

It's that basic. It's that simple.

For more information call  
1-800-FISH CO 1

#### Subscription Expirations

The three-digit number on the top right of your address label identifies the renewal date of your subscription. If the number is 93.0, it expires with the February/March issue, 1993. A 93.2 number means a June, July, expiration. This method will assist the subscriber in keeping tabs on his expiration date and serve as a reminder for renewal.

Church of God General Conference  
P.O. Box 100,000  
Morrow, GA 30260

Address Correction Requested

U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
PERMIT 21  
Oregon, Illinois  
Nonprofit Org.

Dear RESTITUTION HERALD,

I am writing for the following reason:

- My address label is incorrect, please note the changes.
- I am moving in the next six weeks; please send the magazine to my new address printed below.
- I wish to send a gift subscription to the person listed below. Enclosed is \$12 payment.
- Subscription renewal, payment enclosed—1 yr. \$12, 2 yr. \$21, 3 yr. \$30. [British subscribers send U. S. funds]. Thank you.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: THE RESTITUTION HERALD, P.O. Box 100,000, Morrow, GA 30260.

Please check the mailing label to the left for your RH expiration date and renew promptly to keep THE RESTITUTION HERALD coming to your home bimonthly.

Thank you for subscribing to  
THE RESTITUTION HERALD.

IS IT TIME TO RENEW?

# THE RESTITUTION HERALD

Vol. 82, No. 4  
April, May, 1993

Thomas Jefferson, the third president of the United States, is buried at Monticello, his beloved home, which he designed and built at Charlottesville, Virginia.

His tombstone reads:



These were the three major accomplishments of his life.

All conditionalists will observe some good theology from Jefferson's tombstone. He "lies buried" waiting for the call of Jesus Christ, the life giver.

The picture was taken by Paul A. Newell while he, your editor, and other relatives and friends were on vacation in northern Virginia last fall.

**I** AM THE FIRST and the last, and the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades” (the grave; Rev. 1:17b, 18, NASB).

Having passed through the grave and standing on the other side, Jesus Christ could say, “I am . . . the living One; and I was dead . . . I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and the grave.”

We greet you at this Easter season in the name of Him who is alive forevermore. This verse embodies both His crucifixion and resurrection. It also reveals that Jesus has the power and authority to raise the dead, and someday He will assert that power and authority.

“The Jesus who was personally known to John, was both human and also the divinely begotten Son of God. His resurrection body was as real as the one which suffered on the cross.”—Allon Maxwell, *The Real Christ and the Antichrist* (p. 24). Yes, Jesus was physically and bodily raised from the dead.

What we proclaim is no shabby or second-class message. It will never embarrass its messengers. Jesus was dead and is alive forevermore! Praise His precious name! We are committed to the truth that Jesus died and was raised the third day to immortality, never to die again (2 Tim. 1:10; Rom. 6:9, 10). We share that message boldly to the world God so loves.

The first-century disciples in the infant church were slow to catch on to the fact of the resurrection of Christ. His followers came to the tomb early Sunday morning to anoint the body of Jesus, not to celebrate His resurrection. They were as surprised as anyone that Jesus had been resurrected.

Joseph of Arimathaea and Nicodemus had done a hasty job of embalming Jesus and putting Him in Joseph’s tomb because the Sabbath was drawing on (Luke 23:50-56; Matt. 27:57-60).

Jesus was probably crucified and buried Thursday. Friday was probably the high day of John 19:31 and Saturday was the weekly Sabbath. This chronology would explain why the women were so anxious to get to the

tomb to finish embalming Him since Joseph and Nicodemus had done a fast job of it. They came “as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week” (Matt. 28:1); they came “very early in the morning the first day of the week . . . at the rising of the sun” (Mark 16:2); “The first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came to the sepulchre” (Luke 24:1); “The first day of the week . . . early when it was yet dark” (John 20:1).

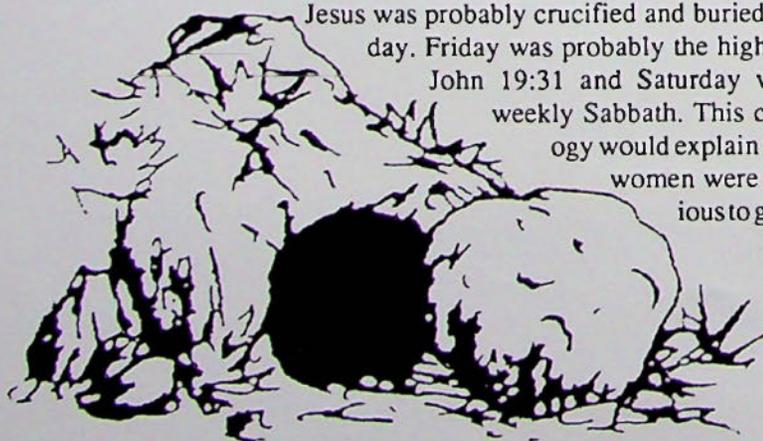
Apparently the women used the very first opportunity to go to the tomb of our Lord to complete the embalming process with no thought of resurrection in their minds. Their only problem as they hurried along their way while “it was yet dark” was, “Who will roll away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?” (Mark 16:3.) They had embalmed on their minds, not resurrection, although Jesus had told them clearly that He would be rejected, crucified, and would rise the third day (Matt. 16:21; 20:18, 19).

We realize that the concept of a man coming out of a grave—being resurrected to immortality never to die again—is foreign to the thinking of unregenerated man, especially those absorbed with this world’s wisdom (1 Cor. 1:26). Certainly the Athenian philosophers to whom Paul preached fall into this category. Some of these Greek philosophers said: “What will this babbling say?” Others said: “He seems to be a setter forth of strange gods.” Why? “Because he preached unto them Jesus and the resurrection” (Acts 17:18). These Greek philosophers accused Paul of pushing a foreign god. The Greek word for “gods” is commonly used in Greek writings for pagan gods of wood and stone. However, fifty times in the New Testament it refers to evil spirits and is usually translated “demons” or “devils” (KJV). This has led many students to the conclusion that idols and demons are used interchangeably some places in the Bible. (See 1 Cor. 10:14-21; Psa. 106:35-38.)

Three responses are seen in Paul’s great message on Mars’ hill (the Areopagus, the highest court in Athens). Some mocked, some wanted more information, but praise God some believed (vv. 32-34). Although Paul had his poorest reception among these Greek intellectuals, we are encouraged to continue preaching Christ crucified, risen, and coming again. Some will believe and turn to our lovely Lord. Our hope is to be like Him in His resurrected form when He comes again (1 John 3:2; Phil. 3:21). It’s worth whatever sacrifice we have to make in this life. RHT



## THE EDITOR'S OPINION



# Contents

**4 Of First Importance**

*Michael Mattison*

**5 To Live with Christ**

*Darcey Demmitt*

**7 The Promise of the Spirit**

*Allon Maxwell*

**9 A Parade Fit for a King**

*Steve Taylor*

**11 Transformed . . . by the  
Renewing of Your Mind**

*Richard Alcumbrack*

**13 Planting Time**

*E. Richard Smith*

**15 God Manifestation:  
An Introduction**

*Duncan Heaster*

**16 The Tomb of the  
Well-Known Soldier**

*Hollis Partlowe*

**18 The Most Important  
Women in My Life**

*Jeffrey Fletcher*



At least half a million tourists from around the globe will visit Monticello this year, the 250th anniversary of Jefferson's April 1743 birth.

**20 God's People**

*Francis E. Burnett*

**24 The Four Marks of  
False Religion**

*Kent Ross*

**28 Yes I'm Homophobic**

*Rex Cain*

---

**FEATURES**

**2** EDITOR'S OPINION

**10** BOOK REVIEW

**14** FEEDBACK

**26** ESPECIALLY FOR THE  
PASTOR'S WIFE

**Lessons from a Miniature  
Mother**

*Paula Kirkpatrick*

**30** CHILDREN'S PAGE

**Growing Patience**

*Susan Lapp*

THE  
**RESTITUTION  
HERALD**

Vol. 82, No.4  
April, May, 1993

THE RESTITUTION HERALD is owned and published by the Church of God General Conference, a non-profit Christian corporation located at 5823 Trammell Road, P.O. Box 100,000, Morrow, GA 30260. THE HERALD is mailed six times a year.

THE RESTITUTION HERALD advocates: the oneness of God (1 Cor. 8:6); the Holy Spirit is God's power (Acts 1:8); Jesus Christ is God's only begotten Son (Matt. 16:16), and is our Mediator (1 Tim. 2:5); the Bible is the inspired Word of God (2 Tim. 3:16); the mortality of man (Job 4:17; Psa. 146:4); the near return of Christ (Acts 1:11), and life only through him (Col. 3:3); the literal resurrection of the dead (John 5:28); the immortalization of those in Christ (1 Cor. 15:53, 54); the destruction of the wicked (Rev. 21:8); the final restoration of Israel as the Kingdom of God under the kingship of Christ (Luke 1:32), the church to be joint heirs with him (Rom. 8:17), and Israel to be made head over Gentile nations (Isa. 60:1-3); the "restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began" (Acts 3:21). It also firmly advocates repentance and immersion in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38), and a consecrated life as essential to salvation.

**Editor:** Hollis Partlowe  
**Associate Editor:** Gordon Landry  
**Make-up Editors:** Mark Cain, Christopher Seiders  
**Typesetter:** Becky Hall  
**Proofreader:** Barbara Landry  
**Contributing Editors:** Richard Alcumbrack,  
Susan Lapp, Dr. Alva G. Huffer,  
Delbert Jones, Paula Kirkpatrick,  
Gordon Landry  
**Mailing and Subscriptions:** Becky Hall, Terri  
Tschaenn, Judy Myers, Harry McMinn

Address all correspondence to: THE RESTITUTION HERALD  
P.O. Box 100,000  
Morrow, GA 30260

**SUBSCRIPTIONS**

One Year, \$12  
Two Years, \$21  
Three years, \$30

Most subscriptions begin with the February or August issue. Readers may begin full-year subscriptions at any time. Use the form on page 32 when corresponding concerning your subscription.

Photographs on cover and page 17  
by Paul A. Newell, Oregon, IL.

# Of First Importance

by Pastor Michael Mattison  
Baton Rouge, LA

We have  
eternal security  
only if we hold  
tight to what is  
eternally  
secure.

**S**OME IMPENDING EVENTS loom so largely on the horizon that perceptive people know their occurrence is inevitable. Usually such major events are so momentous they set the tone for decades afterwards. Such outstanding people or events in their respective field bring to mind talented artists, ingenious inventors, towering statesmen, and great discoveries. Some set the stage for centuries, like Columbus' discovery or the American Revolution. Only one series of events was so phenomenal it was foreseen thousands of years beforehand and holds sway over people and events thousands of years afterwards. This is the death and resurrection of Christ.

"Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and . . . was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures." (1 Cor. 15:3b, 4.) Why does Paul declare that to be "of first importance"? (V. 3a.) Not because it's a fact, because facts by themselves are merely statistics or hard data. And not simply because it was an amazing prediction, or even because it was a divine prophecy. A thing of primary importance must be a force that is vital to our own lives.

As remote as Golgotha is, its hammer blows still echo around the world. Today's sins are still killing Jesus and destroying the people "enjoying" them. Christ died for tomorrow's sins as surely as for yesterday's. He is reburied constantly by selfish yuppies and indifferent slugs who all think He's irrelevant. To them, He stays dead three days or three decades, far past any possibility of being resuscitated as a force to contend with. He no longer is real to the ones who terminated Him in their consciousness. But still, according to the Scriptures, He reappears unexpectedly as a force that reawakens our numb senses and saves us or judges us.

It is futile to deny this. Sooner or later, a force of vital importance will make or break a person, depending on whether he is aligned with it or against it. For example, a person can deny that a poor diet and lack of exercise will affect him, but living that way will definitely take its toll. As another example, a person can believe that living beyond his means will not hurt, but deficit spending will eventually destroy him financially. If

Jesus was killed for sin but overcame death, don't you think He came back to hunt down and eliminate this killer? He knows its savage consequences firsthand. When we also feel the pain and horror of selfishness, greed, cruelty, or disloyalty, we are relieved to find someone like Jesus who came back to life to destroy sin and heal its results.

In 1 Corinthians 15:1, 2, Paul called this the good news he wanted them to know, even though he'd already preached it to them. He said they stood in it, because they'd received it. To stand in the good news about Jesus means a person now bases his values, dreams, and emotions on what he receives from Jesus. Paul went on to say they are saved by it if they hold it fast. He said they believe in vain if they don't hold it fast (tight). We have eternal security only if we hold tight to what is eternally secure. The power of a resurrected Jesus is eternally hostile to sin and all its consequences. As long as we cling to Jesus we can have the assurance He will guard our minds and bodies against sin. He will preserve us through the attacks of others' sins. And He will resurrect us from the death through which He Himself passed.

On the other hand, if we are indifferent to the powerful struggle between Jesus and sin being fought over us, we won't stand in the power of Christ. The fact that He's alive will seem nice for Him and His friends, but irrelevant to us. Meanwhile, we are planting our feet solidly in the ground of our own human wisdom and power. That soil is deficient in many vital nutrients like love, energy, peace, joy, and hope. It is unfortunately contaminated with poisons like resentment, turmoil, laziness, and despair. As we are flooded by the influences of our culture and media, deposits of slimy silt settle into our subconscious and further contaminate us. Concluding this illustration from nature, we finally produce fruit in our lives that's as dangerous as crops that are growing in soil contaminated by hazardous chemicals or radioactive waste.

That's why Jesus has to be sin's mortal enemy. It killed Him personally once, and He won't let that happen again! Whether we like it or not, He's alive to stay. He only remained dead three days. That's over. He was a sacrificial lamb once, but is



an avenging lion forever. Only those who belong to Him will be safe from Him when He returns in glory. It is nothing personal, you see, but He has to destroy sin—and therefore everything and everyone contaminated by sin. He knows if He doesn't, sin would destroy everyone He loves. In this mortal struggle, He sustains your life physically "by the word of his power" daily. He holds back the ravages of sin as far as permissible, hoping sin's daily toll will alarm you and bring you to find refuge and restoration in Him. His resurrection power then is shared with us! His crucifixion power is our ability to know our sins are forgiven. His resurrection power is our ability to overcome, to succeed, to live and learn and grow and mature, to become effective and wise and powerful. Paul received this power that was of first importance to him and became an influential leader. The Corinthians received it too. Will you?

To some it's questionable whether Jesus was raised. They are unaware of the

present force of Christ's life working among the people of their world, which is obviously only possible because He was raised to eternal life. To them, it's a historical issue, not one of vital importance. People care mostly about the present and future. If Jesus doesn't affect or control the present or the future, then He's irrelevant. If in actuality He can transform a person's emotions, family life, career effectiveness, and even grant eternal life, He is extremely relevant!

By way of comparison, to those born after World War II, Hitler seems irrelevant. But if he were to come back alive and bring along his vanished armies and tanks and rockets and arm them with nuclear weapons, he would suddenly take on urgent significance. Everyone in the world would align himself with or against him, and hundreds of millions of lives would be lost in the struggle for control of the billions. Those indifferent would be almost as useful to him as his allies.

Anyone indifferent to Christ is quite

helpful to this sinful world. As long as one feels no personal threat or pain, he is aware of no enemy. It is easy to ignore the reality of sin if one is not being impacted by its results—drug addiction, broken homes, smashed dreams. When these devastating things do occur, a person begins a desperate search for solutions. Only when people believe in the reality of Christ's being alive can they have access to His solutions.

Believing in Jesus' resurrection is your option. Being given forgiveness, release from pressure, cleansing, and eternal life is yours freely—at His option! His resurrection was proof that He is the Son of God. Your resurrection will be proof that you had become a child of God. Once you did, God's power could not be restrained on your behalf now or in the age to come because Jesus was raised to give you life and all things that were meant to go with it.

Happy Easter!

R41

---

# To Live with Christ

by Darcey Demmitt  
Boone, Iowa

The nature of eternal life has less to do with time and more to do with our relationship with God.

**A**UTUMN HAD JUST BEGUN and we were spoiled by all the fine weather. It was still our habit to walk to the park any time we wanted, so the cold front took us by surprise. After sitting around the house for a few minutes wondering what we could do, I decided to peel the girls off the walls and go for a drive.

If you've ever been to Boone, Iowa, you'll know that the drive through downtown took about two and a half minutes. It's a nice little town where crime is almost never a concern and the cost of living isn't too high, but a thriving metropolis it's not. Nor is it a town wrapped in scenic beauty. Desperate for anything out of the ordinary, I turned into the cemetery.

Up until this time the car had been fairly quiet. The baby, Anna, had fallen asleep and my four year old, Brittany, was busy staring out the win-

dow. As I made that left hand turn into the cemetery, a flood of questions filled the car. "What is this place? Who were these people? Are there any children here? How did they die? Oh, like your grandma?"

My grandmother, Marie Nemeth, had died the previous Christmas, and this was something we had talked about often. I had explained to Brittany that even though my grandma had died, God would one day make her alive again and we would all be together again. Since she was only four and I am her mother, this was something she believed unquestionably. There were questions as to the particulars of the whole affair, but there was never any doubt as to the possibility of what I said. It is this absolute trust that is our doorway to faith. "I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 18:3). And so it is as God's

children that we approach His Word.

"I am the Living One; I was dead, and behold I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades" (Rev. 1:18). This has been prophetically true since the beginning of time by virtue of God's own words. "But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him" (Acts 2:24). It is impossible for God to *not* carry out His own plan; it is impossible for God to *not* keep His promises. "Because God wanted to make the unchanging nature of his purpose very clear to the heirs of what was promised, he confirmed it with an oath. God did this so that, by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled to take hold of the hope offered to us may be greatly encouraged" (Heb. 6:17, 18). We may choose to doubt, but that doesn't alter the absoluteness of God's Word. Christ said, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms" (Luke 24:44). Christ had to rise from the dead because God said He would. "Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will rest secure, because you will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay" (Psa. 16:9, 10).

"By his power God raised the Lord from the dead, and he will raise us also" (1 Cor. 6:14). This is our hope and the promise to which we cling. If Christ is not risen from the dead then not only is our faith meaningless and fruitless, but we are still in our sin and have no hope but death. "If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are to be pitied more than all men. But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep" (1 Cor. 15:19, 20). Christ will not leave us behind. If we are God's children, "then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may share in his glory" (Rom. 8:17). Christ Himself said, "Because I live, you also will live" (John 14:19). And He indeed lives.

It must have been incredible and fright-

ening to have physically seen the risen Lord. What an overwhelming experience to have been in the room when "Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you!' After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord" (John 20:19, 20). We too, not only can, but *must* stand face to face with the risen Lord. And "when you really see Jesus, I defy you to doubt Him. When He says—'Let not your heart be troubled, if you see Him I defy you to trouble your mind; it is a moral impossibility to doubt when He is there. Every time you get into personal contact with Jesus, His words are real. 'My peace I give unto you'—it is a peace all over from the crown of the head to the sole of the feet, an irrepressible confidence. 'Your life is hid with Christ in God' and the imperturbable peace of Jesus Christ is imparted to you."<sup>1</sup>

The early apostles did have the advantage that "after his suffering, he showed himself to these men and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive" (Acts 1:3). Yet we have other "convincing proofs" of our own through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. "We know that we live in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit" (1 John 4:13). "Those who obey his commands live in him, and he in them. And this is how we know that he lives in us: We know it by the Spirit he gave us" (1 John 3:24). "The baptism of the Holy Ghost is not an experience apart from Jesus Christ: it is the evidence of the ascended Christ."<sup>2</sup>

Experiencing the present life of Christ should fill our whole being. Not only is it a testimony to us and to those around us of the risen Lord, but it is the beginning of eternal life. Christ said, "Now this is eternal life: That they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent" (John 17:3). The nature of eternal life has less to do with time and more to do with our relationship with God. If we are to be truly complete, we must know God. This, Christ said, is eternal life. "Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called" (1 Tim. 6:12); take hold of Jesus.

Our purpose in life is not self-realization, but the realization of Christ. This is

Christ's prayer, "Righteous Father, though the world does not know you, I know you, and they know that you have sent me. I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them" (John 17:25, 26). Through Paul, God states this as His plan: "For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers" (Rom. 8:29). We share this goal with Paul: "But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith. I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead" (Phil. 3:7-11).

Months after the conversation with Brittany in the cemetery, our family was driving to Ohio to attend the funeral of her grandfather, Dwaine Demmitt. When the conversation turned to how much he would be missed, Brittany provided some words of comfort to her daddy. She shared with Alan how Jesus had died and then was raised from the dead and that someday Jesus would come back and we would all see grandpa again. It was a comfort to be reminded of God's truths concerning the certainty of the resurrection. It was also a great comfort as a parent to hear my daughter's unquestioning faith concerning God's promises.

"Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We believe and know that you are the Holy One of God" (John 6:69). R+T

<sup>1</sup>*My Utmost For His Highest* by Oswald Chambers, page 359.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, page 148.

# The Promise of the Spirit

by Allon Maxwell  
Heathmont, Victoria, Australia

The Spirit of God does not guarantee us instant infallibility.

**N**O ONE CAN READ the Gospels or the Acts without realizing that the preaching of the gospel in the first century opened the door to a revelation of the power of God in a way which is largely lacking in the 20th-century church.

The miracles which accompanied the preaching of the gospel, both declared God's approval of the message and confirmed the truth of the claim that the Christ in whose name the message was preached, was indeed risen from the dead and exalted to the position of supremacy at God's right hand.

One of the significant problems of our time is that most of the church has developed a theology which allows it to remain comfortable with its lack of power. This theology, firstly, explains away the present need for such power and, secondly, denies the possibility that gifts of the Holy Spirit, through which the power is revealed, can still be present in the church at all.

This denial rejects any present relevance for those marvelous elements of the gospel which enable Jesus to reveal His unchanging compassion for the desperate. It rejects His willingness to meet all who come to Him, from the resources of the unlimited power now placed in His hands by God. It takes away the hope offered in the Gospels of meeting with a God who does care, after all, about rescuing those who are oppressed by the devil. (Acts 10:38.) The thrilling experiential Christianity of the first century, with its God-given guarantee of a future inheritance (Eph. 1:13, 14), is replaced by a religion in which the guarantee is neither offered nor permitted!

This is empty religion, dangerously close to

that which Paul describes as having the outward form of Christianity, but denying its power. (2 Tim. 3:5.)

## The Promise for Us Today

I am painfully aware, through hard personal experience, that there are indeed many false spirits in our religious world that are not from God. (1 John 4:1.)

However, I am also convinced beyond question that the promise of the gift of the Holy Spirit (John 14:15-17) was for all true followers of Jesus, in all places and all time. (Acts 2:34-39.) The promise has been preserved of God in the Gospels handed down to us from those first-century witnesses who wrote, under inspiration, about the things they saw Jesus do and heard Him say.

The wording of the promise makes it clear that it still remains as valid today as it was in the first century. It is as much a part of the gospel for the 20th century as it was in the first. If we understand Jesus correctly, we need *both* the Spirit's fruit *and* the Spirit's power to faithfully represent Christ to those who hear the gospel from us.

If we do recognize that power is lacking from our Christian experience, it is important that we do not oversimplify the solution. The lack of the Spirit's power is only a SYMPTOM of another major lack.

Before we presume to ask for any gift of the Holy Spirit, there are some hard questions which we must ask ourselves. We will need to be prepared to wait as long as it takes—until we are sure beyond doubt that we have found God's answers to those questions. We will need to be totally

honest before God that we are prepared to accept those answers and act on them, whatever the personal cost may be. We must face the reality that the cost can be very high indeed.

The lack of the Spirit's power in our church, or in us, might mean that what we preach (if we preach at all!) is something that Jesus is totally unwilling to confirm. (Mark 16:20.)

The Spirit of God does not guarantee us instant infallibility. Nor does it relieve us of our responsibility for continuing prayerful and open-hearted search for understanding of Bible Truth. We will need to go before God to ask Him to reveal to us *the truth* which is the heart of the gospel. We will need to spend time in the Word of God to allow God to quicken the truth to our hearts.

God's emphasis and God's priorities for truth will almost certainly be different to anything we have inherited from men who deny the real need for the Spirit's power in the church. It just might be possible that we have been blinded by "traditions of men." Tradition, even if true, can be emphasized at the expense of other more fundamental and essential truth, without which there can be no real foundation laid for true Christian faith.

Do we really dare to ask God to show us what it is that Jesus *will* confirm?

### To Them That Obey

One essential condition of the promise was related to obedience to the teaching of Jesus. (John 14:15, 16; Acts 5:32.)

The lack of the Spirit's power in our church, or in us, will almost certainly mean that there is something important missing from our obedience, which disqualifies us from the promise.

We will need to go before God to ask Him to reveal to us (and convict us to the point of Godly sorrow) those vital personal *truths* about sin, righteousness, and judgment (John 16:8-11). This is essential to obedience; we need to learn this for ourselves before we can expect Jesus to confirm anything we dare to preach in His name.

Has our baptism in water been founded in true repentance and a heart's cry for forgiveness and a clear conscience? Do

we continue to ask God to speak clearly to us about our sins so that we can grow in the grace and holiness which are the goal of this New Life we say we have been given?

Are we compromised with the world? Or are we separated irrevocably from this world by our commitment to radical, costly obedience to His teaching about the way of life that pleases God?

Do we share the love of Jesus for this lost world of ours to the extent that we are willing to take up and carry a real cross with Him?

### To Glorify Jesus

Why do we want this power?

Are we prepared to glorify Jesus *always* and *never* ourselves? Do we want people to look up to *us*, or to fall on their knees before Jesus?

Can we be trusted to use what we are given, always only to point others to Jesus and never to satisfy our own self-interest? Do we want to be served? Or are we willing to serve? Do we want to give, or to receive?

Are we willing to give up *all* that we have? Or do we want financial rewards?

Let us be totally honest about all this. We would be better to have no power at all than to be wrong about our motives in any of these things.

Can we face persecution and rejection? If we do get this right, persecution is guaranteed, perhaps even from the friends of a lifetime; and certainly from the church at large which labels our distinctive Abrahamic Faith as heresy.

If we are ever to experience real gifts of the Holy Spirit, we must make love our priority—that Divine love described by Paul, which marks the indwelling presence of God. (1 Cor. 13:1-8.) Only with that priority settled—with all personal ego, pride, and ambition set aside—are we encouraged to seek gifts; and then it is prophecy that Paul encourages, *not* tongues! (1 Cor. 14:1.)

Would we be content with that same gift of prophecy (and no more) which was seen in John the Baptist? John worked no miracle. For him the power was in the *words* through which God convicted so many of their need for repentance.

Would we be content with one of those "lesser" invisible gifts, in which the left hand will never get to know what the right hand has done?—gifts such as helping (1 Cor. 12:28), or giving aid, or extending acts of mercy (Rom. 12:8), all of them concealed from the public gaze?

All of these "lesser" gifts are equally works of power, by the same Holy Spirit which moves mountains, or opens the eyes of the blind. All of them are far more often needed than the more spectacular revelations of the power of God.

Perhaps we will need to redefine our understanding of what "power" really is!

If we have fixed our eyes and egos on the spectacular, if we find the less-visible gifts less exciting and less satisfying, we are not yet ready for any real gifts of the Holy Spirit . . . and we will be open to deception from the many false spirits that are abroad in the church around us.

How will we recognize our gift?

We will need to be totally open to hear from God what He really wants to do. From that point it no longer depends on our human ability to hear, but on God's infinite ability to communicate with those whose hearts are pure, and who are willing to hear and do what He says.

### Jesus Is Lord

What it amounts to is this. Are we looking for an "experience," or are we seeking for Jesus to be Lord of all our being? If Jesus Himself is missing as Lord of life, there can be no real experience of the Holy Spirit. However, where there is true surrender to Jesus, and where there is real love for Jesus—enough love to lead us into life-changing obedience to *all* His commandments—there will be no lack of the Spirit's power for anything that God wants to do.

I have seen *real* gifts of the Spirit at work in the lives of those who have this life-changing love for Jesus, a love found only in a deeply humbling personal encounter with Him at the cross. Their lives bear the fruit of radical obedience in a way which is rarely encountered in this generation.

Any gift that I may have seen and believe to be valid is totally founded in that *truth*. R+1

# A Parade Fit for a King

by Pastor Steve Taylor  
Lafayette, IN

The tragedy of Jerusalem—and Israel—is that they missed the Kingdom opportunity; they're still awaiting the Messiah.

**P**ALM SUNDAY is a celebration of the most significant parade ever. There have been more elaborate parades since, but none more important. The significance of this parade is not so much what it was in itself, but what it offered a glimpse of. The Palm Sunday parade is nothing less than a shadow of the victory parade of Jesus when He comes as King of the everlasting Kingdom of God.

The prophet Daniel of the Old Testament, inspired by God to record a time line of major prophecy events leading up to the establishment of the Kingdom of God, wrote about the coming of the Son of God. Jesus fulfilled Daniel's time-line to the very day when He rode into Jerusalem on a donkey on Palm Sunday!

Not only are the events of Palm Sunday important to us in establishing that Jesus is the Son of God, they also challenge us with two great thoughts:

1. PALM SUNDAY AFFIRMS THE VITAL TRUTH OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD ON THE EARTH.

Luke 19:11 says, "While they were listening to this, he went on to tell them a parable, *because he was near Jerusalem and the people thought that the kingdom of God was going to appear at once.*" (Emphasis added.)

As Jesus neared Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, the Jews anticipated that He would do what the Jews always understood about the Messiah: that He would come in victory and overthrow the present political system, and that He would establish God's eternal kingdom on earth.

Although they understood the ultimate plan of God, they misunderstood the specific plan of God—the suffering, death, burial, resurrection, and ascension of the Son of God; the church age; the victorious second coming of the Son of God; the reward of the righteous; and the punishment of

the wicked. All of these are described in the parable in Luke 19:12-27 which leads up to the account of the events of Palm Sunday.

For us, then, to best appreciate the significance of Palm Sunday we need to go back to the Old Testament background, which serves as a vital backdrop for the events of Palm Sunday. The Palm Sunday account in Matthew's and John's Gospels directly quote Zechariah 9, thus making this an important place to begin our Old Testament background study. Zechariah 9:9, 10b states: "Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey. . . . He will proclaim peace to the nations. His rule will extend from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth" (Emphasis added.) The clear reference is to a victor's parade for the Messiah followed by His leadership over the nations of the earth.

Zechariah further paints a picture of the Messiah's earthly leadership in 14:4, 8, 9 when he writes: "On that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem, and the Mount of Olives will be split in two from east to west, forming a great valley, with half of the mountain moving north and half moving south. . . . On that day living water will flow out from Jerusalem, half to the eastern sea and half to the western sea, in summer and in winter. The LORD will be king over the whole earth. On that day there will be one LORD, and his name the only name." (Emphasis added.) The Jews anticipated this event to be inseparably joined with the Palm Sunday event, earlier described by Zechariah. They had failed to include Isaiah's picture of Messiah as a suffering servant, and therefore they missed the truth of the two appearances of the Messiah—one as suffering servant, and a second as conquering king.

With high hopes and anticipation of the fulfillment of Zechariah's prophecies, it is little wonder

that the Jewish people present that day loudly shouted, "Hosanna!" (Save us now!) Their enthusiastic cries amidst the strewn palm branches were fitting symbols and expressions of a people that anticipated the coming of the Messiah to establish the Kingdom of God on earth. As these events gave great excitement to those who anticipated the coming Kingdom of God to the earth, so it does for us today.

## 2. PALM SUNDAY PRESENTS US WITH THE KINGDOM OPPORTUNITY TODAY.

Luke 19:41-44 says, "As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it and said, 'If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace—but now it is hidden from your eyes. The days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment

against you and encircle you and hem you in on every side. They will dash you to the ground, you and the children within your walls. They will not leave one stone on another, because you did not recognize the time of God's coming to you.' "

The tragedy of Jerusalem—and Israel—is that they missed the Kingdom opportunity; they're still awaiting the Messiah. And their search for Messiah will not be complete until the terrible events of the last 3 1/2 years of this age finally turn their attention to the one who was rightful King on that Palm Sunday so long ago. Their rejection has led—and will lead—to terrible suffering and grief.

Acceptance or rejection—we have the same Kingdom opportunity today. Palm Sunday reminds us that Jesus presents Himself to all the world as Messiah and Savior. He is the King of the coming

Kingdom of God that can begin in your heart today, and which will eventually cover the whole earth.

Second Corinthians 6:2 says, "Now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation."

We face the same choice that the Jews did 2,000 years ago, the same choice that every person of every time faces—to accept or reject Jesus. Rejection will lead to untold suffering; acceptance to indescribable joy and peace.

A king seated on a donkey is a picture of peace, and this is what Jesus offers to us: "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives" (John 14:27).

What is your answer to the King? Will you reject Him as the Jews did 2,000 years ago, or will you accept Him and let His Kingdom begin to rule in your life today?

## BOOK REVIEW

# *There Really Is a Difference*

*(A Comparison of Covenant and Dispensational Theology)*

by Renald E. Showers, The Friends of Israel

P. O. Box 908, Bellmawr, NJ 08031 (225 pp., soft cover, \$5.95)

This book is written in easy-to-understand nontechnical language and would be beneficial to lay people, pastors, and students. Dr. Showers explores the difference between the premillennial, amillennial, and postmillennial views of the Kingdom of God and presents a solid biblical case for the premillennial system of theology. Readers of *THE HERALD* will appreciate his keen insight into the prophetic future as well as his clear explanation of the covenants of the Bible.

In fact Showers devotes four chapters to what he calls an examination and evaluation of covenant theology as compared to dispensational theology. His conclusion is fair and unbiased, but it is clear that he identifies with the latter.

In the chapter on "The Abrahamic Covenant" he writes: "These two systems frequently differ from each other in their approaches to the major biblical covenants. These differences are significant, for they lead to contrasting views concerning the millennium or future Kingdom of God foretold in the Scriptures.

These differences are significant for another reason: They lead to contrasting views regarding the permanent existence of Israel as a nation and Israel's permanent ownership of the promised land. . . . The approach which one takes to these covenants is most crucial" (p. 55).

In the chapter, "Distinctions in the Kingdom of God Concept in the Scriptures," the author presents three such distinctions.

First, there is a distinction of time. Some scriptures present the Kingdom of God as an entity already in existence from long ago: "The LORD hath prepared his throne in the heavens and his kingdom ruleth over all" (Psa. 103:19; cf. Lam. 5:19).

By contrast other scriptures indicate that the Kingdom of God is to come in the future; it is not here yet (Dan. 2:44).

Second, according to Showers, there is a distinction of scope. Some scriptures present the Kingdom of God as being universal in scope. It has the entire universe as its realm. "Thou reigneth over all" (1 Chron. 29:11, 12).

By contrast, other scriptures present

the Kingdom of God as being earthly in scope. It has just the earth as its realm. The stone of Daniel 2 filled the whole earth.

The third distinction in the Kingdom of God concept is administration. Some scriptures present the Kingdom as being God's rule administered directly by Him over any or all parts of the universe.

By contrast, Showers further asserts that other scriptures present the Kingdom of God as being God's rule administered indirectly through a human mediator just over the earth. Daniel 2 and 7 describe an earthly Kingdom of God in which God's rule is administered indirectly through a human mediator, the Son of Man, who comes with the clouds of heaven.

All who have an interest in the Kingdom of God will appreciate Showers' work. Nearly all premillennarians, including our readership, will rejoice in *There Really Is a Difference*.

Two copies of *There Really is a Difference* have been donated to Atlanta Bible College Library.

—Reviewed by Hollis Partlowe.

---

# Transformed . . . by the Renewing of Your Mind

(Part One)

by Pastor Richard Alcumbrack  
Macomb, IL

God is not  
desirous or  
satisfied to  
merely make  
outward  
"cosmetic"  
changes to our  
lives.

**G**OD INTENDS for every Christian to be transformed by the renewing of their minds. In this series of articles we will examine exactly how this process of renewal takes place in the heart of the believer.

## The Failed Mission

Every true Christian has shared the same experience. The invitation to follow Jesus Christ was accepted wholeheartedly. A desire to be obedient in all things, to be a true disciple was heart deep and genuine. The expectation that preceded baptism was that of victory and complete transformation. "If anyone is in Christ he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!" (2 Cor. 5:17.) This fresh start on a new life was both a longing and an expectation. Putting the hand to the plow and looking back was the farthest thing from the mind. Expectations and excitement ran high, for it was assumed that baptism would bring immediate victory over sinful tendencies and habits. It was hoped that the drives of temptation would no longer surface. After all, the old ways had gone, and the new had come. With such high expectations, such genuine zeal for the Lord in the hearts of new converts, why do so many fall away from the Lord? Why do so many of those who do not fall away abandon those high ideals and longings?

## With God All Things Are Possible

"It surely is not God's fault. It must be mine," the new believer reasons. "If only I had more

faith." The believer may question the sincerity of his faith, the genuineness of his conversion, the true desires of his heart. He may question his baptism, his church, the truthfulness of the Scriptures, or even the power of God. Disappointment sets in. I recently heard of a man who was baptized in four different churches, fully expecting an instantaneous change that accompanies true conversion. But temptation and weakness continued and finally he gave up on the truthfulness of the message and the power of God to truly save from sin.

Perhaps the church is partially to blame, for we pay great attention to covering all the bases necessary to believing and receiving Jesus Christ as Savior. Belief, repentance, and baptism are vital parts of the gospel message imparted to potential believers. But too often we fail to instruct converts on what they might expect when they give their life to the Lord. Most expect that a victorious life will immediately be within their grasp, that they will be the next person with a wonderful testimony of how the Lord miraculously and instantaneously changed their lives. Perhaps the church is guilty of not preparing converts for a lifetime of true discipleship.

## The Change Comes From Within

The lifestyle of a true disciple of Jesus Christ is a far cry from the lifestyle of the person who does not attempt to follow the Lord. That difference will be observed in outward evidences, but the true change lies far beneath the surface. A new Christian will be tempted to simply follow a

new code of conduct, to adhere to a new set of commandments. These will produce outwardly observable changes in the believer's life. But true conversion does not begin outwardly. It begins with belief in the heart, a change at the core of man's being. It's an inward change in the way we think, our deeper motives, our attitudes and perceptions. These inner changes become the source for outward changes. In other words, being a disciple of Jesus Christ is much more than "acting" like Christ. It is to "be like" Christ.

When a person believes on the Lord Jesus Christ, repents of his sins, and is baptized into Christ he receives the "gift of God's Spirit" (Acts 2:38). The Spirit of God takes up residence in the believer's heart, and begins the process of transformation, with the goal of transforming us to actually become Christlike (see Gal. 5:22, 23). Some changes will be immediate and lasting, and evident outwardly, such as attending church services, reading the Bible, and spending time in prayer. But it is important to remember that the changes produced by God's Spirit are always genuine, beginning deep within the person. They will affect personality and attitudes. We will "be like" Christ inwardly rather than merely "acting like" Christ outwardly. Let us not be deceived into thinking that such a change is possible overnight, no matter how powerful or miraculous the conversion experience appears to be. At conversion the process of transformation begins, and it will continue every day we live, provided we desire to "become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ" (Eph. 4:13).

#### A Lifetime Project

We may think of it like an old house which is purchased by new owners intent on completely renovating to reflect their own tastes. They may begin on the exterior of the structure, making changes which are clearly visible to all the neighbors. As the scaffolds go up and workmen appear on the job site it will be obvious that the home is under new ownership, and the new owners have a clear objective to make some changes. A fresh coat of paint may make the house appear

new, but if the boards underneath are rotten and in need of repair, and the old paint is peeling, preparation for that new paint will be quite time consuming. To renovate an older home is a tremendously consuming project. It will take not days or weeks, but months to accomplish. It will require a great amount of financial expenditure, and perhaps an even greater amount of determination to complete the project. A new home can sometimes be put up in a matter of days, but restoration of an older home requires much greater effort because the workers cannot simply focus on building, but also on repairing the old.

---

The development  
of Godly character  
is a process that  
will last our entire  
lives.

---

So it is for the new Christian. Miraculous conversions are few, and often misleading. While one person may claim an immediate victory over a particular sin such as smoking or drinking, and may even claim that the desire or temptation does not even bother him since his conversion, let us not think that this person is not tempted in many other areas. There may be (and should be) quick evidence that the convert is "under new ownership," and that the new owner (Jesus Christ) is intent upon making significant and lasting changes. The most significant changes are inward and will require great amounts of determination in prayer, Bible study, and discipline. The old ways of thinking and acting have to be torn out before the new ways can be installed. God is not desirous or satisfied to merely make outward "cosmetic" changes to our lives. He is desirous that we "be transformed inwardly by the renewing of our minds" (Rom. 12:2). He will not be satisfied until our lives fully reflect (inwardly and outwardly) the tastes of the

new owner.

New believers merely have a glimpse of the fulness of Jesus' great love for us. Each day holds the possibility of knowing Christ more fully, and thus reflecting Him more accurately. But it remains an impossibility that a new convert might become a complete, victorious, mature believer overnight. The development of Godly character is a process that will last our entire lives.

#### Prayers for New Believers

Maybe we ought to inform new believers that the war with sin is not over when they accept Christ. In fact, it has only begun. The New Testament writings of Paul to the Ephesians make this abundantly clear, as he calls them to "put on the full armor of God so that they can take their stand against the devil's schemes" (Eph. 6:11). As a soldier needs to be trained in the use of his weapons and armor, so a new believer will need to develop his prowess with his spiritual weapons. Some things will only be learned in the heat of the battle. We are assured that God will not let us get involved in a situation that is beyond our abilities with His help (1 Cor. 10:13).

Paul had informed the Ephesians that he remembered them in his prayers, and two prayers are shared in this Epistle. Both prayers indicate that Paul was praying for their growth in Christ. He prayed that these believers would know Christ better (Eph. 1:17). He desired that their decision to follow Christ become a progressive experience. He knew that their battles would not be over just because they had given their life to Christ and had been baptized.

Similar requests are made in the prayer found in chapter 3, verses 14-21, as Paul requests that God "may strengthen you with power through His Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith. And . . . that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the

*(Continued on page 27)*



---

# Planting Time

by Pastor E. Richard Smith  
Pelzer, SC

Every time you draw a breath, four people die who have not heard about Jesus!

**W**E FIND OURSELVES in the gloom of late winter, longing for spring-time. The thoughts of jonquils blooming, birds singing, grass greening, brightens the days; certainly warmer days will soon be here.

The seed catalogs arrive, bringing bright pictures of flowers, shrubs, and trees to beautify the landscape, descriptions of varieties of vegetables that will satisfy our varied appetites.

Suddenly, it is planting time! Have the shrubs and trees, the flower and vegetable seeds been ordered or purchased? Are we ready to do that which will bring visual delight or delectable dishes at mealtime?

"Behold," said Jesus in Matthew 13:3, "a sower went forth to sow." Plans had been made—the plot had been selected, the land had been plowed—now it was time to sow the seed which would grow the best in the type of soil available.

Some seeds grow best in sandy soil, others in land filled with compost; some demand much moisture, others that which is well drained.

Some flowers and shrubs need sunshine throughout the day; some need a shady spot. However, the important point is that nothing will grow until it is planted! Plan as much and as long as you will, but plans do not bring shade trees or shrubs that provide nesting places for birds. Flower beds only in your mind, and dreams of tasty vegetables will never bring beauty to your vision or tasty food to your table.

## It Is Planting Time!

I can picture the sower in the days of Jesus. He had made his preparation, the seed was cleaned, the soil was ready.

At this time he could have considered the inevitable fact that some of the seed he would sow would be lost! Thinking about loss to the

birds, thorns, storms, drought, etc., could have brought him to say, "There is no purpose in sowing this seed; some of it will not sprout, and much of it will be lost!"

However—*IT WAS PLANTING TIME!*

*HE WENT FORTH TO SOW!*

Jesus was setting before His disciples, and those who read the Word of God, a message that could be applied to anyone of any age who would share the good seed of the Word of God with those whom they meet through the journey of life.

We plan and program, when we *should* be sowing the good seed of the Word of God. The seed is the whole Word of God. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

In our own way we often "offer" the seed to the good upright citizen—the one with whom we would share a pew in the church, the one we feel would help us meet the church budget, the one we would invite into our home.

We hear the story of the Good Samaritan and praise him because he, though despised as an outcast, still performed the humanitarian deed that saved a man's life. The good religious people passed by without compassion for the wretched man by the side of the road.

We need to see the millions in the world at large—see them beaten and stripped and wounded by the world's ways. Having the seeds of love revealed through God's Word already governing our lives, we should then plant this good seed in the life of all as we love them because God first loved us.

Someone has told the story of seeing a pile of rosebushes thrown into the trash. One rosebud stood out from the midst of the brush. It seemed to have some life in it. The bush with the bud was pulled from the rubbish.

## It Was Planting Time!

Planted very quickly, a beautiful flower was there to be viewed by the planter. So it is as we plant and sow, the reward to the laborer must be kept in mind.

It is true as we plant for God. One plants, another waters, but God gives the increase (1 Cor. 2:6-8). We cannot count gains or losses though only a few trees, a few bushes, a few rows of seed, grow.

As the parable of Matthew 13 unfolds, we find that some seed or planting is lost; some springs up, prospers for a time, then fades away; the thorns, the cares of life choke some; that which falls into the good ground brings forth according to the nature of the soil.

The soil is the human life. Everyone is not a teacher, preacher, singer, or leader, but everyone IS expected to be that which God intended him to be—one through

whom the Word of God is reproduced in the lives of others.

As the Apostle Paul approached the close of his life and ministry, he could review his life and say, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith!" (2 Tim. 4:7.)—but only because he had kept himself busy sowing and planting. Paul's testimony to the elders of Ephesus was, "I have not failed to declare unto you all the counsel of God" (Acts 20:27).

God's Word declares, "My word shall not return unto me void" (Isa. 55:10, 11). Preach and teach the Word. Tell the world (where YOU live and work) about God and His Son Jesus. Show them God's love and the end result of all that God has done. When questions arise, proclaim the message—Jesus died to redeem sinners! Jesus is now alive! Explain that the way of life set forth by the Word of God will

prepare each person for life in the Kingdom of God.

Tell the world that Jesus will return to bring a time of refreshment to mankind (Acts 3:19, 20).

Let them know that "The kingdoms of this world are [shall] become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev. 11:15). The redeemed shall rule with Him (Rev. 20:6) on the earth (Rev. 5:10).

How shall they know? How shall they grow if they do not hear? (Rom. 10:14.) Every time you draw a breath, four people die who have not heard about Jesus!

Eternity will reveal the result of our planting and sowing—but now our task is not to determine loss or gain. We as stewards of God are to share His Word, sow and plant; the only requirement is to be faithful—preach by word and deed His way of life!

IT IS PLANTING TIME! R44

## FEEDBACK

# What Our Readers Are Saying

"I have most certainly enjoyed the August-September HERALD. I especially enjoyed the article by David Krogh. I feel it took the emphasis off the big picture and made it an individual one. And I know starting new churches must be done."

—CA.

"Keep up the good work on the HERALD."

—IN.

"So much enjoy the HERALD. Hope you continue to be Editor for some time to come."

—IA.

"Through *Handbook of Denominations in the United States* I came to learn about your church. As I want to study the Advent family, I would be glad to receive more information about your history and affirmation of faith. If possible may you send me a copy of your RESTITUTION HERALD?"

—France.

"Thank you for the teaching and inspiration you have given us in THE RESTITUTION

HERALD. The December-January HERALD is one of the best."

—NC.

"May I express my pleasure to you in your wonderful guidance as Editor of THE RESTITUTION HERALD. You make each issue a true gem, and your editorials and articles are most praiseworthy. Thank you so much for your fine work."

—IL.

"The last HERALD was super. Sure wish that you would consider continuing to be Editor. Perhaps you are."

—IL.

"I have always enjoyed your very wonderful magazine but am nearly blind and can no longer read. Sorry not to renew my subscription."

—OR.

"Your articles have been super. God bless."

—MI.

"Thanks for your good work with THE HERALD."

—AZ.

"You've done a superb job with THE HERALD. A local high school teacher asked

me the other day, 'Does it seem to you that THE RESTITUTION HERALD is much better than it used to be?' 'Yes,' I said. And it definitely is."

—OH.

"Enjoyed the last issue of THE HERALD very much. Have had others comment favorably, too."

—IA.

"By the way you, are doing a fine job as Editor."

—TX.

"You've been doing a splendid piece of work during your temporary editorial stint. I congratulate you heartily. . . . I congratulate, not you, but the General Conference and its publications, on your extended tenure as Editor."

—OH.

"Thank you for giving me the motivation this past year to challenge my talent. I enjoy it, but had not really written anything in years until your requests came in and got me enthused again."

—IN.

"I've enjoyed your HERALD. Keep up the good work."

—IN.

# God Manifestation: An Introduction

by Duncan Heaster  
London, England

**W**E ARE SOMETIMES faced with the problem of a passage which appears to call Jesus "God." We are going to suggest in this study that the name of God can be carried by anyone through whom He chooses to "manifest" or reveal Himself. So men and angels as well as Jesus can carry God's name. This is a vital principle which opens up so much of the Bible to us. A son especially may carry the name of his father; he has certain similarities with his father, he may have the same name—but he is not one and the same person as the father. In the same way a representative of a company may speak on behalf of the company; he may telephone someone on business and say, "Hello, this is Unilever here" if he is working for them; he is not Mr. Unilever, but he carries their name because he is working on their behalf. And so it was with Jesus.

## Angels Carrying God's Name

We are told in Exodus 23:19, 20 that God told the people of Israel that an angel would go ahead of them. "My name is in him," they were told. The personal name of God is *Yahweh*. So the angel carried the name of *Yahweh*, and could thus be called *Yahweh*; or "The LORD," in small capitals, as the word *Yahweh* is translated in the NIV and KJV. We are told in Exodus 33:20 that no man can see the face of God and live; but in Exodus 33:11 we read that "The LORD [*Yahweh*] spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaketh to his friend"—i.e., in a relaxed, friendly way. It could not have been the LORD, *Yahweh* Himself, in

person, who spoke to Moses face to face, because no man can see God Himself. But it was the angel who carried God's name who did so, and so we read of the LORD speaking face to face with Moses when it was actually an angel who did so.

There are many other examples of the words "God" and "LORD," referring to the angels as opposed to God Himself (e.g., Gen. 1:26).

## Men with God's Name

One of the passages which I find most helpful in demonstrating all this is John 10:34-36. Here the Jews made the mistake which many so-called "Christians" do today. They thought that Jesus was saying He was God Himself. Jesus corrected them by saying, "Is it not written in your Law, I said, Ye are Gods? If He called them 'Gods' . . . how say ye of [me] . . . 'Thou blasphemest' because I said I am the son of God?" Jesus is really saying, "In the Old Testament men are called 'God'; I am only saying I am the Son of God; so why are you getting so upset?" Jesus is actually quoting from Psalm 82, where the judges of Israel were called gods.

One of the greatest proofs that men can carry God's name is in you and me; we were baptized into the name of the Father and Jesus, so we in some way carry that name, without being God Himself. The full name of God in Hebrew is *Yahweh Elohim*—meaning, "I will be revealed in many mighty ones." We are those many mighty ones, in a limited sense in this life, and more fully in the Kingdom. This is all beautifully shown by a comparison of

Isaiah 64:4 and 1 Corinthians 2:9. "Men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside Thee, what He hath prepared for him that waiteth for him." Paul quotes this in 1 Corinthians 2:9, 10: "It is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit." The passage in Isaiah 64 says that no one except God can understand the things He has prepared for the believers; but 1 Corinthians 2:10 says that those things have been revealed to us; we are in a sense "God"—not God Himself in person, but a manifestation of God as a result of having been baptized into His name and knowing the truth.

## Jesus and the Name of God

It is not surprising that Jesus, as the Son of God and His supreme manifestation to men, should also carry God's name. He could say, "I am come in my Father's name" (John 5:43). Because of His obedience, Jesus ascended to heaven and God gave Him "a Name which is above every name"—the name of *Yahweh*, of God Himself (Phil. 2:9). So this is why we read Jesus saying in Revelation 3:12, "I will write upon him (the believer) the name of my God . . . and I will write upon him my new name." At the judgment Jesus will give us God's name; we then will fully carry the name of God. He calls this name "My new name." Remember, Jesus was giving the Book of Revelation some years after His ascension into heaven and being  
*(Continued on page 31)*

# The Tomb of the Well-Known Soldier

by Pastor Hollis Partlowe  
Oregon, Illinois

How do you report a resurrection? Would anyone believe that you talked to an angel?

**M**ANY OF OUR LARGE cemeteries have a tomb to unknown soldiers—unidentified men who have fallen in battle. The living wanted to remember them for their bravery. I remember in high school, on Armistice Day it was called then, we went to the local cemetery for a patriotic service.

However, in this article let's focus on the tomb of the well-known soldier of the cross. Unlike all other graves, it's empty, although Pilate instructed the chief priests and Pharisees: "Ye have a watch . . . make it as sure as you can" (Matt. 27:65). If anyone could have kept Jesus in the grave the Roman soldiers could have, but it was not possible that anyone could (Acts 2:24). Psalm 16:10 had predicted that Jesus would not be left in the grave. Acts 2:31, 32 reveal the fulfillment of the prophecy.

When we walk through graveyards we see on tombstones: "Here lies . . ." Then follows the name and dates of the birth and death of the deceased, etc. How different is the epitaph of the well-known soldier. His was not written on stone but spoken by an angel and is the reverse of all others. "He is not here: for he is risen. . . Come, see the place where the Lord lay" (Matt. 28:6).

I've stood several times in Arlington Cemetery just across the Potomac River from the nation's capitol. I've thought of all those graves which contain "the small and the great" (Rev. 20:12). They will all come forth some day (John 5:28, 29).

(See Thomas Jefferson's tombstone on the front cover and also my parents' tombstone on page 17.)

## The Well-Known Soldier Fought a Good Fight

Jesus fought the greatest battle and won the greatest victory of all time. By faith in Him we can share in His victory. "We are more than conquerors through him that loved us" (Rom. 8:37).

No company of witnesses has ever given itself like the apostles to proclaim the risen Lord. This truth was spread far and wide. As Paul the apostle told King Agrippa, "This thing was not done in a corner" (Acts 26:26). Easter proclaims more than Jesus was alive the third day after the crucifixion. He was alive the fourth day, the fifth day, etc. "In that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God . . . death hath no more dominion over him" (Rom. 6:10, 9). "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and for ever" (Heb. 13:8).

Robert Lowry, the hymn writer, has written:

*"Up from the grave He arose*

*With a mighty triumph o'er His foes;  
He arose a victor from the dark domain*

*And He lives forever with His saints to reign:  
He arose! He arose! Hallelujah, Christ arose!"*

However, death is still our greatest enemy, an inescapable fact of life. But there is hope. The good news of Easter is that Jesus overcame death nearly 2000 years ago. Through His death, burial, and resurrection, He has "abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel" (2 Tim. 1:10). God be praised!

Jesus really died. He experienced a real death and a real resurrection. Easter morning the stone

## The Church of God Abrahamic Faith and Other Thoughts

Jan Stilson

In the middle of the nineteenth century, Church of God folks began referring to themselves as those from the "Abrahamic faith." Strangely, though, this phrase is not seen in the literature. When referring to themselves in print, it is always, "the congregation . . ." The use of this phrase may be seen countless times in the *Voice of Truth*, *Prophetic Watchman*, *Restitution*, etc., whereas the "Abrahamic faith" phrase is most elusive. David Graham has traced it back to around the turn of the century, and I found reference to "the Faith . . . in Abraham's God."<sup>1</sup>

Recently, a writer from our sister group which has taken the name "Church of God Abrahamic Faith" asserted that Benjamin Wilson was the first to use the phrase "Abrahamic Faith."<sup>2</sup> Wilson was one of the leading figures during the developmental years of the Age-to-Come movement in the midwest. He certainly may have uttered it, and even put it in print, but we can't know that, because the article was not footnoted. Without documentation, other writers and scholars cannot be sure it is accurate.

When our denomination organized in 1921 in Waterloo, Iowa, it took the name Church of God General Conference, and established a corporation, the National Bible Institution, to handle the business aspects of the conference.<sup>3</sup> At this time there were several churches in Indiana, Ohio, and Kentucky, which did not want to be part of the General Conference. And, for years and years, we and they have referred to the congregations within our separate entities as the Church of God Abrahamic Faith.

They did not unite with us because of a controversy which had occurred between the editors of two church

papers, namely, A. R. Underwood of *The Restitution*, a highly esteemed paper amongst our people, and S. J. Lindsay, who began *The Restitution Herald* in 1911. None of our historians have dug out the details on this issue, but supposedly the newly formed Ministerial Association which evidently predated the General Conference by at least ten years, brought charges of financial irregularities against Bro. Underwood. Whether the charges are true is not known at the moment, but feelings were hurt, and forthcoming from the turmoil was the gradual demise of *The Restitution*, ostensibly due to the damaged reputation of its editor and the vote of the delegates in 1921, or thereabouts, for *The Restitution Herald* as the "official voice" of the Church of God General Conference.<sup>4</sup>

At the same time, there was some separation over doctrinal differences so that five churches split from the larger group of local congregations which had organized as the COGGC. *Up until that time* (and this is important), *we had shared a common history with those folks*. However, from that point on, we have generated separate histories. Individuals within both groups have maintained communication, have shared the pulpit, attended meetings, etc., but we have not been able to clear up the problems that existed at that time.

As recently as the mid 1980's several of us from both groups were working together to pool all our worn and valuable *Restitutions* to be microfilmed. We explored the commonality of our history, but agreed it probably would be futile to seek to be unified due to doctrinal differences. Just shortly before that they had legally incorporated as the Church of God Abrahamic Faith.

*So what does all this background information mean?*

Recently, there has been an exchange of letters between some of our writers, the Christadelphians, and the members of the Church of God Abrahamic Faith (hereafter referred to as COGAF) over the use of the term "Church of God Abrahamic Faith." Brothers, bear in mind we no

<sup>1</sup>Letter to *Prophetic Watchman*, 1:Oct. 12, 1867: 265 by R. V. Lyon. Suspension Bridge, N.Y. (Age-to-Come Evangelist to Canada West.)

<sup>2</sup>Drabenstott, Mark. *Tidings*, Jan., 1993, 23.

<sup>3</sup>The minutes of the 1888 General Conference at Philadelphia say the association was to be called Church of God in Christ Jesus in the U.S. and Canada. Individual congregations could elect to be Church of God in Christ Jesus or Church of God of the Blessed Hope. Minutes, Archives. Morrow, GA.

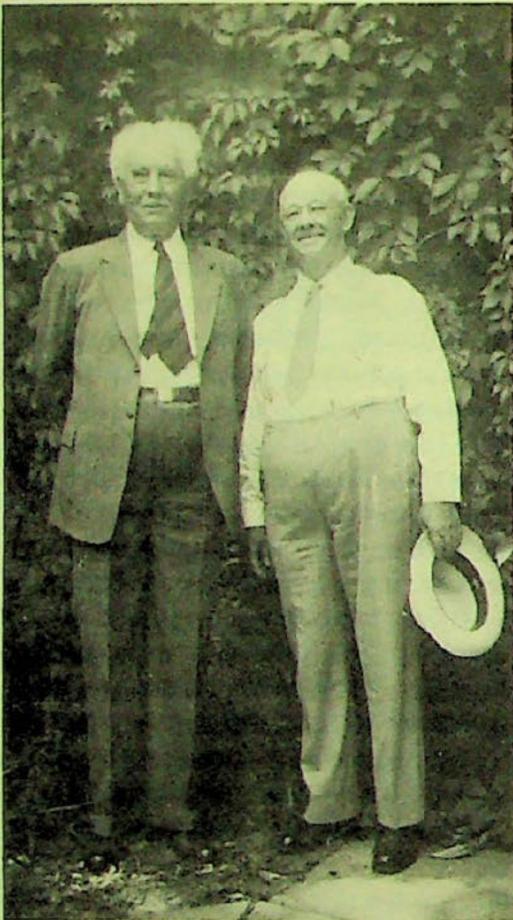
—COGGC. 1921. See Randall, *Historical Waymarks of the Church of God*. Oregon, IL, 1976, 23.

—Schmitt, Thomas. "Our Conference: Its Start and Basis." *Restitution Herald*, 75:1. Oct., 1985. 40, 41.

<sup>4</sup>Randall. *Historical Waymarks*, 40. More research needs to be done in this area.

longer own the right to that phrase. Informally, among ourselves, we are in agreement that we hold to Abraham's faith. Actually, we should be careful how we use the term, particularly in our publications.

In an attempt to clarify to a Christadelphian audience who the COGAF is, their spokesman summarized their beginnings and cast us in the role of villains without documenting that claim with any proof. Calling us "the larger organization,"<sup>5</sup> he made some strong claims regarding the Underwood/Lindsay question, and gave credit also to Benjamin Wilson for founding our work (remember, we had a common heritage in BW's day.) Since we had a common heritage until 1921, how can it be said Wilson was our



L. E. Conner, left, a minister and lawyer from Cleveland, was a good friend of S. J. Lindsay, founder and editor of *The Restitution Herald*. Lindsay called Conner "Link," and Lindsay was "Sam."

founder? We look back to Joseph Marsh as a leading spokesman for the Age-to-Come movement which began on the East coast and moved westward as the century progressed. The reader is referred to the Heritage Issue of *The Restitution Herald* for which David Graham and I

<sup>5</sup>We presently have less than 100 congregations with a goal to add new churches or groups by the turn of the century.

developed a time line of journal succession, showing how the Age-to-Come movement was published by one official paper throughout our history back to 1800. These include the *Voice of Truth*, *Gospel Banner*, *Restitution*, and *Restitution Herald*, among others.<sup>6</sup>

Benjamin Wilson taught the Kingdom of God on earth, oneness of God, conditional immortality, and premillennial return of Christ, and while solid in his teaching of those topics, he must have been working out his theology in other areas. He evidently believed in universal resurrection as early as 1858,<sup>7</sup> but by 1869 published his pro stance on limited resurrection, a 180-degree turnabout in position.<sup>8</sup> He fellowshipped extensively with John Thomas, founder of the Christadelphians and antagonist to Joseph Marsh in Rochester, N.Y., yet worshiped in "The Disciples Meeting House," which he had built during the time he fellowshipped with Alexander Campbell. So strong was his association within his community with Campbell that the historians of Geneva, Illinois, have erroneously stated he was a Campbellite, never mentioning his association with the Christadelphians or the Church of God.<sup>9</sup>

Further, when he moved to California in 1870, we have letters from him stating his acceptance of Josephism, i.e., Joseph was the father of Christ. His nephews staunchly within the Age-to-Come movement, have excused him by saying in his old age he became forgetful (Alzheimers, perhaps?) and was coerced by unscrupulous people into putting his name to that false doctrine.<sup>10</sup> We really can't know that one way or the other unless someone is able to research it and document it!

Lest this seem inflammatory, let me hasten to say, I grew up in the Oregon Church of God, mentored by Evelyn Austin and Leila Whitehead. Dr. Whitehead was the niece of Benjamin Wilson. I grew up learning of him and revering him. However, we must read the record carefully as historians. We must strain to be accurate. Mistakes will happen with the most careful work, and we fellow historians must act as Point and Counterpoint to each other's work. Let us proceed cautiously, but let us hasten to proceed. Let the brother from the COGAF join us in responsible scholarship. If the Lord carries into the next century, it behooves us to seek out the facts, and to always document. Document. Document.

—Readers' response invited.

<sup>6</sup>Stilson. "The publishing Heritage in the Age-to-Come Movement 1800-1985. *Restitution Herald*, Russ Magaw, Ed., 75:1, Oct., 1985. 20-24.

<sup>7</sup>Letter by B. Beals to B. Wilson "Inquiry Concerning the Non Resurrection of Wicked." *Gospel Banner*, 6/26/1860, 92. Reply to Beals by B. Wilson, same issue, 92, 93.

<sup>8</sup>B. Wilson. "Scriptural Inquiry on Resurrection—Limited or Universal." *Life and Immortality Brought to Life*, undated, 309-313.

<sup>9</sup>Campbell, Alexander. "Letter disfellowshipping Wilson from Disciples of Christ." *Gospel Banner*, B. Wilson, Ed., 8:1860, 7.

—*Geneva, Illinois: A History of Its Times and Places*. Geneva Public Library, rep. 1985, 272.

<sup>10</sup>B. Wilson file, Archives. COGGC. Morrow, GA.

# Joseph Marsh's Doctrinal Development and Conflicts with Christadelphianism

MARK M. MATTISON

## Part 1

What exactly is the historical connection between the Church of God (Abrahamic Faith) and Christadelphianism? The early camaraderie between John Thomas and the Wilsons is common knowledge, but there is much more to the story.

Over the last year we have striven to understand what went on between prominent Church of God pioneer Joseph Marsh, Advent Christian Nathaniel Field, and Christadelphian founder John Thomas. It seemed to us that the connections between these men, going all the way back to the 1840's, were significant for Thomas' doctrinal development and rebaptism in 1847.<sup>1</sup> However, more extensive research has revealed that Thomas understood the doctrine of the premillennial Kingdom of God (along with the restoration of national Israel in the flesh) as early as the 1830's, when he was editor of the *Apostolic Advocate*.<sup>2</sup> In addition, Thomas' rebaptism took place in March of 1847, months before he had even met Joseph Marsh.<sup>3</sup>

We are left, then, with a host of questions. What were the connections between Joseph Marsh and John Thomas? Did one influence the other? If so, to what degree? What was the doctrinal development of Marsh and Thomas? About what had they been in agreement, and what was the cause of their falling out? Only a thorough examination of the "bigger picture" can yield some answers.

<sup>1</sup>Cf. Janet Stilson, David Graham, and Mark Mattison, "A Brief History of the Formation of the Church of God General Conference," *A Journal from the Radical Reformation*, Fall 1991, Vol. 1, No. 1, 47, and Janet Stilson, "Historical Newsletter Goes International," *Church of God General Conference History Newsletter*, Summer 1992, Vol. 5, No. 1, 7.

<sup>2</sup>John Thomas' article "On the Names of our Periodicals" (*Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*, January 1851, Vol. 1, No. 1) was quoted out of context in *A Journal from the Radical Reformation*. It was not belief in the doctrine of the Kingdom that led to Thomas' rebaptism in 1847, but his conviction that belief in the premillennial Kingdom (complete with the restoration of Israel) is necessary for salvation and must precede baptism.

<sup>3</sup>Thus the chronological chart in the *History Newsletter*, October/November, Vol. 5, Nos. 1, 2, is misleading in its assertion that in 1843 "John Thomas studies aspects of Kingdom of God with N. Field, Indiana, and is rebaptized. Works with Age-to-Come evangelists until Thomas split in 1848."

## The Restoration of Israel

By the beginning of the nineteenth century, post-millennialism was the prevailing eschatological view of Christendom. Born of the optimism of Western civilization, postmillennialism posited a conversion of the world to Christianity, i.e., the establishment of the millennial Kingdom, prior to the return of Christ. The doctrine of the restoration of Israel was virtually unheard of; few would teach such a thing.

Some voices began to herald the message of Israel's millennial destiny, however. In the first decade of the nineteenth century in America, Elias Smith, co-founder of the revivalistic, nonsectarian Christian Connection,<sup>4</sup> preached extensively about the restoration of national Israel according to the flesh. In the United Kingdom, many eschatological issues were clarified by such men as Henry Drummond and Edward Irving in the Albury Park Conferences (1826-1830).

A man named James McMillan, born in Scotland in 1799, followed Irving's teachings closely. After he was expelled from the Presbyterian Church for rejecting the doctrine of the Trinity, McMillan came to America and settled in Rochester, New York, in 1836.<sup>5</sup> We shall return to McMillan shortly.

Dr. John Thomas was born in 1805 in London, England, the son of a minister. He migrated to America in 1832. That same year he was baptized by Walter Scott into the Campbellite movement.

In 1834, Thomas began editing his first serial publication, *The Apostolic Advocate*. In this journal he affirmed the premillennial return of Christ for the purpose of restoring the Kingdom to Israel and taught that through faith the Gentiles could participate in those promises.

## Joseph Marsh and the Millerite Millennium

Joseph Marsh was born in Vermont in 1802. Early in Marsh's life his family moved to New York, where his

<sup>4</sup>It should be noted that the Christians (or Christyans, not to be confused with the Campbellites) generally repudiated Trinitarian dogma (Smith himself was an Arian) and the immortality of the soul.

<sup>5</sup>Tim Ryan, correspondence.

parents were disfellowshipped by the Methodist Episcopal Church for rejecting the Trinity. Not long afterward, Marsh's mother died.

At the age of 16, Marsh walked to Rochester to live with his brother James. A few years later, in 1823, Marsh was baptized into the Christian Connection. The following year he entered the ministry.<sup>6</sup>

In 1839 Marsh became the editor of *The Christian Palladium*. In this journal he vigorously defended pre-millennial doctrine against the prevailing postmillennial theory. However, he was equally vigorous in denying the millennial restoration of Israel in the flesh.<sup>7</sup> This was entirely consistent with Millerite doctrine.

Marsh had finally become a Millerite in 1842. With William Miller and others, Marsh began to proclaim that Christ was going to return sometime in 1843. He defended this doctrine in the *Palladium*, as well as the Millerite theory of the millennium.

The Millerites, or Adventists, could be distinguished from the "millenarians" by their belief that "the descent of the New Jerusalem will be at the beginning of the thousand years."<sup>8</sup> Simply put, the Millerites regarded Revelation 21 as a restatement of Revelation 20. The New Heavens and New Earth were the millennial restoration. The destruction by fire of 2 Peter 3:10-12 was premillennial, not post-millennial.

For the Millerite, there was no room for a "probation" period whereby mortals could enter the millennium in natural bodies. Only resurrected saints would inherit the Kingdom. The Jews would indeed be restored to their land, but not in their mortal bodies; only those Jews who accepted Christ prior to His return would rule in the Kingdom, and then as immortal saints, just as the immortalized saints of all the kingdoms of the earth would retain their national distinctiveness.

Marsh still held onto these views when he began his own paper in 1844, a Millerite journal entitled *The Voice of Truth & Glad Tidings of the Kingdom at Hand*. Though explaining that he had been wrong about the coming of Christ in '43, Marsh wrote that:

We have *not* been mistaken in our faith relative to the second personal advent of Christ.—The evidences that he will come again have not been in the least invalidated by any mistakes of ours.

We have *not* been mistaken in our faith in the premillennial advent of Christ. The evidences that his coming precedes the millennial glory are conclusive.

Nor have we been mistaken in our views on the return of the Jews according to the flesh, to the land of

Canaan; the more critically the question has been investigated, the more satisfactory have the evidences appeared, that he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, but inwardly, one who is Christ's, and that such only will be gathered into the land promised to their father Abraham, the heavenly country.<sup>9</sup>

Marsh published several articles by such Millerite writers as Josiah Litch and J.B. Cook defending these doctrines extensively.

On January 29, 1847, a Charles Beecher of Fort Wayne, Iowa, wrote a personal letter challenging Marsh on his view of Israel's restoration. The letter was published, along with a response, on March 17, 1847.<sup>10</sup> Beecher was also a premillennialist, but he was not an Adventist. In fact, he was generally very hard on the Adventists.<sup>11</sup>

Beecher accused Marsh of spiritualizing the prophecies in much the same fashion as the postmillennialists; Marsh responded that in fact his denial of the restoration of Israel in the flesh was based on a literal interpretation of Scripture. Following the brief exchange, Marsh published a series of articles by Beecher on the millennium. He continued to allow Beecher to express his views after he renamed the paper the *The Advent Harbinger* later in the same year. Commenting on one of Beecher's articles, Marsh wrote:

Mr. Beecher's article in this day's paper we cannot fully endorse, yet it contains some valuable truths which we cheerfully present to our readers. The point from which we are constrained by the word of the Lord to dissent is, the doctrine of probation of a thousand years after the second advent of Christ. We design, the Lord willing, as soon as convenient, to give this question a thorough examination. Let others do the same in the light of the gospel and they will be guided in their investigations to a just conclusion of this matter.<sup>12</sup>

Gone was the firm conviction that the issue had been adequately explored by the Adventist movement; now the issue was one which he was going to examine more closely when he had the opportunity.

In the meantime, he continued to support the Millerite theory, publishing articles which confused Revelation 21 with Revelation 20. Marsh was to cling to this Millerite

<sup>9</sup>"Mistakes Explained," *The Voice of Truth*, May 27, 1846, Vol. 10, Nos. 8 & 9, 66.

<sup>10</sup>*Voice of Truth*, Vol. 13, No. 12, 92.

<sup>11</sup>Cf. *The Advent Harbinger*, August 3, 1847, Vol. 15, No. 6; August 31, 1847, Vol. 15, No. 10; September 21, 1847, Vol. 15, No. 13. Beecher also believed in the deity of Christ and the immortality of the soul.

<sup>12</sup>*Advent Harbinger*, July 6, 1847, Vol. 15, No. 2, 13.

<sup>6</sup>David Graham, "Church of God Connection & Review," *Wisdom & Power*, July 1991, Vol. 5, No. 4, 20ff.

<sup>7</sup>Cf., e.g., "Inferential Evidence," *The Christian Palladium*, August 2, 1843.

<sup>8</sup>"The Rise and Progress of Adventism," *The Advent Shield and Review*, ed. by Joshua Himes, 1844, Vol. 1, 47.



tradition for another two years.

### John Thomas and Joseph Marsh

In the meantime, John Thomas had come to the conclusion that his baptism by Walter Scott was invalid. The same month that Marsh published Charles Beecher's letter, Thomas was rebaptized. He wrote of the experience:

If such an immersed man come to understand and believe the truth after his immersion in his ignorance, let not such an one deceive himself by supposing his immersion is any better than a Jewish ablution. It is no better. It is utterly worthless; and being convinced of this, we were immersed a second time by one who had been re-immersed, and who declared to us he believed the gospel of the kingdom we desired to obey. We permitted him to do nothing but pronounce the words of Christ, and, having put us under the water, to raise us up again. We confessed to God before we went down into the water, and with our own voice called upon his name. We accepted neither prayer nor exhortation from him; but confined him strictly to the act defined. It is certain, for many reasons, he will never dispense to us in any form or shape again. He is in the hands of him who will deal with him according to his deeds; and there we leave him, being well assured that whatever may become of him, truth will be vindicated, and malice put to shame.<sup>13</sup>

Here we learn that Thomas' unnamed rebaptizer 1) had himself been re-immersed, 2) claimed to be in doctrinal agreement with Thomas, and 3) had since fallen into disrepute with Thomas. Neither Nathaniel Field nor Joseph Marsh could have been this rebaptizer, for neither of them believed in re-immersion and neither of them believed in the restoration of Israel according to the flesh<sup>14</sup> (though Marsh was soon to accept this doctrine); furthermore, Thomas was not to meet Marsh for several months.

Later that same year, a Brother Heyes told Marsh about Thomas' paper, *The Herald of the Future Age*. Marsh sent a copy of the *Harbinger* to Thomas and requested an

<sup>13</sup>"Elpis Israel's Wandering Star," *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*, January 1853, Vol. 3, No. 1, 18, 19.

<sup>14</sup>For Field's views on the restoration of Israel and rebaptism, cf. Sarah Roxanna Wince, "The Story of a Happy Christian Life.—No. 60," *The Restitution*, Sept. 2, 1908, Vol. 57, No. 33: "But the doctor never could grasp the return of Israel—smart as he was, and many an argument did Sister Russell's parents have with him on the subject.

"When Bros. Reed and Stephenson held a two week's meeting in Jeffersonville, they convinced their hearers that Israel would return to their own land, and Dr. Field had to listen to it all. Many were re-immersed, among the number being quite a body of Campbellites—some of the leading members, and as the Doctor would persist in taking in people from other churches without re-immersion many of the older members withdrew. . . ."

exchange.<sup>15</sup> Of the *Herald*, Marsh wrote:

"Herald of the Future Age."—We have just entered this monthly periodical upon our exchange list. It is published by John Thomas, M.D., in Richmond, Va. Though we cannot see that the editor is correct in his opinions, relative to the gathering, to the land of Palestine, of the Jews according to the flesh, yet we most heartily agree with him in several other important positions he has taken. As soon as we can find room, we shall give some extracts from this work.<sup>16</sup>

Prior to this time Thomas had been in fellowship with Nathaniel Field. He wrote:

In the days of our ignorance of the Gospel of the Kingdom<sup>17</sup> we were in denominational fraternity with Nathaniel Field, M.D.; but with Joseph Marsh, as a Christyan, Millerite, or ought else, we have had no ecclesiastical relation. In March, 1847, we left friend Nathaniel in fellowship with all the sentiments (though in the following September he renounced "the Reformation" of A[lexander] C[ampbell]); for at that time we publicly renounced all fellowship with "Christendom," and its names and denominations, one and all. Friend Joseph [Marsh] was then floundering in Millerism, and contending with "the saints" above named [Joshua Himes, George Storrs, etc.], and against the items of what he called "carnal judaism," wherever they chanced to show themselves. . . .

While he was in this condition, that is, in Sept. 1847, we wrote to him from Buffalo, N.Y., saying, "perceiving from the *Advent Harbinger* that you are a man of progress, that is to say, one who believes that it is possible, and even probable, that there is more truth in the Word of God than you may have yet discovered, I have concluded that, upon the principle of 'hearing all things, and holding fast to that which is good,' you would not only have no objection, but desire to hear if any light was with me more than you have already seen, I have already thought it would be well, therefore, to let you know that I would, if agreeable, speak in Rochester on the Gospel, or Glad Tidings of the Kingdom of God. If this meet your approbation and that of the friends, please drop me a line upon the subject, and informing me at what place I shall make my appearance." Being invited after this, we submitted things which they said "interested them more than they expected," and into which they said they would examine.<sup>18</sup>

In retrospect, Marsh wrote more candidly about his

<sup>15</sup>Editorial note appended to an article by Nathaniel Field, "Thomasism, No. 3," *The Prophetic Expositor and Bible Advocate*, May 15, 1859, Vol. 29, No. 24, 665.

<sup>16</sup>*Advent Harbinger*, August 17, 1847, Vol. 15, No. 8, 64.

<sup>17</sup>I.e., that accurate doctrinal understanding must precede baptism.

<sup>18</sup>"Historical Reminiscences," *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*, 1859, 65.

initial impressions of the *Herald* and described Thomas' subsequent visits:

On the receipt of the doctor's sheet, we found it chiefly filled with cutting sarcasm on A. Campbell and others, with whom the doctor appeared to be at war. The paper was poorly printed, on poor paper, and we subsequently learned from the doctor's own lips, it had a subscription-list some short of 400 subscribers. Hence his supporters and sympathizers were then few in number.<sup>19</sup>

Finding some good things in the doctor's paper, especially on the theme of life and death, and perceiving the doctor to be a man of talent, we introduced him and his paper to our brethren. We made frequent extracts from his paper, spoke favorably of it, and its editor, and finally invited the doctor to attend a conference in this city, where he became acquainted with many of our brethren, and at other similar meetings amongst us, which he attended, and where he disposed of his books, obtained subscribers to his paper, and received liberally of the contributions of our brethren. He spent, on one of these visits, nearly a week in our family, took part in family devotions, communed with us and others. . . .<sup>20</sup>

Little did Marsh know that this friendship would have disastrous consequences for the Rochester church.

After providing Marsh and several members of the Rochester congregation with subscriptions to the *Herald*, Thomas left for England in June of 1848.

In 1849, while in England, Thomas published his influential book *Elpis Israel*. Marsh also published a book that year, *The Bible Doctrine or True Gospel Faith*. *The Bible Doctrine* was a Millerite book; in it Marsh outlined the view of the millennium which he had held for so many years and had expressed in all of his previous journals. He still regarded Revelation 21 as a restatement of Revelation 20 and denied that Israel would be restored in the flesh; only immortalized saints would inherit the millennial New Heavens and New Earth.

In the latter part of that year, however, Marsh finally fulfilled his promise to his readers and Charles Beecher, having reexamined the issue of Israel's restoration. He wrote:

There is much darkness in the church relative to the character of the age to come. And many advent believers, who make the prophecies their study, are greatly confused on this important subject. It is true, that they have seen the absurdity of the popular faith of the church relative to the character of the Millenium [sic], or age to come [postmillennialism], but at the same time have been unable to give a consistent view of

its character, in harmony with the very many prophecies which evidently relate to that glorious period.

We have heard a number of labored discourses on the millenium [sic] of Rev. xx., in which a harmony of events predicted in that and the following chapter, was attempted in accordance of the views generally entertained among us, but every such effort, to us, has been a failure; consequently we have never adopted those views, but, at the same time, we have confessed our ignorance relative to the true harmony of the events named in those chapters. We have frequently remarked in reference to this matter that there was great darkness among us about the real character of the millenium [sic], or age to come, and that the order of events of that period was not understood by us. But we now say with strong assurance, that we have the true light on this important matter, which we with much satisfaction endeavor to impart to others.<sup>21</sup>

This was the beginning of his next book, *The Age to Come, or Glorious Restitution of All Things Spoken of by the Mouth of All the Holy Prophets Since the World Began*, which was published in 1851. In this book, he repudiated the Millerite view of the millennium and explained his new understanding that the New Heavens, New Earth, and New Jerusalem of Revelation 21 were to follow chronologically after the millennium of Revelation 20. Having moved the New Heavens and New Earth back a thousand years, Marsh now had room for that probation period during which mortal Jews and Gentiles could enter into the millennial Kingdom. A Jewish remnant would repent at Christ's return and enter the millennium in their mortal bodies.

This doctrinal shift probably represents the most crucial point in Marsh's career; it was at this point in 1850 that the doctrine of the Age-to-Come as we believe it today crystallized in Marsh's mind.

Of course Marsh had not come to these conclusions in a vacuum. Writing in a biased and sarcastic tone, Augustus Sintzenick, who had been Marsh's printer for nearly ten years, wrote:

The most intelligent and honest of the sub-divisions of Millerism, is that represented by the *Prophetic Expositor*, published in this city by Joseph Marsh, with whom, and his dishonest and sophistical course the last few years the readers of the *Herald* are somewhat acquainted. By continual reading of some of the more celebrated English authors and writers on sacred prophecy; and the frequent and earnest testimony to the truth by one of its most able and consistent teachers in this city,<sup>22</sup> the editor, several years ago, was induced to

<sup>19</sup>By contrast, Marsh had around 2,000 subscribers.

<sup>20</sup>*Expositor and Advocate*, May 15, 1859, Vol. 29, No. 24, 665.

<sup>21</sup>"The Age to Come," *Advent Harbinger and Bible Advocate*, January 5, 1850.

<sup>22</sup>Christadelphian historian Tim Ryan identifies this teacher as James McMillan.

give up many of the most nonsensical and absurd crochets of Millerism, and enter upon a more consistent method of interpreting scripture. This may be seen in a pamphlet published by him at this time, denominated "The Age to Come,"—which, though full of doctrinal and grammatical blunders, was a great advance on the previous positions of the editor. The author, though entirely ignorant that the Gospel of the Kingdom was identical with the sum and substance of *the Gospel* [i.e., that a perfect doctrinal understanding must precede baptism], nevertheless brought out, for the first time by Millerite authority, the doctrine of the restitution of all things—the Millennial reign of Jesus for 1000 years—the restoration of Israel to their land. . . . In the dissemination of correct views of prophecy, the *Expositor* was in the main indebted to English writers and to the *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*, from whom Marsh early copied and patterned. To them, and the early and consistent advocate of the one faith in this city, whom the Expositorial chief often had "the privilege" to hear, Joseph Marsh is mainly indebted to his knowledge of truth.<sup>23</sup>

Though Sintzenick may have overestimated Marsh's "indebtedness" to Thomas,<sup>24</sup> it is true that the combined influence of Beecher, McMillan, Thomas, the English literalists and others, as well as his own study and reflection, led Marsh to affirm the millennial restoration of Israel in the flesh.

Thomas was delighted that Marsh had come around on this point, and upon his return from England in 1850 resumed his correspondence with Marsh. They were mutually encouraged by their doctrinal similarities, and Thomas even advertized the *Age to Come* in the *Herald*. Thomas wrote that after his return to America:

we relanded in New York, and upon inquiring after Joseph, found that he had progressed. He has been in the receipt of all our writings to the present time, and we have been to Rochester expounding the Word. He has been gradually approaching our position, assumed for the first time in March, 1847, when we put off "all the sentiments," and put on Christ in baptism. He got so far as to be ashamed of the name "Adventist," and to propose a union of his periodical with the *Herald of the Kingdom!* He no longer liked to be called an Adventist, and has therefore changed his paper's title from "*Advent Harbinger*" to "*Prophetic Expositor*." But, as to uniting our periodicals, we begged to be excused.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>23</sup>"Rochester, N.Y., and some of its Religious Vagaries," *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*, 1860, 226.

<sup>24</sup>" . . . as our Expositorial friend lately expressed himself, 'Dr. Thomas was undertaking to be a leader,' and though Joseph was indebted for much of his new light to the Dr. in question [sic], still it was not desirable [sic] to the *Expositor* editor that this indebtedness should be in any way manifest." *Ibid.*, 227.

<sup>25</sup>"Historical Reminiscences," *Herald of the Kingdom and Age to Come*, 1859, 66.

Thomas explained to Marsh that their diverging views on what constituted a valid baptism would prevent a successful merger between the two papers. Marsh replied that he did not think there would be any problem; Thomas answered that there would, but invited Marsh to continue reprinting articles from the *Herald*.

Herein lay the seed of the destruction of their friendship and mutual cooperation. Thomas was being patient with Marsh, believing that since he had revised his millennial position, he had only to be baptized, his previous baptism being defective. But Marsh did not believe, and had never believed, in re-immersion.

### The Embryo of Conflict

As time went on and Marsh did not agree to be rebaptized, Thomas grew impatient. In the April, 1852, issue of the *Herald*, Thomas wrote:

On the Lord's day evening we spoke at the College Hall in Crosby street, on the question, "*What is the gospel?*" This is the most important inquiry that can be mooted in these times; and one which it is absolutely necessary our Advent friends should take into their most serious consideration. If a man be right on all other scripture subjects, but wrong in this, he cannot be saved; for it is "he that believes (the gospel) and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark xvi. 15,16). . . . Let our friends who believe in the personal return of King Jesus from afar, and in the existence of his kingdom in Palestine in all the Age to Come (and with whom we have a sincere and abiding sympathy)—look into this matter. . . .

In dismissing this subject for the present, we would propound the following question to our friends—If the "kingdom to be restored to Israel" (Acts i.6; Matt. xix.28; Luke xxii.29,30) is to be set up by the God of heaven in their land, (Jer. xxxiii.15,17; Mic. iv.8) and it be the subject matter of the gospel, as it unquestionably can be proved to be; (Matt. xxiv.14) and if the Twelve Tribes of the natural Israel are to be its *subjects*, (Exo. xix.5,6; Isa. li.4) and the spiritual brethren of Jesus its *rulers*, as is also demonstrable (Rev. ii.26,27; iii.21; xx.4; xxi.24,26,)—how can a man who, before and long after his immersion, believed that the gospel kingdom is beyond the skies; that the Twelve Tribes were not its subjects and would never be restored; that the nations would all be destroyed at the coming of the Lord; and that there was no Age to Come of a thousand years duration, during which nations in the flesh will live under their own vines and fig-trees blessed in Abraham's Seed—how can such a man, we earnestly and respectfully inquire, have believed and obeyed the Gospel of the Kingdom? We submit this question to the calm and deliberate examination of our friends, especially of the editor of the *Advent Harbinger*, who is the most liberal and

candid conductor of a paper we know.<sup>26</sup>

Marsh responded to Thomas' earnest question, as requested:

We readily admit that the question, "What is the gospel?" is one of vast importance, and but imperfectly understood by the great mass of professed believers in it; but to say unqualifiedly that those who are "right on all other scripture subjects, but wrong in this, he cannot be saved," is more than we can do; for if we understand the genius of the teachings of Christ, he makes provision for the imperfections in knowledge of his disciples. The very name, *disciple* implies this; for a disciple is a *learner*, and a learner is not perfect in knowledge. If the editor of the *Herald* means to be understood that a man cannot be saved who is imperfect in knowledge, or is partially wrong, we differ from him.<sup>27</sup>

Marsh went on to explain why he did not believe in re-immersion. First, as the apostles baptized people immediately upon their profession of faith in Christ, the baptisands must have had incomplete knowledge. Baptism comes first; greater understanding comes later. Second, neither Christ nor the apostles rebaptized people who had grown in knowledge of the truth. Third, as baptism is a symbol of Christ's death and resurrection, affirmation of that doctrine is sufficient to qualify one for the act. Fourth, the Ethiopian eunuch was baptized after professing faith in Christ as the Son of God, and a "hearty profession of the same faith, is all that the Scriptures authorize us to require of candidates for baptism." Fifth, the apostles were not rebaptized, even after Christ had risen from the dead. "Hence," he wrote, "we conclude that a person who believed the gospel, though ignorant relative to many things pertaining to it, was considered a fit subject for baptism, by Christ and his apostles, without being required to have baptism repeated, as his knowledge should increase."

Besides, Marsh went on, most of those who have been baptized *do* believe in God, Jesus, and a resurrection to immortality in the Kingdom. Why should these be rebaptized because of some imperfectly understood details? "Some have advanced further than others in the science of the gospel, but no one (the Editor of the *Herald* not excepted,) we apprehend, is *perfect* in knowledge, or has completed his studies in the school of Christ. Then, shall we say that no one's baptism is valid? We cannot."

The point of difference between Thomas and Marsh can be simply stated: Must affirmation of the premillennial Kingdom and restoration of Israel precede baptism? Thomas took the affirmative position, and Marsh the negative, though they both agreed on the doctrine itself. Yet as far as Thomas was concerned, until Marsh was baptized with this new understanding, he was living in disobedience

to the gospel. However, there was still time for Marsh to change his mind; their relationship was still cordial.

That is why Marsh was pleased to announce that Thomas was going to deliver a series of lectures at the June, 1853 conference in Rochester.<sup>28</sup> At the conference, Thomas convinced four people of his position and rebaptized them. James McMillan was among the baptisands.

Marsh and his colleagues were still unconcerned. Afterward, J.B. Cook wrote that in spite of the minor doctrinal differences, he found the conference to be one of the best. The millennium, the reign of the Messiah and the saints, the restoration of Israel, and the New Heavens and New Earth had all been discussed, and he felt strengthened in the faith of Christ's coming Kingdom.

(To be continued in next issue.)

---

<sup>28</sup>*Harbinger*, April 16, 1853.

#### Note

Many thanks are extended to those who supplied photocopies, the use of microfilm, and access to journals which made the writing of this article possible. Thanks are also extended to those whose correspondence, questions, and comments contributed to this research, as well as those who critically reviewed the article. These include Janet Stilson, editor of the *Church of God General Conference History Newsletter*, Church of God historian David Graham, Christadelphian Tim Ryan, ex-Christadelphian Allon Maxwell, and those who allowed us access to the Atlanta Bible College/Church of God General Conference archives.

---

#### EMPHATIC DIAGLOTT

In 1857, the firm [newspaper publisher—ed.] sold out to John Wilson, a half brother of Benjamin who had been the general printer and newsgatherer of the firm. The equipment was then divided, Benjamin taking a portion of the type and stereotyping with him to another building. Benjamin then began the publication of a short-lived religious newspaper called *The Gospel Banner*, and then began work upon what was described in the late 19th century as "the most unique book that was ever published," his *Emphatic Diaglott*. . . . For eight years, Benjamin Wilson "worked hard and steadily to accomplish his purpose, prosecuting it oftentimes under discouraging and embarrassing circumstances.

—Mead, Allen. Chapter 18. *Geneva, Illinois*, Sesquicentennial Commemorative Edition, 1985, 302.

#### Correction:

The Summer Issue, 1992, was a special issue but was labeled Vol. 5:1. Also, the first issue published jointly with *The Restitution Herald* was 5:1. Libraries: bind both 5:1s together.

---

<sup>26</sup>Quoted in the *Advent Harbinger*, May 29, 1852.

<sup>27</sup>*Advent Harbinger*, May 29, 1852.

was rolled away. Only the wrappings were left inside the tomb. He was seen alive by many infallible witnesses (Acts 1:3); by 500 brethren at the same time (1 Cor. 15:6).

The apostles went everywhere proclaiming a crucified, risen, and coming Savior. Days earlier they were crushed, defeated, discouraged, and afraid. Then a total change came over them. "They were all filled with the Holy Spirit" (Acts 1:4). In face of tremendous persecution and opposition, they went out with boldness to preach a risen Christ because they knew He was alive—back from the grave.

Jesus didn't go on living during death. He gave a prophecy of His whereabouts for those three days. "For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth" (Matt. 12:40). Jesus didn't go anywhere or preach to anybody during those three days—not any more than Jonah did during his stay in the whale's belly. Jesus was in the stillness of death during that time.

### He Conquered Death and the Grave (Rev. 1:18)

The best news the world ever heard came out of a graveyard near Jerusalem. Jesus is alive from the dead! Every sunrise is God's Easter greeting. Jesus has risen (Matt. 28:6).

His followers came to the tomb early Sunday morning to embalm Him, not to celebrate His resurrection (Mark 16:1). How do you report a resurrection? Would anyone believe that you talked to an angel? This fellow who has risen from the dead will meet you in a few days on a mountain agreed upon earlier (Matt. 28:16). Just hustle on over there. He'll be waiting for you.

When Jesus rose from the dead, He didn't go to those who crucified Him to prove how wrong they had been. Instead He went to those who loved Him and needed His encouragement and comfort. Would we have done that, or would we have tried to prove how wrong Pilate and the Pharisees were? "I told you so!"

The resurrection of Christ didn't change the political and material situation. After



Pictured above is the tombstone of your editor's parents. They lie buried in Prospect Hill Cemetery, Front Royal, Virginia. How thankful we are for the promise of our Savior: "... the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice. And shall come forth . . ." (John 5:28, 29). We rejoice in the great and precious promises of God's Word, not only at Easter, but throughout the year.

Easter Pilate was still governor of Judea; Caiaphas was still the high priest; the scribes and Pharisees still held reign of religious life; the tax collectors still bled the people as before; the money changers still sat at the temple cheating the people.

Then, too, there was the mixed response of the disciples. Some "worshipped him; but some doubted" (Matt. 28:17). My faith falters sometimes. I suspect yours does too, and I remember how very human the disciples were. Then I'm encouraged.

The doctrine of the resurrection is not a trivial appendage to Christianity to be accepted or rejected at will. It's the foundation of our Christian faith. If Jesus Christ was not bodily raised from the grave, Christianity is based on falsehood. See the serious implications we must face "if the dead rise not" (1 Cor. 15:12-20).

Moreover, the resurrection is mentioned 108 times in the New Testament. That's no useless repetition of God's Word. The physical resurrection of Christ is the very cornerstone of our faith and assures us that He was truly the Son of God—"declared to be the Son of God with power . . . by the resurrection from the dead" (Rom. 1:4).

God continues to honor the testimony of all who proclaim the risen Christ who

can save "to the uttermost [forever] all that come to God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb. 7:25).

The angel invited the women to examine the empty tomb. Good evidence is also a full heart as the hymn says: "You ask me how I know He lives? He lives within my heart."

### He Assures Us of Immortality in the Age to Come

Our Lord, "who spoke never like man spoke," said: "Because I live, ye shall live also" (John 14:19). As God raised up Jesus, so He will also raise up us. Paul clearly reveals this fact to us. "And God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power" (1 Cor. 6:14). The New Testament makes clear that the death and resurrection of Christ accomplished wonderful and basic things for every believer. These things are ours because of our position in Christ, not because of what we've done. Easter crowns with certainty man's hope of immortality. The following has been used many times to illustrate the point.

**Death Is Like an Unsprouted Bulb**  
Among the pyramids of Egypt Lord

Lindsay, the English traveler, came across a mummy, the inscription upon which proved to be 2,000 years old.

In examining the mummy after it was unwrapped, he found in one of its closed hands a small root. He took the little bulb from the closed hand and planted it in rich soil, allowed the dew and rain of heaven to descend upon it, and in a few weeks, to his astonishment, the root burst forth and blossomed into a beautiful flower.

No matter how long death has kept us in the ground, when the trumpet sounds and the Son shines, and it is time for the resurrection of our bodies, then the bulb will burst open into a newness of life as we have never known before.

We tend to shy away from the subject of death, and many deny its reality. Friends, death is a reality. I heard of a woman who told a group that she lost her husband. It

sounded as if they were shopping and became separated, but when a person dies he is not lost, he is dead. Another euphemism for death which makes no sense is "passed away" or just plain "passed." It sounds as if the deceased passed from the seventh grade to the eighth grade.

Some psychiatrists, psychologists, counselors, and grief therapists are encouraging people to use words such as died, dead, and death as a part of facing reality. I believe that this is emotionally healthy. Death is a reality, but so is the resurrection.

We have a pledge, a downpayment on immortality (1 Cor. 15:20-23). Today we are seeking eternal life (Rom. 2:7). Obviously, we do not now possess it. Why seek for that which we already have?

The resurrection is the central theme of the New Testament witness. Easter has

become a universal, joyful celebration, but many Christians have not learned the meaning of Easter for everyday life. We all need to say with Paul: "I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death" (Phil. 3:10, NIV). The resurrection power of Jesus Christ is exercised on believers, bringing justification. Christ bids you come and worship the God of resurrection power. He can bring a new life into your situation.

The Greek word for "resurrection" is *anastasis*, which means "a standing or a rising up." One place in the New Testament it has the prefix "ex"—*exanastasis* which means "a standing up out of" (Phil. 3:11). In other words the church is promised a resurrection out from among other  
*(Continued on page 31)*

---

# The Most Important Women in My Life

by Pastor Jeffrey Fletcher  
Hammond, LA

She showed me what Jesus would have been like had He been a mother.

**T**HERE ARE MANY CONCERNS about the relationship between men and women that plague our society and our churches. Feminism strives to throw off the shackles of women's subservience to men. No longer do they wish to play second fiddle in a male-dominated society. In the church there are ongoing questions about the roles of women in ministry—especially pastoral ministry. In the workplace society is painfully becoming aware of ways in which women are not being properly respected by their male co-workers. "Sexual harassment" has become one of the great buzzwords of the '90's. While it is no doubt true

that some women are carrying their concerns a bit too far, nevertheless men do need to be more sensitive about the ways they treat women—women in the workplace, women in the family, and women in the church.

There's a cliché that says, "Behind every successful man you'll find a good woman." I'll leave it to the judgment of God as to how successful I am, but I will say this: Whatever measure of success I might have in this life I owe in great part not to just one, but to many good women.

My mother has been to me a great example of humility. She exemplifies the words of Jesus, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." (Acts 20:35.)

She has consistently placed the needs of her family first. She held me when I cried, she sang to me, changed me, and read me stories. She listened to my prayers. She showed me what Jesus would have been like had He been a mother. It's been said that God couldn't be everywhere at once, so He made mothers. I affirm the sentiment behind that statement. My mother's quiet faith, her humble spirit, and her unwavering dedication to the Lord and to His church have served as my example and inspiration throughout my life. "Her children rise and call her blessed." It is a great tribute to the faith of my mother that even as adults, all four of her children continue in their faith—three of us are involved in ministry.

Moses taught Israel the importance of honoring their mothers (it's the fifth commandment). Paul reminds the church that we must continue to honor our mothers. Mother's Day certainly provides us with an opportunity to honor Mom, but that honor needs to extend throughout the year and throughout our lives. I won't trivialize the concept of honoring mothers by suggesting to you ways of doing it. We all know how to honor Mom; the important thing is that we never forget to consistently do so.

When Paul wrote to Timothy he reminded him of the faith which began in Timothy's grandmother, Lois. I can identify with Timothy, for I had the wonderful blessing of two grandmothers who were women of faith. Both women have served as great examples of faith both to their families and to their local churches. One grandmother, even into her eighties, continued to teach Sunday School. How wonderful it is to be a part of a multi-generational family of faithfulness—to have these great resources from which to draw. In the days before women sought official positions of ministry, they certainly still ministered. I wonder how many of our churches would be there today if it hadn't been for the faithfulness and dedication of our grandmothers teaching Sunday school, playing the piano, and giving out love and hugs to the little sunbeams.

Our grandmothers have special needs of which we must be aware. In many cases they are alone. We must care for them by seeing to it that they are not lonely. If there is no family nearby, it is the place of the church to visit them and be their family.

They deserve every bit of honor and respect we can give.

My sisters (I have three) have taught me how to get along with women. I have often joked that I had three mothers growing up, for my two older sisters instinctively cared for me in a motherly way. One sister read books to me (undoubtedly the basis for my lifelong love of reading), another sister played ball with me (I broke

---

I never really knew  
who I was until I  
met my wife.

---

her nose in a game of one on one). They taught me how to be friends with girls. My younger sister taught me how to be patient and compassionate toward those smaller and less skilled than me.

We live in an age where society in general and men in particular tend to exploit women sexually. Women are often viewed as objects, not as persons. More men would do well to draw on their attitudes toward sisters and apply them to the non-spouse women in their lives. Perhaps then women would be less exploited and more respected.

I never really knew who I was until I met my wife. It is no accident that God said, "The two shall be one flesh." I didn't become a whole person until I married her. She has allowed me to do something I was never comfortable doing before . . . to be myself. With her I have found one person with whom I can be completely open and honest about myself . . . and she still loves me. Paul tells us husbands to love our wives as Christ loved the church. I've not been very successful at this, but I'm trying. Men, we have been commanded to love our wives like we love our own bodies. We are to live with them in respect. They are not our slaves, to be coerced or battered into submission; they are co-heirs of the gracious gift of life (1 Pet. 3:7).

Now that we are parents, I see my wife in new ways. Not only is she a friend and a lover, she is also the mother of my chil-

dren. I now see in her many of the same qualities that I love and appreciate about my own mother. The same sacrificial attitude of putting her family first is obviously present in her life. She cares continually for our four children's many needs and demands. She supports me; she helps me. I am better at what I do because of her love and support. *I love her.*

And now I have a daughter. She is small and precious. It is humbling for me to know that her attitude about herself and about men is going to come largely from me. A great deal of her self-worth will come from Daddy. I must teach her to respect herself. I must teach her that her most important qualities are her inner beauty and her trust in God. I must give her enough love and affection as she grows up so that she will not be tempted to seek it elsewhere in unhealthy ways. I must not "exasperate her, but bring her up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4). It is a challenging responsibility. Through the grace of God, may I be sufficient to the task.

These are only some of the important women in my life. There have been others: pastors' wives, Sunday School teachers, and now as an adult there are my co-laborers. Many dedicated Christian women have served as a positive influence in my life, and continue to do so. Paul tells us to treat these women as members of our family. The older women deserve to be treated with the *agape* love and respect of sisters (1 Tim. 5:2). While society continues to struggle with issues of equality, sexual harassment, pornography, and the exploitation of women, the church must continue to set the highest of standards. Women are not perfect madonnas, nor are they objects; they are partners in faith and ministry. We must treat them with dignity.

There are many valuable ministries for women in society and in the church. For those women who look at their lives and doubt the importance of their achievements, let them be reminded that "The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world." Christian womanhood should be celebrated for the many contributions women make to our families and our churches. I thank God for the many Christian women in my life, let the reader be strongly encouraged to do the same! ❧

# God's People

(Part One  
of Three)

by Pastor Francis E. Burnett  
Belle Plaine, Iowa

**W**HY SHOULD ONE WRITE on a subject with a title that seems to refer to all people to whom God has given life but who have chosen to live any way they have desired? In Acts 17:26 we read, "... and hath made of one blood all nations for to dwell on all the face of the earth."<sup>1</sup> Another translation reads, "God started with one man and made all from him." However, the apostle, in writing the first Corinthian letter, wrote, "Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the Church of God" (1 Cor. 10:32). To be specific, then, the people of God are set forth in the Bible. They are those who have served Him and will continue to do so even into eternity. To be even more specific, the people who serve God are divided into two groups—Israel and the church. This writing will be separated into three portions—Israel, the church, and the comparison and contrast between the two.

## I. Israel

There was a definite beginning through which our God brought forth a people chosen of Him.



Francis Burnett has been a pastor in our General Conference all his life, serving churches in Missouri, Ohio, Michigan, and Nova Scotia. He was also national evangelist for our Conference for several years. Being "retired," he is now pastor of the Church of God at Koszta, Iowa. Having done considerable research on the subject of Israel, he is able to enlighten most of us

in this three-part series. If you'd like to correspond with him his address is Rt 2, Box 13, Belle Plaine, IA 52208.

That was through Abraham, a descendant of Shem. In that lineage was Eber, Nahor, Terah, and Abraham. It is generally accepted that "Hebrew" is a name derived from Eber. It is also thought by some that the meaning pertains to those from the other side of the river, which was the Euphrates.<sup>2</sup> Both understandings would pertain to Abraham. This is all given to show that Abraham was not an Israelite but was a Hebrew. Abraham was chosen because of his character. God's description of Abraham's faith is found in these words: "I have chosen him, so that he will direct his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing what is right and just, so that the LORD will bring about for Abraham what he has promised him" (Gen. 18:19, NIV). The "promise" made to Abraham was a promise with more than one part. He was to have a son even in his old age, and that of Sarah. Through that son his descendants would multiply as the "sand of the sea," the "stars of heaven," or the "dust of the earth." To one without an heir, this was a stupendous kind of thinking. Yet the Scriptures tell us that "Abraham believed God."

The son named Isaac was born, was given a wife, and had two sons who were named Esau and Jacob. During the pregnancy the children were struggling in the womb of Rebekah. Rebekah's response to it was, "Why is this happening to me?" She went to inquire of the Lord. The Lord said to her, "Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples from within you will be separated; one people will be stronger than the other, and the older will serve the younger" (Gen. 25:22, 23, NIV).

Because of deceiving his father to get the firstborn's blessing, Jacob had to flee the anger of Esau. He went to Haran, the home of Rebekah's



relatives. The place was also called Padanaram. Jacob worked for Laban, the brother of Rebekah. After twenty years God appeared to Jacob in a dream and told him to return to the land of his father. This was done and Jacob returned with two wives, two concubines, eleven sons, and one daughter. In addition, he had large herds of cattle and goats and flocks of sheep plus camels and other holdings. Soon after returning, God told Jacob, "Go up to Bethel, and dwell there and make there an altar unto God, that appeared unto thee when thou fleddest from the face of Esau thy brother" (Gen. 35:1). During the worship period at Bethel, God appeared again to Jacob and said, "Your name is Jacob, but you will no longer be called Jacob; your name will be Israel." God said further, "I am God Almighty; be fruitful and increase in number. A nation and a community of nations will come from you, and kings will come from your body" (Gen. 35:10, 11, NIV). Even before Jacob and his great family and possessions had left Padanaram, God told him, "Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed" (Gen. 32:28, KJV). The name means "ruler with God," as noted in the Companion Bible.<sup>3</sup> From Strong's Concordance, the Hebrew meaning is "he will rule as God." The Hebrew word is a derivation of two words, one meaning "the Almighty" and the other meaning "the prevailer."<sup>4</sup>

It was after God had brought Moses back from Midian to lead the Israelites out of Egypt that the importance of the nation began to be known. God told Moses to tell the Israelites, "I will take you as my own people, and I will be your God. Then you will know that I am the LORD your God, who brought you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians. . . . I am the LORD" (Ex. 6:7, 8, NIV). It was after the coming out of Egypt when Moses was preparing to ascend into the mountain to receive the Law that God said to Moses, "Now if you will obey me fully and keep my covenants, then out of all the nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy na-

tion.' These are the words you are to speak to the Israelites" (Ex. 19:5, 6, NIV).

In that set of laws (Deuteronomy) God told Moses, "For you are a people holy to the LORD your God. The LORD your God has chosen you out of all the peoples on the face of the earth to be his people, his treasured possession. The LORD did not set his affection on you and choose you because you were more numerous than other peoples. . . . But it was because the LORD loved you and kept the oath he swore to your forefathers. . . . Know therefore that the LORD your God is God; he is a faithful God, keeping his covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love him and keep his commands" (Deut. 7:6-9, NIV). The Soncino Commentary reads on this section, especially verse 7, "The root meaning of the verb ["set"] is "to fasten together." The signification is: God espoused Israel with an indissoluble bond."<sup>5</sup> In further instruction God said, ". . . for you are a people holy to the LORD your God. Out of all the peoples on the face of the earth, the LORD has chosen you to be his treasured possession" (Deut. 14:2, NIV).

Further importance of Israel's position before God is shown in the following. "For I could wish that I myself were cursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, those of my own race, the people of Israel. Theirs is the adoption as sons; theirs the divine glory, the covenants, the receiving of the law, the temple worship and the promises. Theirs are the patriarchs, and from them is traced the human ancestry of Christ" (Rom. 9:3-5, NIV). We urge you at this point in this writing to feel the impact of the promise(s) of God to Israel who were and are called "his treasured possession." God will not alter that which has gone out of His lips. God does not change, not even one bit. This is why you and I believe today in His Son Jesus and expect the future to be exactly as promised. Israel was chosen to be a very special people—then, now, and in the future.

#### Israel: A Special People

Israel was selected by the God of heaven to be His. They are indeed shown throughout both the Old and New Testa-

ments to be a special people. This, of course, is especially true in the Old Testament. This, however, does not make it of any less value. One can understand how important such distinction was in these words: "And all the peoples of the earth shall see that the name of the LORD is called upon thee" (Deut. 28:10, Soncino). The commentary reads, "God fulfills Israel's desires as a demonstration that they are His people" (Soncino).<sup>6</sup> In Psalm 147:19, 20 we read, "He has revealed his word to Jacob, his laws and decrees to Israel. He has done this for no other nation; they do not know his laws. Praise the LORD" (NIV). The Apostle Paul revealed this same fact in Romans 9:4, 5.

As Moses stood before Pharaoh God commanded him to say, "Thus saith the LORD, Israel is my son, even my first-born" (Ex. 4:22, KJV). The Hebrew meaning of "firstborn" is "chief."<sup>7</sup> From Hebrew and Jewish history, we do know that the position carried with it the privilege of inheritance. And finally in this segment having to do with the specialness of Israel we read: "And the LORD hath avouched thee this day to be His own treasure, as He hath promised thee, and that thou shouldest keep all His commandments; and to make thee high above all nations that He hath made, in praise, and in name, and in glory; and that thou mayest be a holy people unto the LORD thy God, as He hath spoken" (Deut. 26:18, 19, Soncino). Soncino comments: "In praise, in name and in glory" among the nations [is] by virtue of Israel's special relationship to God."<sup>8</sup>

#### Israel: If You Obey

The Lord God was very specific in setting forth the way Israel should live. Living by His righteousness is not unlike the principles taught in the New Testament. In Leviticus 26:12 one finds the positive, "I will walk among you and be your God, and you will be my people." Then there was a warning, "But if you will not listen to me and carry out all these commands, and if you reject my decrees and abhor my laws and fail to carry out all my commands and so violate my covenant, then I will do this to you"

(Lev. 26:14-16, NIV).

Let us now consider some of the scriptures that come from the prophets that let Israel know exactly what would happen if they disobeyed. "I will scatter you like chaff driven by the desert wind. This is your lot, the portion I have decreed for you," declares the LORD, 'because you have forgotten me and trusted in false gods' " (Jer. 13:24, 25, NIV). "For the Israelites will live many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or sacred stones, without ephod or idol" (Hosea 3:4, NIV). "Therefore because of you, Zion will be plowed like a field, Jerusalem will become a heap of rubble, the temple hill a mound overgrown with thickets" (Micah 3:12, NIV). " 'When I called, they did not listen; so when they called, I would not listen,' says the LORD Almighty. 'I scattered them with a whirlwind among all the nations, where they were strangers. The land was left so desolate behind them that no one could come or go' " (Zech. 7:13, 14, NIV).

Israel has been punished for disobedience since the time of the twelve spies, if not before that. However, the severest punishment began after Joshua and that generation, which had experienced so many of God's great miracles, died. No other people in the world have been so punished, are even now, or will be yet until their Messiah, our Savior Jesus, returns to fulfill the promises of God for the future. "Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and proclaim to her that her hard service has been completed, that her sin has been paid for, that she has received from the LORD's hand double for all her sins" (Isa. 40:1, 2, NIV). Though this is to be applied to the future as the tone of the writing indicates, it does show what God did to Israel. It is not yet finished. From Jeremiah we read, "I will repay them double for their wickedness and their sin, because they have defiled my land with the lifeless forms of their vile images and have filled my inheritance with their detestable idols" (Jer. 16:18, NIV). Again, no other nation has been so punished; that is, no others who have had God as her protector, provider, judge, and more.

As we bring this segment to a close, let

us be reminded of the items we have learned which have been brought out in this article. Israel is God's "firstborn son . . . treasured possession." The God who cannot lie will not break His promised vow that Israel was all of these things to Him and that He would never forsake them. And so we end this segment with God's Word from Isaiah: " 'For a brief moment I abandoned you, but with deep compassion I will bring you back. In a surge of anger I hid my face from you for a moment, but with everlasting kindness I have compassion on you,' says the LORD your Redeemer" (Isa. 54:7, 8, NIV).

### Israel: With Great Compassion

"With great compassion" reveals God's Spirit and attitude involved in the redeeming of Israel, as portrayed in Isaiah 54. As an introduction to this segment, let us be reminded of the condition of that nation, the people chosen of God. As there is today in our Christian/non-Christian world, so there was in Israel. In Israel there were always a few who were dedicated to serving God and others that were not. "Unless the LORD Almighty had left us some survivors, we would have become like Sodom, we would have been like Gomorrah" (Isa. 1:9, NIV). One need only read the story of the forty years' wandering to understand Paul's reference to God's not being "pleased with most of them." But there were a few that followed God's laws and the giving of the offerings for praise, thanksgiving, and atonement. Paul names several of them in Hebrews 11. Those and many more were faithful to God during their lifetimes. They were not the sinners of Israel. They were not the "outcasts" or the unbelievers (doubters). They were not those who had eyes but were blind and ears but were deaf. (See Isa. 42:19; 6:9, 10; Matt. 13:14-16.) Most of the Israelites were sinners. They transgressed against God. Isaiah was told to call them "rulers of Sodom" and "people of Gomorrah" (Isa. 1:10, NIV).

The redemption of Israel has to do with the sinners and outcasts. These were dispersed into all parts of the earth because of disobeying God's laws, because of disbelief, and because of outright dis-

owning Jehovah as their God. Those who "followed that rock" were righteous in God's sight. Their redemption has been accounted for already because they believed God and followed in the ways He had shown them. The Apostle Paul described in his letter to the brethren in Rome the difference between the faithful of Israel and those who had been blinded by unbelief. "What then? What Israel sought so earnestly it did not obtain, but the elect did. The others were hardened" (Rom. 11:7, NIV). The elect of Israel had received what was "sought so earnestly," just like many faithful followers of Jesus did later in that "these were all commended for their faith, yet none of them [as yet have] received what had been promised . . . so that only together with us [the called-out in Christ] would they [the chosen and faithful saints prior to the cross, including faithful Israel] be made perfect" (Heb. 11:39, 40, NIV). One cannot leave out that during Paul's ministry, and in fact, from the time that Jesus began his ministry, the Jews (Israelites) were believing on Jesus and accepting Him as Savior. When they did this, they were no longer Israelite as the Gentiles were no longer Gentile but were "all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:27).

### Israel: Thy Savior, Thy Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob

These are the words given to Isaiah: "Thou shalt also suck the milk of the nations, and shalt suck the breast of kings; and thou shalt know that I the LORD am thy Savior, and I, the Mighty One of Jacob, thy Redeemer" (Isa. 60:16, Soncino). As noted previously, those who will be regathered are the ones who were cast out, scattered and exiled because of the sin and distrust in the living God. Micah's description of the regathering reads: " 'In that day,' declares the LORD, 'I will gather the lame; I will assemble the exiles and those I have brought to grief. I will make the lame a remnant, those driven away a strong nation. The LORD will rule over them in Mount Zion from that day forever' " (Micah 4:6, 7, NIV).

### Israel: Thou Art Mine

The redemption of God's "chosen,"

His "firstborn," His "Son," His "treasured possession" is one of the major points from Isaiah. Remember, Isaiah is considered the leading prophet with this major prophetic message: "But now, this is what the LORD says, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: 'Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are mine'" (43:1, NIV). "Have called"—the latter verb "indicates the creation of a special relationship between God and Israel and the latter's appointment to His service."<sup>1</sup> "You will be called the Holy People, The Redeemed of the LORD; and you will be called Sought After, The City no longer Deserted" (Isa. 62:12, NIV).

Read the prophecies of Hosea and Jeremiah 31 from the New International Version. "See, I will bring them from the land of the north and gather them from the ends of the earth. Among them will be the blind and the lame, expectant mothers and women in labor; a great throng will return . . . because I am Israel's father, and Ephraim is my firstborn son. . . . 'He who scattered Israel will gather them and will watch over his flock like a shepherd.' For the LORD will ransom Jacob and redeem them from the hand of those stronger than they. . . . This is what the LORD says: . . . 'Restrain your voice from weeping and your eyes from tears, for your work will be rewarded,' declares the LORD. So there is hope for your future," declares the LORD. 'Your children will return to their own land.' " (Jer. 31:8-17a). One great promise was made to Ephraim. "Return, O Israel, to the LORD your God. . . . 'I will heal their waywardness and love them freely, for my anger has turned away from them. . . . O Ephraim, what more have I to do with idols? I will answer him and care for him. I am like a green pine tree; your fruitfulness comes from me'" (Hosea 14:1-8, NIV).

### Israel: I Have Loved You

"I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with loving kindness. I will build you up again and you will be rebuilt, O Virgin Israel" (Jer. 31:3, 4, NIV). Another outstanding section of Scripture showing the redemption of Israel is found in Isaiah 54. "Sing, O

barren woman, you who never bore a child; burst into song, shout for joy . . . because more are the children of the desolate woman than of her who has a husband,' says the LORD. . . . 'For your Maker is your husband—the LORD Almighty is his name—the Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer; he is called the God of all the earth. The LORD will call you back as if you were a wife deserted and distressed in spirit . . . but with everlasting kindness I will have compassion on you,' says the LORD your Redeemer" (Isa. 54:1-8, NIV).

God will bring back the thousands upon thousands of Israelites from the land of the enemy (Jer. 31:16). God will forgive all of their sin. "I will cleanse them from all their sin they have committed against me and will forgive all their sins of rebellion against me" (Jer. 33:8, NIV). "For I will take you out of the nations; I will gather you from all the countries and bring you back into your own land. I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you. . . . And I will put my Spirit in you. . . . You will live in the land I gave your forefathers; you will be my people, and I will be your God. I will save you from all your uncleanness" (Ezek. 36:24-29a, NIV). Ezekiel 37 shows the condition of many of the Israelites. "Therefore prophesy and say to them: 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: O my people, I am going to open your graves and bring you up from them; I will bring you back to the land of Israel. Then you, my people, will know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves and bring you up from them. I will put my Spirit in you and you will live, and I will settle you in your own land. Then you will know that I the LORD have spoken, and I have done it, declares the LORD'" (Ezek. 37:12-14, NIV). The prophecy of resurrection is very real. (See Isa. 26:19; Job 19:25-27; Psa. 71:20-24; Dan. 12:2.) Remember, the Israelites that are being raised and brought back from exiled lands along with the living are not the righteous ones. Those persons, also called the elect, have been accounted for by the writer of the

Hebrew letter: "These are all heroes of faith, but they did not receive what was promised, since God had made provision for us to have something better, and they were not to reach perfection except with us" (Heb. 11:39, 40, Jerusalem Bible). The "something better" is the first resurrection of all the saints when Jesus returns. The cleansing of the mortal nation of Israel will be through Jesus Christ. "This is why Christ can make a new agreement between God and man. The people broke God's law while they were living under the first agreement (Old Testament or Mosaic covenant). But the death of Christ was the price of the New Covenant to set them free from sin. Now those people who have been called by God may receive the eternal inheritance that God promised" (Heb. 9:15, The Simple English Bible). A description of God's cleansing and Israel's repentance is found in Zechariah 12:10 and through 13:1.

One important item in examining any and all of the scriptures, especially in regard to Israel, is the emphatic "I." Over and over, it is written, "I" will do it, bring it to pass, see to its fulfillment. There is the "I" that is definite. No person or no thing can stop God from doing what He has spoken.

(Continued on page 31)

<sup>1</sup>KJV (King James Version). NIV citations are New International Version. Other Translations are noted in the text.

<sup>2</sup>John B. Davis, ed., *A Dictionary of the Bible* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1942), p. 295.

<sup>3</sup>Humphrey Milford, *The Companion Bible* (London: Oxford University Press, n.d.), pp. 47, 50.

<sup>4</sup>James Strong, *A Concise Dictionary of the Words in the Hebrew Bible in Strong's Exhaustive Concordance* (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1890), #3478.

<sup>5</sup>A. Cohen, Ph.D., ed. *The Soncino Books of the Bible: Chumash, Five Books of Moses* (10th ed.: London: Soncino Press, 1971), p. 1026.

<sup>6</sup>Cohen, *Ibid.*, p. 1125.

<sup>7</sup>Strong, *Ibid.*, #1060.

<sup>8</sup>Cohen, *Ibid.*, p. 1120.

<sup>9</sup>A. Cohen, Ph.D., ed., *The Soncino Books of the Bible: Isaiah* (10th ed.: London: Soncino Press, 1971), p. 7.

# The Four Marks of False Religion

by Kent Ross, Vice President  
Atlanta Bible College

To believe, or  
repent, requires  
conscious  
thought,  
something no  
infant can do.

**H**E SAID, "GOD CAME AND DIED on the cross for our sins." I tried to explain again why his view was not compatible with the Bible. He seemed to understand what I was saying, but it was obvious his mind wasn't being changed. He concluded our discussion concerning our different understanding of Christology by saying in summation, "Well, at least we're all going to the same place when we die." I could only report, "I think there are several more things we need to discuss."

We might be inclined to shrug off such differences, but somewhere along the line it's time that we take a hard look at what is true and what isn't true. In our world today there are many deceivers calling themselves Christians. But there has been a strange silence to address these as deceivers because they seem to have drawn so many into their web. More and more of us seem to give in to false systems. We see them growing and they seem so dominant in the religious world.

Perhaps it's our North American definition of success which makes us doubt our own perception of what is true, and there seems to be a reluctance even on our part to address the issues involved because we see these deceivers achieving great "successes." They have churches filled to overflowing while we have few churches of any size at all. They meet ready responsiveness from people, which we often do not. Their theology is espoused by books and magazines, radio shows and television evangelists, while we have but few voices raised to defend Biblical truth. What is disturbing is that even among us there

have been softly spoken suggestions that "maybe these doctrines we've held aren't all *that important*." Because we haven't been as loving, or socially conscious, or growing exponentially, we begin to suspect that it is the doctrines we've held that may not be that important, and that they are only narrow-minded bigotry.

There has come over us a strange timidity to confront that which is false and untrue. These lies told often enough and loud enough have affected us and caused us to doubt our own reading of the Bible. We've become hesitant to say truth is truth, and that falsehood is falsehood. It appears that some among us may have become so desperate to see some "success" that we have said, "Maybe these truths are true, but they aren't all that important." This is an incredible state of affairs when that which is truth is set aside because of numbers and "success" stories that we long to experience. Some have become almost willing to deny the obvious meaning of Scripture because it isn't popular and "politically correct."

Perhaps this is not unexpected as this appears to be the state of the entire church, as Christ's return nears. There is to be a lack of concern over what is true and what is false. Paul wrote to Timothy about people who are not concerned but rather "heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears." Paul warned those of Thessalonica of those who would perish because they failed to *love the truth* (2 Thes. 2:10).

For some, hopefully for many, even most in the Church of God, truth has been vital; it continues to be vital and it does still matter. Because that is true, being casual in our attitude toward other

religions (which may be false and teach falsehoods) becomes very dangerous. There are several important teachings that should indicate to us if a church is teaching what is true or what is false. Note these *four marks* of what is false, yet what is widely taught in many religions.

#### Four Marks of False Religion

1. The *first mark of false religion* is the teaching that God is more than one person. There are many churches that teach such a false understanding of God. They teach that God is three individuals, yet somehow one. This "trinitarian" teaching isn't found in the Bible. Clearly, biblical language describes the Father alone as God. Jesus is described as the Son of God, sent by the Father. He was born of the virgin Mary as a human.

Churches that teach that Jesus and the Father and the Holy Spirit are one God are not teaching the Bible. Rather, it is a corruption of the simple, clear teaching of the Bible that pictures Jesus as the Father's only begotten Son.

In a most confusing way teachers of this falsehood will agree that Jesus is the only begotten Son of God, but will insist that He is also God. That this is impossible is acknowledged by all. But it is pathetically excused away by saying, "If you try to understand the trinity you'll lose your mind, but if you don't believe it you'll lose your soul." Pathetic indeed! and again theologically untrue.

Those who know the Bible and desire to hold to *its* truth reject this thinking immediately. Any church that teaches the trinity should be avoided as it clearly is teaching something false that is not found in the Bible. Any person who is a participant in such a church is failing to discern between what is true and what is false. These churches should be avoided and recognized for what they are. People who have started attending a church that teaches this falsehood should very quickly get back to studying their Bible, and leave that church.

2. The *second mark of false religion* is the teaching that at death a person's soul leaves the body and is rewarded either in heaven or hell, or perhaps an intermediate state pending judgment. Again, this

teaching is clearly false if one is to believe the Bible. It is a teaching that came into Christendom by way of Greek paganism. It does seem appealing to think that death does not end existence, but that somehow something immortal in man lives on in a noncorporeal state.

Yet the Bible truth is all too plain. Man is not naturally immortal, but immortality is something that is sought after (Rom. 2:7). Man does not *have* a soul . . . he *is* a soul. When God forms a person (Gen. 2:7), God breathes into that person the breath of life and that causes a living or *live* soul. When that breath from God leaves the individual, that person is a *dead* soul. Breath from God has no personality. It is His unique ability to give life to that which has no life. When a person dies the breath that God first gave returns to God, and man—a dead soul—lies unconscious in the grave. A church or religion teaching that when death occurs a portion of that person remains alive is *not teaching truth*, but something that is false!

3. The *third mark of false religion* is the teaching that God's reward for mankind is a place in heaven. Nowhere in the Bible is it taught that anyone goes to heaven, except Jesus. Even King David, who despite many sins, is biblically described as a "man after God's own heart" (Acts 13:22), died and remained in the grave. He did not ascend to heaven. Hebrews 11 describes person after person who believed God's promises. These were people such as Abraham, Isaac, Moses, Gideon, and others, yet the chapter concludes that none of them has received the promises of God. The Bible in Hebrews 11:39 says, "These were all commended for their faith, yet none of them received what had been promised. God had planned something better for us so that only together with us would they be made perfect." Now they all wait in the grave until the time of God's rewarding. They are not somewhere off in heaven . . . not Abraham, not Isaac, not Moses, not Gideon . . . and not people who have died throughout history.

That time of reward is described throughout the Bible as the coming Kingdom of God. The apostles were permitted

to experience a brief taste of it by being in the presence of Jesus as He exhibited Kingdom powers. After Christ's ascension all who come to believe are given a foretaste of the Kingdom by God's Holy Spirit, God's promise of what shall be (Eph. 1:14). But Acts 3:19-21 describes it ultimately as a future event when Jesus returns to this earth. In fact, finally even God Himself will come to this planet (Rev. 21:3). At that time Jesus hands the Kingdom over to God, His Father (1 Cor. 15:24).

This is an impossible concept and teaching for false religions when they teach that Jesus is one with the Father. How could the purported Jesus/God turn something over to Himself? Clearly each basic falsehood tends to produce others—such as man having an immortal soul that at death goes flying off to heaven. In fact, many other fabrications arise from impossible concepts. These are simply fallacies, and are marks of false religion.

4. The *fourth mark of false religion* concerns the matter of baptism. That infants may be baptized is one teaching which departs from the biblical teaching about baptism. This is found *nowhere* in the Bible. Further, the very intent of being baptized is to make public that which the person believes. It is impossible for an infant to be consciously committed or to (believe) anything; thus an infant cannot be *scripturally baptized*.

In Mark 16:16 the Bible explicitly says, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." To teach that infants may be baptized and then, when they're older, confirmed in their beliefs, violates the Bible's clear teaching. While Peter in Acts 2:38 says, "Repent and be baptized," its essential teaching remains the same. To believe, or repent, requires conscious thought, something no infant can do.

Further, the New Testament is clear that baptism is immersion under water, not a sprinkling of droplets on the forehead. The word coming directly from the Greek means only "dipping under" or immersion. Romans 6:1-4 is clear in its intent that baptism represents death to sin, burial in a watery grave, and resur-

rection to a new life. The analogy is from Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection. No one would suggest that sprinkling could represent that.

These four teachings are taught in many, even most churches. All four are false. They cannot be supported by the Bible. In discussion with a seminary professor on the issue of the trinity, I said, "I just can't find any Bible for it." His answer in essence was that, "Yes, Biblical scholarship is on your side, but . . ." He went on to explain that the Church Councils of the 4th and 5th centuries made clear *what the Bible was trying to teach*. What the Bible was trying to teach! Incredible and impossible! No one can seriously hold such views if they hold

honestly to the Bible as being inspired by the Lord God. No one should associate himself with such false teachings, but rather should seek out the truth. Truth versus falsehood should not be compromised. If a church is teaching you, your loved ones, or your friends that:

1. Jesus is God, or
2. That man has an immortal soul, or
3. That mankind's reward is to be heaven, or
4. That babies can be baptized, you should separate yourselves from it.

For too long we have sought to be gentle with false teachings, to not make a strong issue of their adulteration of God's truth, but we cannot allow it any longer. We must boldly stand for what is right. If

your children start attending another church because it has a great youth group, or if some of your young adult friends start going to this older church because of its ministry to families . . . inquire, ask, find out what that church believes regarding these four critical issues. If it teaches the Bible as it clearly expresses itself, well and good. But if any church—exciting as it may be, as large as it has grown, as vibrant as its worship services indicate—is teaching any of these four untrue doctrines, you need to help your family members and friends see that church for what it is . . . false religion and dangerous. It should be avoided like a plague.

RH

ESPECIALLY FOR THE PASTOR'S WIFE

# Lessons from a Miniature Mother

by Paula Kirkpatrick  
Hector, MN

Oh, what precious gifts to give our children, the gifts of time and touch.

**T**he April sunshine enveloped me with warmth as I hurried through my yard work duties that morning. The lush green grass was finally long enough for its first mowing of the season. Once that was completed, there was weed-trimming to do around the church and parsonage. It was important that the grounds looked neat on that particular day, because a funeral would be held in the church that afternoon. So, though the day was fresh with the newness of spring, the tasks at hand seemed shrouded with sadness.

As I rounded the corner of the house, the front porch light caught my eye. The light fixture resembled an old-fashioned lantern; four square panes of glass surrounded the bulb, and black-domed lid sat on top. Now, however, the lid was dangling against one of the glass panes because a screw was

missing. And stuffed inside the lantern were dried bits of grass, weeds, and mud. "How in the world did that happen?" I pondered. And suddenly I realized the preposterous truth. A bird had decided to try to build its nest in my light fixture. Amazing!

I knew at once I needed to empty the lantern of this debris before the bird took further action and began a family. I climbed on our step stool and, reaching up high, put my hand in the lantern to pull out the nesting materials. A sudden tingling sensation zipped down my arm and my heart began to race. Time stood still with momentary enchantment. My fingertips had gently discovered three small, smooth, warm, pulsing eggs! I gasped in disbelief, in awe, in marvelous wonder.

New life had already begun. It did not, could not, wait for a convenient time, a proper place according to my standards. No, life continued its

cycle as God had established it. And in the midst of the sorrow of that day, new life created hope.

The days passed swiftly after my initial discovery. A flurry of activity was occurring inside and outside the parsonage, as we prepared for our son's high school graduation on May 31. Painting, repairs, extra cleaning occupied my thoughts continually.

"How will it all get done?" I would ask myself each night. I was convinced my "To Do" list was growing, not diminishing. And each day seemed determined to race by faster than the one preceding it.

But if this mother was "losing it," there was another mother on the premises that was taking it all in stride. The mother robin had a job to do, too. And she carried it out with dignity, patience, and persistence.

How often was she frightened from her nest by a visitor at the front door? (I quickly began to instruct our friends and acquaintances to please use the back door at all times!) How often was she threatened by the loud drone of the lawnmower, or quick footsteps on the sidewalk next to the house? Momentarily, she would flee to the big pine tree in the front yard, and deliver a nonstop scolding to each offender. But it never lasted long. Duty called her. Her eggs needed her warmth. God had given her this task. It was enough.

Her dedication became a diversion for me. I often paused in my work to tiptoe along the sidewalk and peek around the corner of the house. There our mother robin sat, perched atop the light fixture, patiently waiting. While I scurried around doing "important" things, she sat quietly. And gradually, I came to realize which mother was accomplishing the most, and spending her time most wisely.

A clean house and fresh paint can't give a child warmth and love. Oh, what precious gifts to give our children, the gifts of time and touch.

One bright afternoon I noticed the robin was absent from her nest. With a mother's intuition I sensed something had changed. Out came the step stool once again. I climbed atop the seat so I could stretch and peek into the nest. Three tiny naked baby birds greeted my eyes, with necks outstretched, eyes closed, and beaks wide open. I marveled at this miracle of God for only a moment. The mother bird would soon return to satisfy

their hunger. And so, I must return to my spying position around the corner.

Within days, I could view the babies' heads looking out of the nest, searching for their mother and the nourishment she would bring. However, time was literally "flying" for me, too. There was little opportunity for me to check on our new "residents" as the end of the month swiftly approached. Then, with little more than a week until graduation day, I gazed up one morning at a strangely silent nest. My step stool inspection confirmed what I already knew. The nest was empty. The birds were gone. In less than a month, the eggs had hatched, the birds had grown, learned to fly, and left. The mother's task was done. Her fledglings had "graduated" to independence. My "fledgling" was graduating too. Would he "soar" above the world and its temptations? I could only hope and pray. And trust.

The mother robin trusted as she made her nest in my light fixture. She made do with what she could find, and she did what she knew how to do, and she trusted God for the rest. She never realized that with the flick of a switch, the porch light could burn and destroy her nest and family. (And start a fire that could burn down the parsonage!

My husband wisely suggested putting masking tape temporarily over the light switch to avoid that possibility.)

Yet, with the flick of a switch, we know our world could disappear in nuclear fire and destruction. Our trust in God keeps this thought in perspective.

The Psalmist said it very well. "He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust. . . . Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night nor for the arrow that flieth by day; . . . nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday. Because thou hast made the LORD, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation." (Psa. 91:4a, 5, 6b, 9.)

The robin's nest may have been in my light fixture, but her life was lived in the care of the Almighty (Matt. 6:26). Where did my life dwell? In a sparkling clean home, or in the refuge of the Lord, in the shadow of His wings?

Hope, perseverance, dedication, trust. So many lessons from one little bird. So many thoughts to encourage my life. Spring's coming once again. Perhaps I should loosen the screw on our porch light fixture. ✠

---

## Transformed . . . by the Renewing of Your Mind

*(Continued from page 12)*

measure of all the fullness of God." These requests are for progressive experiences that begin at conversion, but grow deeper each day.

One reason converts sometimes fall away is disillusionment in the area of victory over sin and temptation. Some give up on themselves, the church, or God. They expect too much too soon, and their spiritual leaders may be somewhat guilty of promoting those false expectations. No wonder the writer of Hebrews calls us to perseverance: "Draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith. . . . Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess. . . . Let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds

. . . let us not give up meeting together . . . let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching" (Heb. 10:22-25).

Let us remember to pray for the members of our churches, that they will grow in their experience of the love of Christ, that they will be "like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither" (Psa. 1:3). And let us be faithful in teaching new converts particularly that the decision to follow Christ is not a one-time decision, but a daily commitment. ✠

(All Scriptures from the New International Version.)

# Yes, I'm Homophobic

by Pastor Rex Cain  
Bedford, OH



Pastor Rex Cain is a member of Atlanta Bible College/General Conference Board of Trustees and Pastor of our Conference Church at Bedford, Ohio.

**I**'LL ADMIT IT RIGHT UP front. I'm with God on this. It can't fulfill the natural (and essential) law of procreation. It's self-serving. It's repulsive, at least to me. Strong terms, indeed, but no less than the Creator's own!

## We Are Labeled

The homosexual community would like to compartmentalize us as straight-laced religious bigoted fanatics whose minds are sealed and biased against any new life-styles. That's okay. We've been pigeonholed before, persecuted, but truth remains truth. Besides, this abortion of normalcy is not new, but as old as the Bible.

## It Began in Genesis

The world would like to laugh off Sodom and Gomorrah as a fanciful child's Sunday School story, but I'm persuaded otherwise. A cursory reading is revealing. What always catches my attention in reading this (since I see it happening in our generation) is that "The men of Sodom, both young and old, to the last man, surrounded the house" (Gen. 19:4). Note, "TO THE LAST MAN." The whole adult male population of these two cities were homosexuals. From almost the beginning of recorded history, homosexuality was practiced. It now appears to be a large and growing force in the world with tremendous political clout to legislate laws that serve their agenda. Even President Clinton has promised not to discriminate against them. How long will it be until many cities of the world contain homosexuals "to the last man [or woman]"? I believe it will grow worse until the end of this age—probably contributing in large

part to the end coming! Further, pastors (along with their churches) who teach that it is morally wrong will be increasingly persecuted.

## An Abomination in God's Eyes

When God led Israel out of Egypt, he promised He would "lay none of the diseases of Egypt upon them" (Ex. 15:26). Evidently the scourge of sexually transmitted diseases (STD) was prevalent, based on God's dos and don'ts. In order to avoid these diseases (besides numerous others), God insisted they avoid certain practices:

"You shall not lie with a male as with a woman; it is an abomination" (Lev. 18:22, RSV).

"You shall not lie with any beast and defile yourself with it, neither shall any woman give herself to a beast to lie with it: it is perversion" (v. 23).

"You shall not lie carnally with your neighbor's wife, and defile yourself with her" (v. 20).

This is a minute sampling from the 613 laws given for man's and the nation's own health and well-being. What did the Creator of man's body think of these perverted relationships? "They are an abomination in my eyes" (Lev. 18:22).

But of course, anyone calloused and unwilling to open his heart to truth will reject this instruction without blinking an eye. My only hope is that someone in the reading audience is feeling guilt in his immoral behavior, because God is still working with him. He may be wanting to do right. Perhaps these simple straightforward statements will strike a sensitive chord. I pray you will turn from your sinful ways.

## Not a Plague

Personally, I've not seen the AIDS epidemic as a plague, but as a natural consequence of



immoral and filthy behavior. Why would God require (in order to avoid diseases as He promised) individuals of the nation of Israel to leave the cities and go to the countryside to defecate? Not only that, but strict instructions were to dig a hole and then cover the feces. What did God know that we seem yet not to have learned? That the feces contains every kind of germ and bacteria that plagues mankind with every imaginable disease! Dr. McMillen, in his book *None of These Diseases* (1970), writes this:

"No one can appreciate so fully as a doctor the amazingly large percentage of human disease and suffering which is directly traceable to worry, fear, conflict, immorality, dissipation, and ignorance—to unwholesome thinking and unclean living. The sincere acceptance of the principles and teachings of Christ with respect to the life of mental peace and joy, the life of unselfish thought and clean living, would at once wipe out more than half the difficulties, diseases, and sorrows of the human race. In other words, more than half of the present affliction of mankind could be prevented by the tremendous prophylactic power of actually living up to the personal and practical spirit of the real teachings of Christ" (pp. 64, 65).

AIDS, then, in my view (along with about 26 other STDs), is not a plague, but a natural consequence of unclean behavior. God knew this long ago and so condemned such practices as immoral—bluntly, "an abomination." God wants us to have "none of these diseases" (Ex. 15:26). He wants the best for His creation, so He has told us to not indulge in certain activities for our own good health and well-being . . . to say nothing of pleasing our Creator!

### You Can't Persist in Sin As if It Doesn't Matter

Many homosexuals are flaunting their life-styles in Gay Pride Festivals drawing tens of thousands. But, most disturbing to me is that some claim they can be preachers and acceptable to God without changing their sinful behavior. They now have their own churches.

Could I be a murderer and continue to

murder while pastoring a church? Could I steal and continue stealing while serving a congregation and be pleasing to God? Or even greedy, for that matter?

Homosexuals now use the rationale that they were born homosexuals. Well, I was born greedy with murder and lust in my heart. But I'm expected (to please and honor God) to stop my murdering, or my greed, or my lust.

Homosexuality is a sin just like any other. And though "born" with it (as anyone is born with sin), it must be stopped—period. God will help all sinners to stop sinning when we reach out to Him for righteousness. "Seek God . . . and find him. He is not far from each one of us" (Acts 17:27).

I'm not a homosexual basher. I love them as God loves them and want them to hear His warnings—and yet, too, His love and salvation for them. A classic

---

What disturbs me  
are those who  
arrogantly flaunt  
their life-styles as if it  
matters not to the  
Creator.

---

verse on this is found in 1 Corinthians 6:9: "Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither the immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor robbers will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you [in the Corinthian church!]. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God" (RSV). Note that greed (with which we are born) is listed right along with homosexuality!

Yes, some of the forgiven Corinthian brethren were evidently former homosexuals. But no longer, because they

were "washed, sanctified and justified" . . . just like the greedy, the robbers, and the rest.

All sinners can find forgiveness once we repent and turn away from sin and pursue righteousness.

Yes, I'm homophobic, but not in the sense but what I would welcome a homosexual who wanted to find salvation as the Almighty teaches. What disturbs me are those who arrogantly flaunt their life-styles as if it matters not to the Creator. It does, and God has so said in many parts of His Word. "Though they know God's decree that those who do such things [preceding verses are condemning homosexuality] deserve to die, they not only do them but approve those who practice them" (Rom. 1:32).

### What God Has Said

"It is God's will that you should be holy; that you should avoid sexual immorality; that each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honorable" (1 Thes. 4:3, 4, NIV).

"Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body" (1 Cor. 6:18, NIV).

"Now then, my sons, listen to me; pay attention to what I say. Do not let your heart turn to her [harlot's, v. 10] ways or stray into her paths. Many are the victims she has brought down; her slain are a mighty throng. Her house [of prostitution] is a highway to the grave [AIDS?], leading them down to the chambers of death" (Prov. 7:24, NIV).

"The Lord will punish men for all such sins. . . . For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life. Therefore, he who rejects this instruction does not reject man but God" (1 Thes. 4:6-8, NIV).

"Now reform your ways and your actions and obey the Lord your God" (Jer. 26:13, NIV).

"Come out from them [those who do iniquity, v. 14], and be separate from them, says the Lord, and touch nothing unclean; then I will welcome you" (2 Cor. 6:17, RSV).

*(Continued on page 31)*



# Growing Patience

by Susan Lapp  
Brooklyn Park, MN

**S**hawn's blue eyes sparkled as he held up the little packets of seeds one at a time, gently shaking each one to listen to the quiet, rustling noise. "Umm . . . carrots, squash, green beans, beets. . . I wonder how much room Dad will give me for my garden. My garden. . . ." He liked the sound of that. Dad had promised Shawn that he could have his own little garden this year. Shawn had "helped" his father with their family vegetable garden ever since he had ridden on father's back in the baby carrier. He put down the seed packets and turned to the new set of small shiny gardening tools he had received for his birthday—his very own spade, hoe, and bright blue plastic watering can. He'd even received his own gardening hat—a smaller version of his father's. He tried it on and daydreamed about working alongside his father, preparing the soil, digging the holes to plant the seeds, watering and covering the seeds. He could hardly wait!

Soon, although hardly soon enough for Shawn, he and his father were out planting the precious little seeds in the earth. Father showed Shawn how deep and how far apart to plant each kind of seed. When they had finished, Shawn stood back and admired his garden. *Now if it would all just hurry up and grow!* thought Shawn to himself, dirty hands shoved deep into his jean pockets.

Shawn awoke early next morning and was eager to see if anything had come up yet. He quickly finished his breakfast and ran outside to check. He couldn't believe his eyes—the garden looked just the same as it had yesterday evening. Why, Father's tomato plants looked just like they had last night, too. He even poked his fingers into the soil and dug up a few seeds, which looked exactly as they had when he had planted them. He ran inside and asked his father, "Is there something wrong with my garden? It's not growing!"

Father smiled at his son and said, "You have to be patient and let God do the rest. He knows how to make everything grow, just as He's planned. Your job now is to wait and trust God to grow your garden. Later you'll be able to help by watering,

weeding, and eventually harvesting. Now your job is to learn patience."

Shawn didn't especially like the sound of that. He always had a hard time waiting at the doctor's office, or in lines at the grocery store. He sighed deeply, and decided to go for a bike ride. The next morning Shawn couldn't resist digging up some more seeds from his garden to see if they'd grown yet. "And what do you think you're doing, young man?" said his father behind him.

He jumped up, wiping his dirty fingers on his pants, "Oh, I uh, I was just checking my seeds . . . uhm, to see if they were growing yet." Shawn couldn't raise his eyes to directly meet his father's gaze.

"Shawn, your garden will never grow if you keep digging up the seeds to check on them. You need to wait *patiently* and *trust* God. He knows exactly what to do to make those seeds grow. If you want to *do* something, you can start praying, thanking God for the vegetables He's going to give you," said Father.

"How can I thank God for the vegetables?—why the seeds aren't even growing yet!" exclaimed the little boy, frowning.

"That's all part of trusting God. Just try it, and you'll see," said Father wisely.

Shawn felt a little awkward with his prayers at first, but gradually he felt more confident. Soon he saw the tiny green plants pushing their way toward the sunlight. As they grew and blossomed and began to bear fruit, Shawn marveled at God's power, all stored in each tiny seed.

Shawn beamed up at his father and said, "You were right, Dad; God does know how to make everything grow! All I had to do was to wait patiently and trust Him." And Shawn's earthly father was not the only one who smiled.

"Wait for the LORD; be strong and take heart and wait for the LORD" (Psa. 27:14).

"As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will never cease" (Gen. 8:22).

---

# The Tomb of the Well-known Soldier

(Continued from page 18)

dead ones. The physical bodies of Christians in the age to come will be in the likeness of Christ (Phil. 3:20; 1 John 3:2). The good news of Easter is that every Christian who dies will one day be raised, even as Christ was.

This Easter anchor your faith to this tremendous fact. This could be the greatest day in your life. The Spirit of God can transform people into what God wants them to be. Moreover, the New Testament declares that God will give believers a like resurrection. The empty tomb seals that promise. Jesus is the firstfruits of a great host which is to follow (1 Cor. 15:20-23). The death and resurrection of Jesus is God's great receipt marked "paid in full." We were in debt. God paid it all through His Son. He closed out the account. It's our privilege to proclaim that the tomb of the well-known soldier is

empty. His epitaph reads, "He has risen from the dead."

Following the founding of the church the apostles baptized those who trusted the risen Savior. Christian baptism became the identifying mark of faith in Christ. It was administered to those who had accepted Christ's death as sacrifice.

They were buried with Christ in the watery grave and raised to "walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:3-5; Col. 2:12). Have you been baptized into Christ according to the New Testament? "Why do you delay? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on His name" (Acts 22:16, NASB). RHT

---

## God's People

(Continued from page 23)

### Israel: Honor and Praise

Even after the Lord God has caused His wife (also called firstborn, treasured possession, son, beloved, and more), to be separated from Him, that same nation will become "the head" and not "the tail." "I will give them praise and honor in every land where they were put to shame. At that time I will gather you; at that time I will bring you home. I will give you honor and praise among all the peoples of the earth when I restore your fortunes before your very eyes" (Zeph. 3:19b, 20).

Finally, let us repeat a declaration of God through Moses to Israel: "You are a people holy to the LORD your God. Out of all the peoples on the face of the earth, the LORD has chosen you to be his treasured possession" (Deut. 14:2, NIV). The scattering has been going on for many centuries due to the rebellion and refusal to obey God's commands, statutes, and laws. BUT they will be REGATHERED, REDEEMED, and CLEANSED. God has declared it. It will be done exactly as it has been written. Praise God from whom all blessings flow. RHT

---

## God Manifestation: An Introduction

(Continued from page 15)

given God's name, as explained in Philipians 2:9. So He can call God's name "My new name": the name He had recently been given. Thus because Jesus carries the name of God especially since His ascension, we can understand why He told the apostles to go and baptize in the name of the Father; but in Acts we read of them baptizing in the name of Christ, because God's name was given to Christ. We can now properly understand Isaiah 9:6, where concerning Jesus we are told: "His name shall be called, Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father." This is a prophecy that Jesus would carry all the names of God—that He would be the total manifestation or revelation of God to us. It was in this sense that He was called "Emmanuel," meaning, "God is with us." RHT

---

## Yes, I'm Homophobic

(Continued from page 29)

"The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear him, and he delivers them. Taste and see that the LORD is good; blessed is the man who takes refuge in him. Fear the LORD, you his saints, for those who fear him lack nothing" (Psa. 34:7-9, NIV).

"Who is a God like you, who pardons sin and forgives the transgression? . . . You do not stay angry forever but delight to show mercy" (Micah 7:18, NIV).

The following are some verses for your own personal study:  
Gen. 1:27; 19:4, 5, 24

Ex. 15:26  
Lev. 18:22; 20:13; 26:21  
Deut. 7:15; 28:58-62  
2 Chron. 21:18  
1 Kings 14:24  
Ezek. 18:26-28  
Gal. 6:7, 8  
1 Tim. 1:9-11  
James 1:14, 15  
Jude 7  
Rom. 1:24-32  
2 Pet. 2:6 RHT

[None of These Diseases, S. I. McMillen M.D., Fleming H. Revell Co., 1970.]

# ABC

*"Atlanta Bible College has a unique role in the ongoing restoration of neglected biblical truth prior to the coming of the Kingdom.*

*Students interested in searching out the teaching of Jesus in an atmosphere of freedom should consider Atlanta Bible College as a first choice."*

*Anthony F. Buzzard,  
Instructor*

**ATLANTA  
BIBLE  
COLLEGE**

For more information call: 1-800-FISH CO 1

**Subscription Expirations**

The three-digit number on the top right of your address label identifies the renewal date of your subscription. If the number is 93.0, it expires with the February/March issue, 1993. A 93.2 number means a June, July, expiration. This method will assist the subscriber in keeping tabs on his expiration date and serve as a reminder for renewal.

Church of God General Conference  
P.O. Box 100,000  
Morrow, GA 30260

U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
PERMIT 21  
Oregon, Illinois  
Nonprofit Org.

**Address Correction Requested**

Dear RESTITUTION HERALD,

I am writing for the following reason:

- My address label is incorrect; please note the changes.
- I am moving in the next six weeks; please send the magazine to my new address printed below.
- I wish to send a gift subscription to the person listed below. Enclosed is \$12 payment.
- Subscription renewal, payment enclosed—1 yr. \$12, 2 yr. \$21, 3 yr. \$30. [British subscribers send U. S. funds]. Thank you.

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: THE RESTITUTION HERALD, P.O. Box 100,000, Morrow, GA 30260.

Please check the mailing label to the left for your RH expiration date and renew promptly to keep THE RESTITUTION HERALD coming to your home bimonthly.

*Thank you for subscribing to  
THE RESTITUTION HERALD.*

**IS IT TIME TO RENEW?**

# THE RESTITUTION HERALD

Vol. 82, No. 5  
June, July, 1993

## Our 82nd Year

Church of God General Conference  
*History Newsletter* included  
MESSIAH in the Old Testament



### HERITAGE OF OUR FAITH

*"Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32).*

# Uncle Sam's 217th Birthday



## THE EDITOR'S OPINION

**J**ULY 4 IS UNCLE SAM'S birthday again. He'll be 217. Uncle Sam is the personification of the U.S. Government. When we speak of Washington, D.C., where our nation's government is headquartered, we may simply speak of Uncle Sam. Similarly, we speak of paying our taxes to Uncle Sam, etc. This is our twentieth-century language.

What is our duty to our country and the U.S. Government? Can one be a good Christian and a good citizen at the same time? We are on record as saying we can. There need be no conflict between the two. First and foremost we must strive to be good Christians, and second, good citizens. If the two are not compatible, then God has asked the impossible of us.

### Romans 13:1-7 (NASB)

"Let every person be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God. Therefore he who resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves. For rulers are not a cause of fear for good behavior, but for evil. Do you want to have no fear of authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same; for it is a minister of God to you for good. But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for it does not bear the sword for nothing; for it is a minister [servant] of God, an avenger who brings wrath upon the one who practices evil. Wherefore it is necessary to be in subjection, not only because of wrath, but also for conscience' sake. For because of this you also pay taxes, for rulers are servants of God, devoting themselves to this very thing. Render to all what is due them: tax to whom tax is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor."

The Christian is to obey the governmental authority under which he lives as long as it does not conflict with doing God's will. These first-century Christians were to be in submission to the brutal Roman government, the one that nailed

their Savior to the cross. Obedience to the state is an ordinance of God. "Let every person be in subjection to the governing authorities." This defines the obligation of the Christian in this area. Then Paul shows why he has this obligation. There is no human authority except by God, and those which exist have been established by God.

The phraseology stresses both the office holder and the office. Nothing is said about the form of government. The passage emphasizes government itself and its administrators. To resist governmental authority is to resist God, and those who resist shall receive condemnation. The Christian is a citizen as well as a church member. Paul pictures the obedient citizen as being worthy of praise from the government. His description of the ruling authority as the helper or agent of God seems very strong to us.

The one who breaks the law ought to fear because the Roman soldier didn't carry his sword without a purpose. Here is clear evidence that God has ordained force (the sword) to be used by human authorities to prevent anarchy and the tyranny of evil in human society. Twice in verse 4 the Roman soldier is called the agent of God, the avenger (the satan) who brings God's wrath upon the evildoer.

Then the apostle gives two reasons for obedience to governmental authorities:

1. God's wrath administered by rulers will fall on the ones who disobey. Christians are to be forewarned.

2. The Christian's conscience declares that he must obey the ordinances of God.

Submission to civil rulers is one of these ordinances. It involves paying taxes, custom duties, and showing respect and honor to those entitled to it. These are obligations of Christians to the rulers of the land in whatever country and with whatever form of government. The Bible speaks to all areas of life.

As followers of Jesus, we rejoice when we have good leaders in government. "With good men in authority, the people rejoice; but with the wicked

*(Continued on page 4)*

# Contents

- 5 **Messiah in the Law**  
*Gary Burnham*
- 7 **Messiah in the Psalms**  
*James Mattison*
- 10 **Messiah in the Major Prophets**  
*Ed Goit*
- 13 **Messiah in the Minor Prophets**  
*Rex F. Cain*
- 16 **Messiah in the New Testament**  
*Hollis Partlowe*
- 18 **God's People—The Church**  
*Frances E. Burnett*
- 20 **"FATHERS . . . Children Are Unique"**  
*John Hearp*
- 23 **Rethinking Our Heritage**  
*John Carr*
- 24 **"Hey! That's Ours!"**  
*Kent Ross*



GOD BLESS AMERICA

God bless America,  
Land that I love,  
Stand beside her—and guide her—  
Thru the night with a light from above.  
From the mountains to the prairies—  
To the oceans—white with foam,  
God bless America,  
My home, sweet home,  
God bless America, my home, sweet  
home.

- 25 **Memorial Day**  
*Cheryl Norwood*
- 26 **What Does John 1:1 Really Say**  
*Sid Hatch*
- 27 **God Manifestation in Moses**  
*Duncan Heaster*
- 29 **Promised Healing**  
*Darrell Rankin, Delbert Rankin, and Russell Rankin*
- 30 **Do All Speak in Tongues?**  
*Allon Maxwell*

## FEATURES

- 2 **EDITOR'S OPINION**
- 22 **BOOK REVIEW**

THE  
**RESTITUTION  
HERALD**  
Vol. 82, No. 4  
April, May, 1993

THE RESTITUTION HERALD is owned and published by the Church of God General Conference, a non-profit Christian corporation located at 5823 Trammell Road, P.O. Box 100,000, Morrow, GA 30260. THE HERALD is mailed six times a year.

THE RESTITUTION HERALD advocates: the oneness of God (1 Cor. 8:6); the Holy Spirit is God's power (Acts 1:8); Jesus Christ is God's only begotten Son (Matt. 16:16), and is our Mediator (1 Tim. 2:5); the Bible is the inspired Word of God (2 Tim. 3:16); the mortality of man (Job 4:17; Psa. 146:4); the near return of Christ (Acts 1:11), and life only through him (Col. 3:3); the literal resurrection of the dead (John 5:28); the immortalization of those in Christ (1 Cor. 15:53, 54); the destruction of the wicked (Rev. 21:8); the final restoration of Israel as the Kingdom of God under the kingship of Christ (Luke 1:32), the church to be joint heirs with him (Rom. 8:17), and Israel to be made head over Gentile nations (Isa. 60:1-3); the "restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began" (Acts 3:21). It also firmly advocates repentance and immersion in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38), and a consecrated life as essential to salvation.

**Editor:** Hollis Partlowe  
**Associate Editor:** Gordon Landry  
**Make-up Editor:** Christopher Seiders  
**Typesetter:** Becky Hall  
**Proofreader:** Barbara Landry  
**Contributing Editors:** Richard Alcumbrack, Susan Lapp, Dr. Alva G. Huffer, Delbert Jones, Paula Kirkpatrick, Gordon Landry  
**Mailing and Subscriptions:** Becky Hall, Terri Tschaenn, Judy Myers, Harry McMin

Address all correspondence to: THE RESTITUTION HERALD  
P.O. Box 100,000  
Morrow, GA 30260

## SUBSCRIPTIONS

One Year, \$12  
Two Years, \$21  
Three years, \$30

Most subscriptions begin with the February or August issue. Readers may begin full-year subscriptions at any time. Use the form on page 32 when corresponding concerning your subscription.

(Continued from page 2)

in power they groan" (Prov. 29:2, LB). Freedom exacts a terrible price sometimes. Thousands of men (and women) have given their lives so we could enjoy freedom. Some came home from wars older and wiser; others came back crippled in body and mind. Some didn't come back but were buried in far-off lands; some came home in a box to be buried in a family plot or cemetery near home. Whatever the case, we honor their courage and benefit from their sacrifices.

In my opinion, in cases like World War II, our leaders had two choices: defend ourselves or national suicide. I'm thankful they chose the former, although I hate war with a purple passion. Sometimes war is the lesser of two evils.

### 1 Peter 2:13-17 (NASB)

"Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution: whether to a king as the one in authority. . . . For such is the will of God. . . . Honor all men; love the brotherhood, fear God, honor the king."

As is the case in the Romans passage, the focus of the Apostle Peter here is governmental leaders. We are to be in submission to them. This does not mean compelling compliance with evil. Peter also said: "We ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29). Awakened Christians are the only hope of any nation. "The wicked shall be turned into *sheol* [the grave] and all the nations that forget God" (Psa. 9:17).

Scripture also says: "Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD." (Psa. 33:12.)

"Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people" (Prov. 14:34).

In 1787, Benjamin Franklin said: "Here is my creed. I believe in one God, the Creator of the universe. That he governs it by his providence. That he ought to be worshiped." We need more men like wise old Ben in government today. America has been richly blessed by the God of heaven. Many nations don't have enough food, while we encourage farmers to grow less. We export more food than any other twelve nations combined. Americans in terms of buying power are the highest-paid workers in the world. Americans give more to benevolent institutions than the rest of the world combined. America has not finished her role in world history. I'm glad I'm an American.

While we have done many things right, we have many problems too. An abundance of justifiable criticism could be levied against our government. Corruption from one end to the other is well known. Yet we are to honor and pray for our leaders.

### 1 Timothy 2:1, 2 (NASB)

"I urge that entreaties and prayers, petitions, and thanksgiving, be made on behalf of all men, for kings and all who are in authority, in order that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity."

As Christians we are not only to honor and respect our earthly leaders, we are to pray for them. We are to operate under the framework of the government to reach the lost for Christ and grow the church. Perhaps we can see more clearly now the



"Give me your tired, your poor,  
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,  
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.  
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,  
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"

—From the poem, *The New Colossus*,  
by Emma Lazarus.

importance of the relationship between the church and government. If the leaders are sympathetic to Christianity, our job is much easier. "Democracy is not a perfect form of government, but all other forms are so much worse."

Arnold Toynbee, a distinguished English historian, counted nineteen civilizations that have existed since man began to form governments. Of the nineteen, only five remain. Ours is one of them.

Let us never forget that in the final analysis, God presides above the affairs of men. He rules over all. He is Sovereign. He is still on the throne. He will have the last word. This is God's country, "America the Beautiful." Whatever greatness we have, it is to His credit. Let us together affirm our faith in the God of history and the Christ of Scripture.

"My country 'tis of Thee,  
Sweet land of liberty,  
Of Thee I sing:  
Land where my fathers died,  
Land of the pilgrim's pride,  
From ev'ry mountain side  
Let freedom ring!  
"Our fathers' God, to Thee,  
Author of liberty,  
To Thee we sing.  
Long may our land be bright  
With freedom's holy light;  
Protect us by Thy might,  
Great God, our King."



# Messiah in the Law

by Pastor Gary Burnham  
Centreville, VA

Paul informed the Galatians that none other than Jesus Christ was Abraham's ultimate offspring (Gal. 3:16).

**“P**ROPHECY IS BORING!” “Studying prophecy is useless!” “Not prophecy again!” “When can we learn something useful?”

Do these sound like statements you've heard before? Do they sound like statements you've made before? Or, maybe you've just thought them; have you been afraid to actually verbalize them?

I make no promises that this article will revolutionize the study of prophecy. But I do hope it will offer you a useful, practical approach to viewing the predictions made about Messiah in the Pentateuch—the first five books of the Old Testament.

## A Major Battle

Following Adam and Eve's deception by the serpent in the garden of Eden, God pronounced a curse upon the serpent. That curse included the following:

“I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel” (Gen. 3:15, NIV).

While these words have been understood by some to literally refer to a snake biting the heel of man, and a man stomping on the head of a snake, most biblical scholars agree that this verse is the Bible's first prophecy about Jesus Christ. They call it “The Protevangelium,” the first announcement of the good news of the gospel.

At just the right time, God caused Jesus Christ to be born of a woman (Gal. 4:4), and this prophecy from Genesis began its fulfillment. Jesus did indeed suffer, even to the point of death. But the crushing blow was delivered by Jesus Himself when He rose from the grave!

What makes this prophecy useful to you and me today? We must allow it to remind us we are

engaged in a major battle. Adam and Eve were unable to overcome the cunning of the serpent. Only Jesus could free mankind from the vice-like grip of death that sin held upon the human race following that episode in Eden.

The Apostle Paul reminded the Ephesians, “Our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms” (6:12).

For Paul, the only reasonable solution was this: “Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes” (6:11).

Just as in Adam and Eve's day, our enemy “prowls around like a roaring lion” (1 Pet. 5:8). An attempt to win the battle in our own human strength is doomed to fail as surely as Adam and Eve failed. But our sure promise, beginning in Genesis, is that if we battle in God's power and not our own, the serpent will find himself crushed again and again!

## Co-heirs With Christ

Beginning in Genesis, several verses weave a genealogical thread which reveals the ancestry of the promised Messiah.

Something special could be expected from the line of Noah's son Shem when Noah's prophecy about him contained the phrase “the God of Shem” (Gen. 9:26), the first time in Scripture such a personal designation is found.

Abraham was told his offspring would inherit the land of the Canaanites (Gen. 12:6), and eventually “all peoples on earth” (12:3) would be blessed through him. Paul informed the Galatians that none other than Jesus Christ was Abraham's ultimate offspring (Gal. 3:16).

These promises to Abraham were renewed to his son Isaac (Gen. 26:3), to his grandson Jacob

(35:11, 12), and to his great-grandson Judah:

"The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until he comes to whom it belongs and the obedience of the nations is his" (Gen. 49:10).

The prophet Balaam later spoke of "a star [coming] out of Jacob" and "a scepter [rising] out of Israel" (Num. 24:17). It is suggested that this prophecy spoke not only of a literal event in the near future, but also looked ahead to the entrance of Messiah (Jesus Christ) into the world.

An additional note may be made from outside the Pentateuch. Speaking of David's son Solomon, and ultimately of Jesus Christ, God promised King David, "Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever" (2 Sam. 7:16).

Why study such a tedious genealogy? Good question! Let me suggest two reasons.

First: For the Israelite people, ancestry was extremely important. Did the ancestry of the one who claimed to be Messiah fit the prophecies of their Scriptures? Yes! Both Matthew (chapter 1) and Luke (chapter 3) corroborate this fact. Jesus did fit the genealogical prophecies made about the coming Messiah.

Second: You and I, if we are followers of Christ, have a share in the things Christ is prophesied to inherit. Several of the prophecies just quoted tell us Jesus will rule over the nations; they will be obedient to Him, and His rule will last forever. I don't know about you, but if I am going to share in that inheritance, I'd like to know it!

And in fact the Bible states we will share in that inheritance! To the Galatians Paul wrote,

"If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (3:29).

And to the Romans:

"Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory" (8:17).

In Revelation a song is sung to Christ

which says, in part,

"You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth" (5:10).

Jesus is indeed the heir prophesied in the Old Testament. He will return one day to reign over this world. But He will not rule alone. You and I will rule with Him! We too will reign over the nations!

Could it be that genealogy isn't so unimportant after all?

#### Our Lord—A Prophet Like Moses

While Moses was giving a discourse on some of the laws God had prescribed for Israel, God prompted him to say,

"The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own brothers. You must listen to him. . . . The LORD said to me, ' . . . I will raise up for them a prophet like you, from among their brothers; I will put my words in his mouth, and he will tell them everything I command him. If anyone does not listen to my words that the prophet speaks in my name, I myself will call him to account' " (Deut. 18:15-19).

About 15 centuries later, the Apostle Peter, speaking under the influence of God's Holy Spirit, quoted (in Acts 3:22, 23) from these verses in Deuteronomy, implying they looked ahead to the coming of Jesus Christ. Peter claimed this was an example of how God had "promised long ago through his holy prophets" (Acts 3:21).

If we wish to make practical application of this prophecy, there are several things of which we must first take note.

The prophet to come (Christ) would be similar to Moses. Moses was called of God to lead His people Israel. As well, Jesus was called, or anointed, by His God to be a leader. Moses was often given the very words of God to speak to the Israelites. Likewise, Jesus spoke "just what the Father has told me to say" (John 12:50). When Moses' instruction was obeyed, Israel prospered; when disobeyed, punishment followed. If Jesus' words are not obeyed, the consequence is costly. Jesus Himself said,

"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will

of my Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 7:21).

On the other hand, the one who will obey Jesus' words will be like the wise man who built his house on the foundation of rock (Matt. 7:24).

In Moses' day the question was, "Who will be this new Moses-like prophet God is promising to raise up?" In Jesus' day the question was, "Is Jesus this new Moses-like prophet God promised to raise up?" The question today is asked directly to you, "Are you really letting Jesus Christ be the sole Lord of your life?"

Do Jesus and His words direct you in your home? Guide you on the job? Motivate your witness to others? Reign over you in your participation in your local church?

You can answer for no one but yourself. But you must do at least that much. Is it a waste of time to study the Messianic prophecy God gave to Moses? Yes, if I stubbornly refuse to admit that Jesus is the one the prophecy spoke of, but a very good use of my time if it strengthens my resolve to make Jesus my Lord in each and every area of my life.

#### The Death of Legalism

There is at least one additional significant way in which the Pentateuch looked forward to Jesus Christ. Neither a cursory reading nor an in-depth study of Genesis through Deuteronomy will reveal this important truth. This truth's fullest revelation awaited the New Testament to make its appearance.

In an attempt to ferret out this vital truth, we might begin with some of Paul's words to the churches of Galatia,

"Before this faith came, we were held prisoners by the law, locked up until faith should be revealed. So the law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith. Now that faith has come, we are no longer under the supervision of the law" (Gal. 3:23-25).

These verses (as well as the whole of the Galatian letter) reveal essential truth about the law of the Old Testament. They claim the law imprisoned people. How so? It made demands that no human being could possibly ever completely obey. Try

as anyone might, failure was inevitable. Even the most godly—Moses, Joshua, and others—were unsuccessful in perfectly following all of the law.

Why? Why would God ever give a set of laws He knew couldn't be fully obeyed? These verses tell us: "The law was put in charge to lead us to Christ." From the very beginning, God's intent was that the law would so frustrate people because of their inability to follow it that, when Christ appeared, they would be more than ready to accept Him as a replacement for their ill-fated attempts at keeping the law.

How? How could God give up on the law? Well, He didn't! Jesus said,

"Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them" (Matt. 5:17).

Since the human race was incapable of fulfilling (obeying) the law, God sent Jesus Christ to do it for mankind. Only Jesus Christ was able to fulfill (obey) the law.

Further, Paul said,

"Do we, then, nullify the law by this faith? Not at all! Rather, we uphold the law" (Rom. 3:31).

For Paul, the law was given greater honor when one accepted Jesus Christ through faith rather than by attempting to

keep the law through human effort! Listen carefully! If you insist upon trying to keep the law rather than accepting Jesus Christ by faith, you cheapen the law!

Back to our verses from Galatians. Finally, Paul insists that since faith in Christ has arrived, "we are no longer under the supervision of the law." In fact, Paul enlightened the Colossians by saying the work of Christ on the cross "canceled the written code" (Col. 2:14).

So now we are free to live as we please, right? NO! What are we free to do? We are free to pursue what Christianity is really all about: a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. We spend our time trying to get to know the one who fulfilled for us the requirements of the law, rather than continuing to try to fulfill those requirements in our own power. As we develop this relationship with Jesus, we make Him the Lord of our lives—allowing Him to direct our thoughts and actions out of this relationship, not out of sterile legal requirements. (Go back and review the previous section of this article, "Our Lord—A Prophet Like Moses.")

When will we learn that any system which relies merely on a set of rules and regulations, or a list of do's and don'ts, is doomed to fail? The law of God recorded in our Old Testament has a vital purpose:

to so frustrate our human inability that we are driven to Jesus Christ on our knees!

### Some Concluding Thoughts

The study of prophecy does not have to be boring—not even a study of the prophecies of Christ in the Pentateuch. When it is it's because we do not make every effort to make practical application to real life. I have attempted to do that with, I hope, at least some degree of success.

When you feel you are losing life's battles, tap into the supernatural armor God makes available!

When your lot in life keeps you "low man on the totem pole," remember that one day you will reign with Christ over the nations!

When your life seems to be floating along with no real direction, renew your commitment to make Jesus Christ the Lord of every area of your life. In His timing He'll provide some direction!

When your very best efforts to be "good" and to "do the right thing" end in failure, remember Jesus has already been "good" for you and done "the right thing" for you! Make building your personal relationship with Him priority #1. The "good" that He will then create in your life will make you wonder how you could have ever lived any other way! Rtt

# Messiah in the Psalms

by Pastor James Mattison  
Pelzer, SC

**M**USIC WAS A PROMINENT PART of people's lives in ancient times, and it played a vital role in Israel as well as in adjacent lands. Hebrew music was largely vocal, with the lyre accompanying the human voice. Singing is first mentioned in the Bible in connection with Jacob's departure from Laban (Gen. 31:27). Moses and Israel sang the first religious song recorded after God saved

Israel at the Red Sea (Ex. 15:1). Miriam and many women joined in with timbrels (tambourines). Many other songs are recorded in the Bible, including Mary's when she was chosen of God to bear the Messiah (Luke 1:46-55). Singing was very common, even upon the digging of a well, triumph in battle, or welcoming heroes home. David wrote seventy-three Psalms, while Solomon wrote another "thousand and five songs" (1

Kings 4:32). David's choir had 288 voices. David invented many of the musical instruments with which Israel praised God (Amos 6:5; 2 Chron. 7:6). Music in worship after the time of David continued with Solomon (2 Chron. 5:12, 13; 9:11), under Jehoshaphat (20:21, 23); Joash (23:13, 18); Hezekiah (29:27-30); Josiah (35:15, 25); Ezra (Ezra 2:41; 3:11; 7:24); and Nehemiah (Neh. 7:44; 10:28). The "songs of Zion" were famous (Psa. 137:3, 4).

The Book of Psalms, Unger says in his Bible Dictionary, is "Israel's collection of hymns of praise and worship, widely used in temple and synagogue worship." This part of the Bible has been particularly cherished by God's people of every age. Who hasn't heard of and loved Psalm 23? And what of the other 149? "It was no accident that the first book published in America was a translation of Psalms. The Psalms apply to every mood and to every language of the human heart. It is the prayer book of Jews, Catholics, and Protestants alike . . . it is the music of heaven" (*The Key to the Psalms*, Sylvester Vernon Williams).

The ancient Hebrew name *tehillim* means songs of praise, or hymns. The word *Psalms* from the Greek means "music on string instruments," or "songs adapted to such music."

There are 150 Psalms arranged in five books (1-41; 42-72; 73-89; 90-106; and 107-150). Seventy-three of these psalms are ascribed to David in the titles. David is called "the sweet psalmist of Israel" (2 Sam. 23:1). Other authors were Moses (90); Solomon (72, 127); Heman (88); Ethan (89); the Sons of Korah (42, 44-49, 84, 85, 87); Asaph (12 psalms); while forty-nine are anonymous. Ezra, who probably wrote Psalm 119, is very possibly the compiler of the Psalms. He "was a ready scribe [skilled writer and compiler] in the law of Moses" (Ezra 7:6). In *The Key to the Psalms*, special comments are given of Psalm 119. Notice the wonderful order of this Psalm. It is arranged with eight verses under each letter of the Hebrew alphabet. It is a psalm of personal experience with God by one who hates sin and loves God's Word and righteousness. It is beautiful and majestic, ending with a

longing for salvation.

David was specially endowed with the gift of the Holy Spirit. He is called a prophet in the New Testament (Matt. 27:35). David was a skilled warrior, a wise king, a professional musician, and a man after God's own heart. Some of the psalms were set to tunes already in existence. Many Jewish songs are characterized by being in a minor key, ending in the note *la*.

David and all Israel played before the Lord "on all manner of instruments made of fir wood, even on harps, and on psalteries, and on timbrels, and on cornets, and on cymbals" (2 Sam. 6:5). First Chronicles 16:4-6 gives the names of those who were over the psalteries, harps, cornets, and cymbals. Second Chronicles 7:6 speaks about the priests and Levites using the "instruments of musick of the Lord which David the king had made to praise the Lord, because his mercy endureth for ever."

These are the musical instruments used in David's day:

1. *Lyre*. a stringed instrument of the harp class. It was this musical instrument that David played before Saul.

2. *Harp*. This was a musical instrument of strings upon an open frame, plucked with the fingers.

3. *Timbrel*, or *tabret* (tambourine, Strong). Sachs says it was "a wooden hoop very probably with two skins," like a drum or tom-tom.

4. *Trumpet*. Ram or goat's horn (shofar); also made of metal (Num. 10).

5. *Flute*. A woodwind instrument that was blown.

6. *Psaltery*. (*Viol*, Isa. 5:12.) Perhaps a small zither. A wooden instrument, the special ones having 10 strings (Psa. 33:2) tuned to the soprano register (1 Chron. 15:20, 21— "on the Sheminith," or eighth).

7. *Pipe*. Several kinds of wood instruments that were blown.

8. *Cymbals*. Two rounded metal instruments, almost flat or coned, struck together.

Other instruments mentioned in the Bible were the *dulcimer* (some think it was possibly a bagpipe, while others think it was a flat piece of wood on which were fastened two strips of wood crossed by

strings), and *sackbut* (a wind instrument with a long bent tube with a movable slide like a trombone). Others say it was a stringed instrument. Egypt, at least, used the *zither* and the *sistrum*.

Most of the Psalms attributed to David reflect some period of his life. Book I, Psalms 1-41, reflect on David's trust in God in early and middle life, while Book II, Psalms 42-72 reflect on his reliance upon God in later life.

Though the Book of Psalms is largely composed of devotional hymns, praise to God from the heart, personal testimony, and thanksgiving, many of these poetic gems have far-reaching predictions, especially concerning Messiah. "Psalm 2 is a magnificent prophetic panorama of Messiah's redemptive career and His return as King of Kings. Psalm 22 is an amazing detailed prophecy of the suffering and death of Christ in His first advent. Psalm 110 is a far-reaching prophecy of Christ as a perpetual priest. Psalm 16 heralds His future resurrection. Psalm 72 envisions the coming millennial kingdom" (*Christ and His Bride*). "In all the Old Testament, there is no more practical, instructive, beautiful or popular book than the Psalms" (Unger).

### Jesus' Statement

After His resurrection from the dead, Jesus said to His apostles, "These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the *psalms*, concerning me" (Luke 24:44). "Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures" (v. 45).

### Jesus in the Psalms

By studying the Psalms in the light of what they say about Messiah, we too can have *our* understanding opened as to who this Savior was to be, what He was to suffer, and what He was to do. In the Psalms there are at least thirty-six (36) particular things mentioned about the Messiah, Jesus Christ. They give many details about His life and many of them are quoted in the New Testament as being fulfilled by Him. Notice these prophecies

of Him who is our Lord and Savior, the shepherd of the sheep, the bread of life, the one who today gives us strength and tomorrow will bring eternal life to us at the resurrection of the dead. Verses italicized in the following references mean that this is a word-for-word quote from Psalms. We have tried to put them in chronological order.

1. Psalm 2:2, 7, 12. Born the Son of God, the Anointed One. *Matthew 3:17; Acts 13:33; Hebrews 1:5; 5:5; John 1:14; 3:16.* Thou art my Son. I have begotten thee.

2. Psalm 132:11. Born of mankind of the seed of David. *Acts 13:23; Luke 1:32; Matthew 1:1; Romans 1:3.*

3. Psalm 40:6-8. I come to do thy will, O God. *Hebrews 10:5-9.* Jesus always did His Father's will. *John 4:34; Luke 22:42.*

4. Psalm 91:11, 12. In Jesus' temptation by the devil, the devil used this passage to tempt Jesus to sin, but Jesus countered with argument from another scripture.

5. Psalm 16:10. Jesus was the Holy One of which David spoke. *Mark 1:24; Acts 3:14; 2:27; 13:35.*

Psalm 16:10. Jesus would be holy, without sin, and filled with the Holy Spirit. *John 8:46; 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 2:22; John 3:34.*

6. Psalm 69:9. He would have a great zeal for God. *Psalm 119:139; John 2:17.*

7. Psalm 78:1, 2. He would teach the Word of God by using parables. *Matthew 13:10-17, 34, 35; Psalm 49:4.*

8. Psalm 118:22, 23. He was the Stone the builders refused. *Matthew 21:42; Mark 12:10, 11; Luke 20:17; Acts 4:11; 1 Peter 2:4, 6, 7.* Ephesians 2:20.

9. Psalm 35:19; 69:4. Israel hated Christ without a cause. *John 15:25.*

Psalm 22:6-8. He would be despised, thus rejected. *John 1:11.*

Psalm 2:1-3. Even after His ascension, Israel gathered together against Him. *Acts 4:25-28.*

10. Psalm 22:1. Even God would forsake Him as He became Sin Personified on the cross. *Matthew 27:46; Mark 15:34.*

11. Psalm 69:8. He would become a stranger to His brethren, and an alien to His mother's children. *John 7:5; Mark 3:21.* "He is beside himself" (insane).

12. Psalm 118:26. Messiah would ride triumphantly into Jerusalem while the people sang out, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." *Matthew 21:9; Mark 11:9.*

13. Psalm 41:9; 55:12-14. Messiah would be betrayed by a close friend.

"Mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me."

"It was not an enemy that reproached me; then I could have borne it; neither was it he that hated me that did magnify himself against me . . . but it was thou, a man mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance." *John 13:17, 21; Luke 22:48; Mark 14:10, 18; Matthew 26:21, 23, 24, 25.*

14. Psalm 69:16-20. Messiah's heart would be broken; He would be full of heaviness. *Matthew 26:37-39.* He "began to be very sorrowful and very heavy. . . . My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." *Mark 14:33, 34; Luke 22:44.* "Being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling to the ground."

15. Psalm 27:12; 35:11. False witnesses would lie about Him. *Matthew 26:59, 60.*

16. Psalm 22:16. "They pierced my hands and my feet." Messiah would be crucified. *Matthew 27:35; Mark 15:24, 25; Luke 23:33; John 19:15-18, 20, 23; Zechariah 12:10.*

17. Psalm 22:17. They stared at Him. *Matthew 27:36.*

18. Psalm 22:7, 8. They mocked Him and reviled Him. *Psalm 109:25; Matthew 27:39-43; Mark 15:29-32; Luke 23:35, 36.*

19. Psalm 22:18. They parted His garments among them and cast lots for His coat. *Matthew 27:35; Mark 15:24; John 19:23, 24.*

20. Psalm 69:21. Messiah would be very thirsty. *John 19:28.*

21. Psalm 69:21. They would give Him gall and vinegar to drink. *Matthew 27:34, 48; Mark 15:23, 36; Luke 23:36; John 19:29, 30.* At first He would not drink, but later He did.

22. Psalm 31:5. He committed His spirit to God. *Luke 23:46.*

23. Psalm 16:10. Messiah would die.

*Matthew 27:50; Mark 15:37; Luke 23:46; John 19:30, 33.*

24. Psalm 38:11; 88:8. His friends and kinsmen would stand afar off. *Matthew 27:55; Mark 15:40, 41; Luke 23:49.*

25. Psalm 34:20. Not one of His bones would be broken. *John 19:36.*

26. Psalm 69:9. "The insults of those who insult thee have fallen on me" (NIV). "The punishment due to the wicked, who, by their speeches and actions, had dishonoured God, was laid on me [Christ]" (Benson Comm.). The sins of all who have dishonored God were laid on Messiah. *Romans 15:3; 1 Corinthians 15:3.*

27. Psalm 16:8-11. God would resurrect Messiah to Eternal Life. He would never corrupt. *Psalm 72:15; "He shall live." Acts 2:23, 24, 25-27, 29, 30, 31, 32; 13:30-37, 35.*

28. Psalm 110:1, 5. Messiah would ascend to sit at God's right hand. *Matthew 26:64; Mark 12:36; 14:62; 16:19; Luke 20:42, 43; 24:51; Acts 2:34, 35; 7:55; Romans 8:34; Ephesians 1:20; Colossians 3:1; Hebrews 1:3, 13; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2; Daniel 7:13.*

29. Psalm 68:18. He led captive that which had put men into captivity and gave gifts to men. *Ephesians 4:8.*

30. Psalm 110:4. Messiah was to be a priest forever after the order of Melchisedek. He would intercede for His people with God. *Hebrews 5:6; 6:20; 7:17; Romans 8:34, 26, 27; Hebrews 7:25; 9:24; 1 John 2:1.*

31. Psalm 110:1, 2. Messiah would be at God's right hand until the time comes for God to send Him back to earth to make His enemies His footstool, and rule over them from Zion. *Psalm 102:16; Acts 3:19-21; Colossians 3:1-4; Acts 1:11.*

32. Psalm 132:11. God will give Messiah the throne of His father David. *2 Samuel 7:12, 13; Luke 1:32; Acts 2:29, 30; Revelation 3:7.*

33. Psalm 45:6. "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever." *Hebrews 1:8.* The word "God" here means deity, that which is divine, an object of worship. Messiah was to become divine like His Father when He ruled upon His throne.

34. Psalm 2:6-9. God will set His King on the holy hill of Zion. He will give Him

the heathen for His inheritance, and the earth for His possession. He will rule the nations with a rod of iron. Matthew 19:28; 25:31-34,40; Revelation 1:5; 11:15; 12:5; 17:14; 19:15; Jeremiah 23:5. The King shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. Isaiah 2:2-4. He will teach the nations remaining after Armageddon the way of God.

35. Psalm 45:9, 11, 13, 14. Messiah would have a Bride, a Queen. Revelation 19:7; 21:9.

36. Psalm 2:12. "Kiss the Son, lest he be angry and ye perish. . . Blessed are all they that put their trust in him."

We are asked to accept Israel's Messiah as our Savior and love Him and trust Him. Acts 4:12; 2:38; Revelation 3:20; Romans 10:9, 10; Acts 13:38, 39.

#### Conclusion

If the world had only the Psalms, and

all the other Old Testament books were lost, we could still understand who God's Messiah—Savior—would be: what kind of Man He would be, many things that would happen to Him, how He would take our reproaches upon Himself, how He would die, be resurrected by His Father, ascend to God's right hand to intercede for His people, and come again to earth as King of earth, living forever here on earth with His Queen, His people in the Kingdom of God in righteousness and peace.

The inspired New Testament writers were given understanding that certain Psalms spoke of the Messiah, and in turn have told us, "This is that which was spoken by the prophet."

Having therefore understanding of this great and wonderful holy Son of God, how our lives will change, how we will seek His righteousness with all our hearts,

and have as our sustaining hope that Kingdom to come that He will establish here on earth when He returns.

Paul explains well this change, this new way of living through life with Christ in us when he says, "See what this godly sorrow has produced in you: what earnestness, what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what alarm, what longing, what concern, what readiness to see justice done" (2 Cor. 7:11, NIV).

This article can be used as a daily study guide to see and relish our Messiah as He is seen in the Psalms. If we would concentrate each day on three points about Christ in the Psalms, at the end of the month we would be much richer in spirituality and in knowing better our Lord and Savior. Enjoy your reading and pondering! R41

# Messiah in the Major Prophets

by Pastor Ed Goit  
North Tonawanda, NY

Jesus had a double claim to King David's throne.

**B**IBLE STUDENTS CLASSIFY Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel as the Major Prophets. It is written that "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Pet. 1:21b). These men assumed that their Messianic prophecies were all to be fulfilled at Messiah's first coming. They did not see that the Church Age would intervene between the cross (sufferings of Christ) and the crown (the glory that should follow).

It is our purpose to trace the prophecies of the Messiah's first coming through the Major Prophets and demonstrate that they testify to His second coming and affirm God's assurance that their

messages of a Messianic age will be fulfilled through Jesus, the Christ of God. Our thoughts will be focused on certain key passages from the Major Prophets and additional scriptures will be listed for further consideration. Well did Jesus say, referring to the Scriptures, "They are they which testify of me" (John 5:39).

#### ISAIAH DECLARES MESSIAH'S COMING

Isaiah heralded a call to repentance to a sinful Israel with this entreaty, "Let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Isa. 1:18).

Israel's history ranks of rebellion, disobedience, and its ultimate scattering among the nations. God's prophets continually proclaimed the coming of a better day in the gloom of judgments.

### Virgin Birth

In one of Israel's darker days, King Ahaz was comforted by Isaiah. God's prophet declared, "Hear ye now, O house of David; Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will ye weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel" (Isa. 7:14). This prophecy is one of many having dual fulfillment. It had completion in both Mary and a young woman in Isaiah's time. This prophecy is quoted as being fulfilled in Matthew 1:23. Matthew's reference to Jesus' birth declares, "When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost" (Matt. 1:18). Jesus had an earthly mother, but He did not have an earthly father. The angel of God told Mary, "Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. . . . The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:31, 35).

Paul the apostle proclaimed the virgin birth. "When the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law" (Gal. 4:4).

### Lineage of David

The miraculous birth of Christ fulfilled Isaiah's prophecy. Joseph and Mary were descendants of King David. Joseph's ancestor was David's son Solomon; Mary's descent was through David's son Nathan. (Matt. 1:1-17; Luke 3:23-38.) Jesus had a double claim to King David's throne. Every devout Jew knew that God had promised that the Messiah would be of the lineage of David. The genealogical table was necessary to certify Jesus' Messiahship. History's tapestry is woven with the threads from the loom of God in

Jesus' birth. Jesus, being the seed of David according to the flesh, had a rightful claim to the throne of David. (Rom. 1:3.) In a truer sense the throne of David was also called "the throne of the LORD" (1 Chron. 29:23). The fact that Jesus is the Son of God, begotten of the Holy Spirit, makes Him the rightful heir in a more significant sense.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ further testifies to His Messiahship and right to sit on the throne of David. (Acts 2:29-36.) Israel longed for the coming Messiah and God planned Israel's restoration and its accomplishment through Jesus' second coming. (Rom. 11:26, 27.) God further planned that salvation for the Gentiles would come through Jesus Christ. (Rom. 11:11-15.)

### Messianic Prophecies

In declaring Messiah's birth, Isaiah prophesied, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this" (Isa. 9:6, 7). No Christian will dispute the application of this prophecy to the Messiah.

It is God's plan to fulfill this prophecy in its entirety through His Son's second coming and the consequent "restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began" (Acts 3:21b). The prophecy of God's kingdom restored on earth, ruled by His anointed, will consummate His unconditional covenant with Abraham. God is committed to establishing a theocratic kingdom where Paradise will be restored. Isaiah also forecast changes in the animal kingdom and the earth itself. (Isa. 35.) These prophecies are plain, positive, and certain of fulfillment. There is no symbolism or room for spiritualizing the words of Isaiah 11:1-12; 35:1-10; 51:3; 65:25.

### Who Else But Jesus?

Isaiah 53 sketches the sufferings and exaltation of the servant as "a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth" (v. 7). This portrait of Jesus proclaims the design of His death (v. 4). Who else was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities, if not Jesus? The New Testament story of the Evangelist Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch considers this scripture and its fulfillment in Jesus (Acts 8:26-39.) As a result, the eunuch accepted Jesus as his Savior, was baptized, and went on his way rejoicing. We would do well to consider this example. Consider Isaiah 2:3, 4; 26:19-21; 28:16; 40:1-5; 50:6; 59:20; 61; 62:11; 63:1-6; 65:17-25.

### JEREMIAH PROCLAIMS MESSIAH'S COMING

God ordained Jeremiah a prophet to the nations and Judah in particular. He declared God's impending judgment and rejection of Judah.

### Startling Words

In the midst of these announcements he included these startling words, "The LORD hath created a new thing in the earth, A woman shall compass a man" (Jer. 31:22b). The fact that a man-child is enfolded in the womb of a woman is not new. Here, however, is the strong implication that this event is a special, supernatural, creative act of God. I believe it looks far beyond the immediate future and incorporates events to be revealed in God's unfolding purpose. This scripture could be one of many which involves an immediate fulfillment in the relationship of Israel with God and its fuller realization in the miraculous virgin birth of Jesus as the anointed of God. It is important that this prophecy was given in the context of the scattering and restoration of Israel and more importantly in the background of the prophecy of God's new covenant with the whole nation of Israel.

### "A Righteous Branch"

Jeremiah prophesied, "The days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto

David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS" (Jer. 23:5, 6). This scripture is denoted as the Messianic hope. Jeremiah also heralds its message in Jeremiah 30:8, 9 and 38:15-17.

### A New Covenant

Early in Israel's history, God gave them the Law at Sinai. Israel didn't fulfill God's expectations and disobeyed Him, causing their rejection. Against such despair and darkness, Jeremiah proclaimed, "Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more" (Jer. 31:31-34). This prophecy extended hope in Israel's gloom. Every visible evidence of the old covenant had been destroyed. Jerusalem was burned, sacked, and laid ruin by King Nebuchadnezzar and his followers. The Temple was a heartrending ruin. The Ark of the Covenant was no more (probably carried off to Babylon). (2 Kings 24:13; Dan. 1:2.) Most of the people were slaughtered in Babylonian captivity.

The surviving remnant was under Gedaliah's rule. (2 Chron. 25.) Jeremiah prophesied to this group his most glorious message. Israel was guaranteed a new heart as a foundation for God's promised blessings. This new covenant will incor-

porate God's forgiveness of Israel's iniquity. Jesus died for the whole household of Israel as well as Gentiles. The blood of Jesus shed on Calvary's Cross forges the foundation of this new covenant. It will not be realized until God has effected Israel's salvation and restoration to the promised land. (Jer. 32:37-44; Rom. 11:26, 27.) This restoration requires Israel's spiritual rebirth, regenerated by Jesus' second coming. Jeremiah talks in the short term of a literal, physical captivity and return from Babylon. (Jer. 25:9-14.) In the long term, he projects a new covenant for God's people who rejected His only begotten Son. Study Jeremiah 3:14-18; 24; 29:1 - 33:26.

### EZEKIEL ANNOUNCES MESSIAH'S COMING

Ezekiel's announcement of Messiah's coming prophesies to events of His second coming. No fact in history is more firmly established than the reality of Jesus Christ's first coming. Inasmuch as all the prophecies of Messiah's coming were not consummated at His first coming, it is evident that there must be a second coming.

The office of Messiah embraces the work of Prophet, Priest, and King. At Jesus' first advent He was the Prophet whom Moses predicted (Deut. 18:15), and as such He died for our justification. He has ascended to the right hand of God and acts as our Priest, Intercessor, and Sanctifier (Heb. 5:14-16; 7:25). When Jesus returns as He promised (John 14:3), He will come as "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS" to glorify His Church. In God's plan Jesus was born to be King. (Isa. 60:3; Matt. 2:2-4; Luke 2:11; John 1:49; 18:37.)

God's people, the whole house of Israel, were ruled by a dynasty of kings whose lineage descended from King David. This lineage ceased when Jerusalem was conquered by Babylon in 586 B.C. Ezekiel 21:27 marks the close of the theocratic kingdom and the "times of the Gentiles" inception, during which all Israel is set aside until Messiah should come to restore the kingdom of God on earth. A future theocratic kingdom becomes the major topic of the prophet's

message. Ezekiel prophesied God's cutting off of Israel. "I will overturn, overturn, overturn it: and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is; and I will give it him" (Ezek. 21:27). It is the right of Messiah, the only begotten Son of God, who shall ascend to David's throne. (Luke 1:31-33; Isa. 9:7; Zech. 9:9, 10.)

Ezekiel's prophecy of a coming Messiah proclaims the restoration of a theocratic kingdom. In the light of fulfilled prophecies of Jesus' first advent and prophecies relating to the reestablishment of God's kingdom on this earth, it is obvious there can and will be no fulfillment apart from the personal presence of Jesus Christ. The whole new age depends on His literal return as promised (Acts 1:11). All that will be realized in the Millennium has its origin in Jesus Christ. Under His rule the earth will once more become a garden of Eden. There will be great social, economic, and climatic changes, war and disease will be abolished, the church and state will become one in aim and action, long life will be restored, and the fertility and productivity of the earth will be reestablished. (See Ezek. 34:23; 36:33-36; 37:26-28; Isa. 61:6; 66:23.)

### The Ezekiel Tablets

In recent years a treasure of tremendous archaeological and spiritual importance has surfaced in Jerusalem known as the Ezekiel Tablets. There are sixty-six marble-and-black basalt tablets containing almost the complete script of Ezekiel inscribed in bas relief. These tablets could be of equal importance to the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls. They are housed in a small museum called Yad Ben Ziv, the home of the second president of Israel, the late Ben Ziv. Some Israeli scholars connected with the museum hold that these tablets could be the original tablets from Ezekiel's tomb, created by the prophet himself or by his pupils after his death. There is much ongoing study concerning these tablets.

### The Millennial Temple

The Priestly work of the Messiah is the climax of Ezekiel's prophecy of the vision of the Millennial Temple (Acts 15:13,



14; Ezek. 40 - 48). Zechariah foretells great physical change in the land of Palestine when Jesus returns to the Mount of Olives (Zech. 14:10). Note the words "lifted up" and the dimensions that total thirty-six miles. This plain will provide the needed construction area for this Temple.

### DANIEL AFFIRMS MESSIAH'S COMING

Daniel's long life extended from Nebuchadnezzar to Cyrus. Jesus directly recognized authorship of Daniel's book of prophecy. (Matt. 24:15; Mark 13:14.) Daniel, in recording Nebuchadnezzar's vision (2:31-45), has provided Bible students with the ABC's of prophecy. It declares the events of the last days, Gentile Times, the coming of Messiah, and the reestablishment of the Kingdom of God on earth. He prophesies God's divine program for the future. In this prophecy, Daniel declares "that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure" (Dan. 2:45). Just as the stone fell upon the feet of the image and crushed the whole to pieces, so the God of the heavens declared He would set up a Kingdom which should never be destroyed. This shall be a Kingdom that shall stand for-

ever and its power shall never be transferred to another people.

The stone has been variously interpreted as the Jewish nation, the Church, the Messiah, and the Messianic Kingdom, but it is clear from the Scriptures that it is used as a Messianic symbol (Gen. 49:24; Isa. 28:16; Eph. 2:20; 1 Pet. 2:7, 8; Matt. 21:42, 43).

### The Ancient of Days - The Son of Man

Daniel dreamed a dream and had visions and told the sum of the matter (Dan. 7:1). The dream was to a great extent a repetition of the dream of the four great world empires that had been given to Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 2). It portrayed fierce, wild beasts symbolical of kingdoms. In this dream, Daniel beheld the Ancient of Days (Dan. 7:9, 10). He also beheld "one like the Son of man" (Dan. 7:13). The kingdoms of man had passed away and the prophet now saw the installation of Christ in His Millennial Kingdom. Daniel observed that one came with the clouds of heaven and was brought before the Ancient of Days. At His first Advent, Jesus prophesied that in a coming day everyone shall see "the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." (Matt. 24:30; Rev. 1:7; Acts 1:11.) There can be no question as to the identity of the "one like a Son of man." It could be no other than our Lord Himself. This title was ascribed

to Messiah in Psalm 80:17 and one He used frequently during His earthly ministry. He was conducted to the Ancient of Days in the vision, "And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom . . . which shall not be destroyed." (Dan. 7:14; Psa. 2:6-9; Luke 19:12.)

In a discussion of Messiah's coming, we would be negligent if we failed to refer to Daniel's prophecy of the seventy weeks determined upon his people Israel and upon Jerusalem. Jesus at His first coming referred to this scripture in answering His disciples' questions concerning the sign of His coming and the end of the world (Matt. 24:3, 15-27). In this passage, "the backbone of prophecy," specific reference is made to the time of the coming of Messiah, i.e., His first coming, His crucifixion, the tribulation, and other events (Dan. 9:24-27).

God's Word prophesies two separate comings of the Messiah: one to persecution and death, the second to glorious victory over the enemies of God and Israel. In this study we have viewed the coming of Messiah in the Major Prophets and have noted some of the fulfilled prophecies at Jesus' first coming and point out that He will return to redeem both Israel and the church in the near future. In the interim let us occupy for Jesus and beware of false Christs, such as David Koresh, the self-described Son of God. May our prayer ever be, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus" (Rev. 22:20b). R41

# Messiah in the Minor Prophets

*by Pastor Rex F. Cain  
Bedford, OH*

**B**Y THE TIME THE MINOR Prophets took pen in hand, the Messianic Kingdom and coming Deliverer was a well-entrenched Jewish hope. Like Daniel who read Jeremiah to discover the time remaining in Israel's captivity, so the Minor Proph-

ets (who overlapped with several of the Major Prophets) read the Law, Psalms, and Prophets to discover—to their joy—that an Anointed was scheduled to one day appear. Thus, when we peruse the writings of such godly men as the Minor Prophets, we know they are echoing both

their contemporary mentors and the patriarchs. This says nothing, of course, of writing under the unction of God.

For this brief sketch of the Minor Prophets' anticipation of the coming Messiah, I've chosen to ponder their remarks chronologically as they appeared in history.

#### OBADIAH—840 B.C. or 597 B.C.?

It's difficult to ascertain when Obadiah lived. Dr. John Whitcomb Jr. places him around 840 B.C., and historian Robert Boyd at 597 B.C. For our purposes here, we'll grant Obadiah the earlier date.

One might call Obadiah's little one-chapter discourse a letter of doom for anti-Semites (v. 10). It's addressed to Edom (present-day Jordan) and promises their demise for constantly persecuting Israel through the centuries—even to this day!

In this shortest book of the Old Testament, we won't find many Messianic prophecies, but verses 17-21 promise Israel's future redemption and restoration.

When Obadiah predicts, "There shall be no survivor in the house of Esau" (v. 18b) and "the kingdom shall be the LORD'S" (v. 21), it's apparent this prophet was convinced. Israel's enemies would one day be destroyed and Israel exalted. While there are no direct references to this book in the New Testament, a companion passage for verse 21 might be Revelation 11:15: "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord." Obviously, Obadiah had a compelling hope for Israel's future glory.

#### JOEL—835-796 B.C.

As mentioned in the opening lines, these prophets were students of the patriarchs. Joel is sometimes called the Prophet of the Pentateuch inasmuch as 25 references to the books of Moses are found in his three-chapter prophecy. He admonished primarily the sins of the southern kingdom.

Joel is given a firm covenant for Israel's future Messianic glory:

"The Lord [will] roar from Zion" (3:16a).

"Jerusalem shall be holy, and stran-

gers shall never again pass through it" (3:17b).

"In that day . . . the hills shall flow with milk" (3:18).

"Judah shall be inhabited forever" (3:20a).

"The Lord dwells in Zion" (3:21b).

In Joel's highly prophetic third chapter, we can hear the New Testament's references to it (and fulfillments) as regards God's wrath (3:11-14 with Rev. 14:15-20; 16:16), the new earth (3:18 with Rev. 21), and the "river of life" (3:18 with Ezek. 47 and Rev. 22).

Joel knows future glory awaits Israel in the Coming Age of the Messiah, but not without trauma: "For the day of the LORD is great and very terrible; who can endure it?" (2:11b.) This shows God's severity. But wait. "Return to me with all your heart. . . . Who knows whether [God] will not turn and repent, and leave a blessing behind him?" (2:12, 13.) This portrays God's goodness.

#### JONAH—784-722 B.C.

All Christians and virtually all those who abandoned Sunday School and church in their youth still recall vividly the story of Jonah in the whale. Jonah is another short book (four chapters), but the whole narrative is a portrayal of the resurrection hope. Some scholars suggest that Jonah is a type of Israel being swallowed but never digested—that like Jonah, Israel will be regurgitated from the pit (2:6) of destruction. (It is reminiscent of Ezekiel 37 and the valley of dry bones; Israel shall arise in the last days "a mighty host" and be glorified as God's people on earth.)

There is no direct Messianic reference, but Jesus quotes Jonah in Matthew 12:39-41 (thus giving sacred credence to this often-maligned volume), wherein future judgment and resurrection are under discussion. Jonah thus portrayed by divine providence Messiah's coming and burial (Matt. 12:40) and the resurrection at the Messiah's return. The Pharisees were demanding "a sign" of Jesus' Messiahship (Matt. 12:23, 38), and He cites Jonah.

#### AMOS—764-755 B.C.

This prophet claims his words were received through a vision (1:2). He spoke

to the northern kingdom in a time of prosperity, but also a time of wantonness and gross sin. He's known for the "plumbline" explication (7:7) that served as a symbol of judgment according to the strict standards of God's righteousness. In his nine chapters, only in 9:11-15 does Amos project thoughts to the fulfillment of the Messianic Age, but they are very vivid:

"In that day I will raise up the tabernacle of David" (9:11).

"[Israel will] possess . . . Edom [Jordan] and all nations" (9:12).

"Days are coming, says the LORD, when the plowman shall overtake the reaper" (9:13).

"I will plant them upon their land, and they shall never again be plucked up out of the land which I have given them, says the LORD your God" (9:15).

Amos' vision (direct from God) is unmistakable: Israel's tabernacle (9:11) will be restored. The prophet speaks of David's throne reestablished even before Solomon's temple was destroyed! Note how James quotes and applies Amos' prophecy about 750 years later in Acts 15:15-17.

Under the divine breath of God, Amos was inspired to pen the glorious eternal restoration of David's throne—the Messianic kingdom. The land is theirs forever.

#### HOSEA—755-714 B.C.

One after another, God sends His men to admonish their nation about their lamentable sins, yet always declaring hope. The word "return" is found 15 times in Hosea indicating that if they would, God would gladly forgive. But then, as now, the warnings fell on deaf ears and calloused hearts. Through several illustrations, God's love and restoration of Israel is portrayed throughout the 14 chapters.

The primary Messianic text in Hosea is 3:5:

"Afterward the children of Israel shall return and seek the LORD their God, and David their king [prophetically Christ—David had been dead 350 years]; and they shall come in fear to the LORD and to his goodness in the latter days."

There's no doubt about it, another minor prophet who directly received "the word of the Lord" (1:1) was inspired to record for history (primarily Israel's) the coming Messianic Age.

#### MICAH—740-698 B.C.

This prophet of doom and glory lived to see his own prophecy fulfilled against Samaria when the ten tribes fell to Assyria in 722 B.C. He preached warnings to both kingdoms but was, like so many others, ignored. Again under the unction of the Almighty ("The word of the Lord that came to Micah"—1:1), he spoke prophetically of the glorious Messianic Age:

"Bethlehem . . . from you . . . one who is to be ruler in Israel" (5:2). Fulfilled, Matthew 2:2-6. Messiah arrives. "We will walk in the name of the LORD . . . for ever" (4:5). Israel's promised restoration. Compare 7:7-17. "They [Israel] shall dwell secure, for now he [referring back to v. 2—Messiah] shall be great to the ends of the earth" (5:4).

Another minor prophet drives another nail into the covenant box of hope for Israel's future glory!

#### NAHUM—648-620 B.C.

Nahum gives a scathing prophecy of Nineveh's "utter end" (1:8) because of gross sin that had engulfed them after their dramatic repentance 100 years earlier under Jonah. It was less than 300 years later that Alexander the Great took an expedition over the site and failed to realize he was walking over the ruins of one of the greatest empires that ever existed! How true was Nahum's divine forecast!

No direct Messianic passages can be cited; however, in verses 7-15 of chapter 1 is Judah's hope—particularly in verse 15, "Never again shall the wicked come against you."

#### ZEPHANIAH—634-625 B.C.

Like virtually all the other minor prophets, Zephaniah delivered "hellfire and brimstone" warnings to a wayward people, but perhaps it was his blunt warnings that prompted the great spiritual revival in his day under king Josiah.

He speaks often (in spite of only three

chapters) of the "day of the LORD," which is almost universally agreed to be the Messianic Age.

"All the earth shall be consumed. Yet . . . all of them [Israel] may call on the name of the LORD" (3:8, 9). "On that day you shall not be put to shame. . . . You shall no longer be haughty in my holy mountain" (3:11). "A remnant shall be purified" (3:11-14). "The King of Israel [Messiah!], the LORD, is in your midst. . . . On that day it shall be said, 'Do not fear, O Zion'" (3:15). "At that time [millennium] I will bring you home. . . . I will make you renowned . . . among all the peoples of the earth, when I restore your fortunes" (3:19, 20).

Truly, Zephaniah reveals both the wrath and the love of God. A remnant of Israel (cf. Ezek. 39:25-29; Romans 11) who have been true to their God will, on *that day*, find "the King of Israel" in their midst!

#### HABAKKUK—625-610 B.C.

Under Habakkuk the ominous reverberations of marching Babylonian armies could be felt in Judah. While the earth shook, the nation's heart stood still. Because they refused to repent, the doom predicted by scores of prophets was now at their doorstep. Now, like then, we often put off repentance until the "enemy" is at our gate—too late!

Habakkuk prayed while the dust rose on the horizon where multiple tens of thousands of army boots marched toward God's land and people:

"Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation" (3:18). Why? "For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea" (2:14). Had he read Isaiah 11:9? How shall any enter that glorious day? "But the righteous shall live by faith" (2:4). Did Paul read Habakkuk? See Galatians 3:11.

Yes, Habakkuk too—for all the "woes" he pronounced in his three chapters—was warmed by the pervasive truth that God had promised to all His faithful followers, "The earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD" (2:14).

That was spoken while Babylonian armies prepared to invade. Israel will be permanently established in the Messianic Age.

#### HAGGAI—520 B.C.

In words of a few more than an average church bulletin (1,131), Haggai addresses a small "remnant of the people" (1:12, 14) who had returned from the Babylonian captivity. He was the first of the post-exile prophets. His message was far different and was received far differently than those "sinners" of pre-exile times! They now had a heart for the Word of God, having suffered miserably in exile. His ministry lasted four months with four messages (1:1; 2:1; 2:10; 2:20) and, in the time sequence, should be placed in Ezra between chapters four and five.

Haggai's focus is the rebuilding of the devastated and glorious Solomon's temple. But that glory was never again to appear for Israel—not even at Christ's time 500 years later when Herod rebuilt the temple on a grand scale. That temple was still less glorious than Solomon's. However, Messianically, Haggai (having the temple on his mind and under inspiration) writes very briefly of the future Kingdom temple:

"I am with you, says the LORD . . . My Spirit abides among you; fear not. Once again . . . I will shake the heavens and the earth and the sea and dry land; and I will shake all nations, so that the treasures of all nations shall come in [to the temple—compare Isa. 60:5; Rev. 21:10, 22-26 plus many more passages], and I will fill this house with splendor. [It hasn't since Haggai—this must be future!] . . . THE LATTER SPLENDOR OF THIS HOUSE SHALL BE GREATER THAN THE FORMER [of Solomon's time] . . . and in this place I will give prosperity . . ." (2:4-9).

What a thing to say when at this point this small band of people was struggling to survive! Obviously, Haggai was seeing the Messianic Kingdom, and temple, far down the road of history! As Haggai admonishes five times in his two chapters, "Consider."

(Continued)

## ZECHARIAH—520-518 B.C.

This contemporary with Haggai was the prophet of restoration and glory. It has been said, "Haggai was a realist with his feet on the ground and Zechariah was a visionary with his head in the clouds." How wonderful! For of all the Minor Prophets, it is Zechariah who most lifts our hopes with vivid and unmistakably clear words for the Messianic Age! To quote them here would take far too much space, but I'll mention a few topics with related passages for you to pursue on your own. His prophecies can only inspire our hearts!

1) First Advent (3:8) with Mark 10:45; Philippians 2:7.

2) Speaking to Gentiles (9:10) with John 1:12.

3) Entry into Jerusalem (9:9) with Matthew 21:1-9.

4) Betrayed for 30 pieces of silver (11:12 with Matthew 26:14, 15).

5) Deserted by disciples (13:7) with Matthew 26:31, 56.

6) Hands and feet pierced (12:10) with John 19:34, 37.

7) Potter's field (11:13) with Matthew 27:6, 7.

[Above stated 520 B.C.—fulfilled Christ's earthly ministry.]

8) The battle of Armageddon (14:4-21) with Revelation 16:14.

9) Christ's Messianic return (14:4-21) with Revelation 19:11-16; 2 Thessaloni-

ans 1:8-10; Revelation 20:1-6, and many others!

[Above stated 520 B.C.—yet to be fulfilled.]

The most beautiful Messianic passage for me in this marvelous Minor Prophet is clear and forthright:

"AND THE LORD WILL BECOME KING OVER ALL THE EARTH; ON THAT DAY [His return—the Messianic Age] THE LORD WILL BE ONE AND HIS NAME ONE" (14:9).

Hallelujah! "Come, Lord Jesus!" (Rev. 22:20.)

## MALACHI—540-400 B.C.

And last of the Minor Prophets—but certainly not the least—is Malachi. He is often called "The unknown prophet with an angel's name" due to the fact that his name means "Jehovah's messenger." Four hundred silent years follow his message—the time between the Testaments when no further voice from God was heard until His Son arrived and the calendar began with 1 A.D. (*anno Domini*—After Christ).

In 100 years since Haggai and Zechariah, Israel fell back into gross sins, including idolatry, thanks to foreign wives whom God commanded they should never marry. Malachi's message was received by the majority with indignation and arrogance. "Who, me?"

Yet, as with all the others, God had "jewels" (KJV, 3:17)—those who "feared the LORD, that thought upon his name" (3:16). They rejoiced in the prophet's message of future glory for Israel. The key two verses for Israel's future glory would be these in his four-chapter book:

"For you who fear my name the SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS SHALL RISE [Christ, Messiah] with healing in its wings. You shall go forth leaping like calves from the stall. And you shall tread down the wicked, for they will be ashes under the soles of your feet, on the day when I act [Christ's return], says the LORD of hosts" (4:2, 3).

And so we find, in one way or another, all the Minor Prophets have spoken about the Messianic Age.

The eternal question, then, is this: Will you be among that number that "leaps like a calf from the stall" in that Messianic Day? Do you believe the prophet's message? Christ is coming to establish a worldwide righteous Kingdom for those "who fear my name."

Jesus said:

"These are my words . . . that every thing written about me in the law of Moses and the prophets and the psalms must be fulfilled" (Luke 24:44).

(Scriptural quotations are from the RSV unless otherwise designated.) RSV

# Messiah in the New Testament

by Pastor Hollis Partlowe  
Oregon, Illinois

**F**OUR WRITERS HAVE ABLY presented the first coming of Messiah on the preceding pages as He was revealed in the Old Testament. Jesus just walks across the pages of the Old Testament into the New and announces: "I am He. I'm Messiah, Son of Abraham, Son of David, Son of

Adam, King of Israel, Son of God. I'm the great prophet that God has raised up among your countrymen like Moses" (Deut. 18:15-18; Acts 3:22, 23). Malachi had prophesied that John the Baptist would appear and prepare the way for Messiah, King of Israel (Mal. 3:1). Then after 400 silent years (from Malachi to Matthew) Christ was born.

## Joseph Marsh's Doctrinal Development and Conflicts with Christadelphianism

MARK M. MATTISON

### Part 2

#### Church Split

Trouble visited the Rochester Church of God in 1856 when Marsh decided not to publish an article by H.L. Hastings. Believing that he was acting in accordance with the Church discipline described in Matthew 18, Hastings reprov'd Marsh, and when Marsh did not acquiesce, Hastings drew others into the conflict. The political struggle led to a trial in the Rochester church in 1857, at which time Marsh was exonerated. Displeased at the outcome, J.B. Cook and others left the church. But this was only the beginning of Marsh's troubles.

#### Full-Blown Conflict over Re-immersion

The year 1858 brought with it the full-blown conflict over rebaptism. In April of that year, Mark Allen wrote an article for the *Expositor* entitled "Pre-requisites to Immersion," in which he argued that a proper understanding of the Kingdom must precede immersion. Marsh responded that "All can understandingly believe in the death and resurrection of the Son of God, and represent the same by baptism. To require *perfection in degree* in the whole, or the full gospel of the kingdom, on the part of all, before or subsequent to baptism, is requiring an *impossibility* which God demands of no one."<sup>29</sup>

J.M. Stephenson debated the topic with Marsh through the pages of the *Expositor* at some length. Augustus Sintzenick, the printer of the *Expositor* and a sympathizer

with Marsh's position, would eventually be swayed by this discussion.<sup>30</sup>

In the *Herald* of May 1858, Thomas happily reported "A Gospel Crisis in Rochester, N.Y." He wrote:

Bro. Chase from Michigan has recently been preaching at "Chapel Hall" in Rochester. His last discourse was on Baptism. He is said to have laid the subject fairly and faithfully before his audience, in the judgement of the majority of the society meeting at that place. After he had finished, Bro. McMillan and Bro. Bradfield, two friends of the truth there, who have not only believed the Gospel of the Kingdom, but with scriptural intelligence obeyed it, rose up, and bore a faithful testimony to the truth also.<sup>31</sup>

He goes on to relate that one of those present confessed his need for rebaptism, and that the following Sunday Marsh addressed Chase's position from James 1:25. Marsh's sermon was followed by a brief talk by Sintzenick reinforcing Marsh's position. (Thomas wrote that Sintzenick said "a great deal," but Sintzenick protested that the talk was not more than ten minutes long, and that Thomas had misquoted him<sup>32</sup>). McMillan then protested against Marsh and Sintzenick that true belief must precede

<sup>30</sup>Mark Allen, "The Gospel of the Kingdom in Rochester, N.Y.," *Herald*, 1860, 131; Sintzenick, "Rochester, N. Y., and some of its Religious Vagaries," *Herald*, 1860, 228.

<sup>31</sup>Page 109.

<sup>32</sup>"A Correction," *Herald*, 1858, 154ff. In a lengthy review of Sintzenick's correction, Thomas argued that he had not misquoted him, but had quoted his informant's letter word-for-word; however, even if the informant had misquoted him, his "correction" was "in effect" the same as what the informant had said he said.

<sup>29</sup>Cf. "Trials in the Church in Rochester, N.Y.—Decision of Council, &c.," *Expositor and Advocate*, September 15, 1857, 211ff.

baptism, and exhorted both of them:

to retire home and learn the gospel the Samaritans received from Philip; and to be immersed for the name of Jesus Christ into remission of sins, as Peter also enjoined upon the Pentecostian First Fruits. This wholesome exhortation was publicly offered; and we doubt not, received as unpalatable exhortation sincerely and affectionately presented, is entitled to be. Afterwards a little more was added of the same sort. The Editor [Marsh] was told by his friend that he looked upon him as an unbaptized man, though now, indeed, believing the gospel.<sup>33</sup> He besought him to consider what he was doing, and not to stand in the way of others, of whom some had spoken to him of his position. Bro. Bradfield exhorted him also to the same end; and parted with him not without hope that he would become obedient to the righteousness of God testified by Moses and the prophets. . . .

We are glad to hear that things have come to a head in Rochester, N.Y. No real good can be done in that city until what is there called "the church of God" become such in deed and truth by an intelligent obedience to the glad tidings of the kingdom of God.

. . . They have had many doctrinal troubles in Rochester, which have had a winnowing effect. Our friend Cook and his faction have been fanned out; and others scattered off elsewhere. All this was necessary, that the approved might be made manifest.<sup>34</sup>

In the *Expositor*, Marsh wrote that the so-called "Gospel crisis" was in effect a dialogue, not an argument. It was true that Brother Chase had preached in Rochester on baptism, and McMillan and Bradfield had spoken "in approbation of his discourses," and another worthy brother had expressed doubts about the validity of his baptism. It was also true that Marsh had preached the following Sunday from James 1:25, but it was *not* true that his sermon was preached in response to Chase. In fact, he had not even discussed the topic of baptism. He goes on:

At the close of our discourse, in harmony with usual custom, we gave liberty for others to speak. Several

brethren spoke, and baptism was one of the various topics of their conversation, some of which was rather heated, but no more so than is occasionally witnessed among good and conscientious brethren where different sentiments are entertained, and freedom of speech is tolerated. Instead of a "crisis" being the result, as is represented by the *Herald*, we have rented our place of worship for another year, and notwithstanding the same differences in sentiment on baptism still exist, as before, we have not made this difference a sufficient cause for breach of Christian fellowship among us, and we sincerely hope we never shall.

Why does the editor of the *Herald* seem eagerly to grasp at every occasion to bring *us* into disrepute before his readers? What have we done to merit these frequent and unprovoked personal attacks? He once adopted a very different course, associated with us as a fellow laborer, and brother, at the family altar and table of the Lord.—Our sentiments on his favorite topic, baptism, are the *same now*, as *then*—of which fact he was not, and is not, ignorant. We have not withdrawn our fellowship from him; and know not why he has treated us as an "apostate," in our "sins," being baptized in "the faith of devils," &c., unless it be, that we have exercised the right to do as he has done, viz: to freely express our sentiments on baptism!<sup>35</sup>

Thomas and his supporters were increasing their efforts to win converts from the Age-to-Come movement which Marsh had been leading in the wake of Millerism. In the same month that Thomas had reported Rochester's "Gospel crisis," a Mr. S. Williams reported a successful missionary trip to one such Age-to-Come Church of God in Port Perry, Canada:

There is a church there of between twenty and thirty members, calling themselves "the church of God;" and believing in the Age to Come, restoration of the Jews, reappearance of Christ, and the establishment of his Kingdom in the Covenanted land. But I found that they lacked one thing, viz., *the obedience of the faith*. The most of them there take "*The Expositor*;" in which I am sorry to see friend Marsh take such a sophistical stand against that enlightened obedience which the one faith demands [rebaptism], seeing that he is the means of keeping back many honest hearts from "obeying the truth," as many of them look up to him as their oracle. How glad should I be to see him obey the truth; as I think that through "the Expositor" he is operating as a stumbling-block to some who would otherwise obey; and his conversion would move it out of the way.<sup>36</sup>

Williams reports that after delivering nineteen more lec-

<sup>33</sup>Thomas referred to this event again in "The Gospel of the Kingdom not One Idea, but the Manifold Wisdom of God," *Herald*, 1858, 131: "One of the members (an official member, we believe,) of the society in Rochester to which he [Marsh] belongs, and a very warm personal friend too, recently told the elder [Marsh] that although he had called him Brother, he looked upon him as an unbaptized man, yet now believing the gospel; and besought him to consider what he was doing, and not stand in the way of others. Now this official brother knows our friend, the editor, better than we do; neither he nor the reader, therefore, will deem us presumptuous or uncharitable in saying that we wait for proof that the editor of the *Expositor* is a brother in Christ at all; for in all our New Testament reading we never read of an unbaptized brother in Christ, or a Christian, weak or strong, since the day of Pentecost; and his official friend says he is unbaptized."

<sup>34</sup>"A Gospel Crisis in Rochester, N.Y.," *Herald*, 1858, 110, 111.

<sup>35</sup>*Ibid.*, May 15, 1858, 660.

<sup>36</sup>"The Clerical Son of a Ghost in Skyana Rejected, and the Jesus Paul Preached Obeyed," *Herald*, 1858, 159.

tures on his visit, "six who had been previously immersed into the theological sonship, and world-burning theory of Antichrist [i.e., the Millerite doctrine of the millennium], came forward and were baptized into the one faith. In the whole I baptized fourteen into the Name of the Holy One, who are now rejoicing in hope of the glory of God."<sup>37</sup>

Yet, as the following incident will illustrate, Marsh still believed that he could work with those who sided with Thomas on the issue of rebaptism.

Two months later, a prophetic conference was held at Port Perry. One of the speakers was someone who called himself "John Williams." After Williams had consented to speak at the conference, he "found through the Expositor that Friend Marsh and Elder Sweet were also to be there."<sup>38</sup>

On the first morning of the conference, Marsh asked Williams if he would be willing to become an evangelist (even though he knew Williams' position on baptism). Williams agreed. It was proposed and seconded that Williams should become an evangelist, and one hundred dollars were immediately pledged to him. Marsh planned to raise more funds for Williams through the *Expositor*.

In one of his sermons, Williams "invited them to examine their relationship to Abraham, in the light of God's word, by first believing 'the great and precious promises,' then baptism; not baptism, then faith."<sup>39</sup> In his presentations, Williams consistently took Marsh and his colleagues to task. Commenting on the conference in the *Herald*, he rhetorically asked Marsh and Sweet, "Why do you preach the kingdom at all, if it is unnecessary for faith? Why? because you are with a people that believe it, and from whom you obtain 'the almighty dollar.'"<sup>40</sup>

Three days after Williams' appointment as an evangelist, Marsh and Sweet took Williams aside and asked him about a letter of his which had been published in the July *Herald*. Why would Williams not call Marsh "Brother," but only "Friend"? Williams answered that he could not acknowledge Marsh as a brother in Christ, for he had not yet been baptized. Marsh protested that by that statement, Williams had "unchristianized" him. Williams answered that a Christian not only believed the Word, but obeyed it. Marsh said though he had used his influence to get Williams into the field as an evangelist, he would have to bring this matter to his brethren if Williams did not retract his statement. Williams refused.

The next morning Marsh asked Williams to reconsider, but he would not. As Marsh had promised, he brought the matter before the church, reading extracts from the letter. Adding that the issue of rebaptism should not be made into a test of fellowship, Marsh turned to Williams and asked, "Can you fellowship me as a *Brother* in Christ?" Williams

responded, "I cannot fellowship you as a brother in Christ, for I know your position."<sup>41</sup>

Many at the conference disapproved of the spirit of Williams' letter, and it was decided that Williams would not be supported and paid as an evangelist.

Three years later, "Williams" was exposed as a bigamist whose real name was Mr. Shillibeer.<sup>42</sup>

### Thomas vs. Marsh and Field

This conflict over re-immersion, however, is nowhere more apparent than in the flood of letters and articles in both the *Herald* and the *Expositor* from 1858 to 1860. In February of 1858, Marsh wrote an article called "The Test of Baptism," which Thomas took to task in a series of articles entitled "The Gospel of the Kingdom not One Idea, but the Manifold Wisdom of God." How could Marsh's first baptism have been valid since he had not understood the doctrine of the restoration of Israel? As a Millerite, Thomas argued, Marsh had treated God as a liar by denying the restoration of Israel in the flesh. The attacks were becoming less theological and more personal.

In "Inconsistencies of Dr. J. Thomas," Marsh wrote that it was inconsistent:

to judge others, as he has, as "sinners," "apostates," &c., because under the excitement of 1843, they embraced some erroneous doctrines which since then they have renounced and confessed their mistake, when at the same time greater *sins* lie unconfessed at his door.<sup>43</sup>

The "unconfessed sins" to which Marsh alluded were explained by Nathaniel Field. In about the year 1840, Field explained, Alexander Campbell had asked Thomas to stop publishing his views on certain topics. It was resolved and agreed upon that "certain things believed and propagated by Dr. Thomas, in relation to the mortality of man, the resurrection of the dead, and the final destiny of the wicked" would no longer be discussed by Thomas, as they were of no practical benefit. In compliance with this agreement, Thomas stopped publishing the *Apostolic Advocate*, but broke his covenant two years later when he began publishing the *Investigator*. "The reason why Mr. Campbell refuses to notice him," Field wrote, "is, that he [Thomas] acted in bad faith, and violated his promise to hold the discussion of his views in abeyance."<sup>44</sup>

Thomas did not take this article lightly. It formed the basis for several articles, the first of which was entitled "The Dilemma and its Horns."<sup>45</sup> Thomas protested the personal attack and wrote of "the ocean of all Christendom's sentiments, where Messrs. Marsh and Field are floundering like dying fish harpooned of Galilee, and all

<sup>37</sup>*Ibid.*, 160.

<sup>38</sup>"A Canadian Conference, and the Doings Thereat (Concluded)," *Herald*, 1858, 254.

<sup>39</sup>*Ibid.*, 229.

<sup>40</sup>*Ibid.*, 254.

<sup>41</sup>*Ibid.*, 256.

<sup>42</sup>*Herald*, 1861, 144.

<sup>43</sup>*Expositor*, Nov. 15, 1858.

<sup>44</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>45</sup>*Herald*, February 1859, 34-39.

for the waves of unrighteousness after 'the way of Balaam son of Bosor!' "<sup>46</sup> Thomas caricatured Marsh's and Field's argument:

Dr. Thomas sinned against the Supervisor of a Sect twenty years ago, and has some inconsistencies even now; therefore the immersion of an ignoramus—one piously ignorant of the gospel—is a valid baptism! Blessed and beautiful logic, in what thicket or copse of Paradise hast thou hid thyself! 'Common sense!' where art thou? Away on the wings of light to EXPOSITORIA, and visit these men!<sup>47</sup>

Thomas then proceeded to slander Marsh's and Field's Millerite background once more, repeating the popular myth that the Millerites sold "ascension robes":

What then, would he [Paul] have said to Expositorial Joseph and Nathaniel had they been in Galatia with their phrenologies literally crammed (as they must be considering the things contained) with 'the sentiments of all Christendom,' capped off with world burning and dry-goods ascension robes for an aerial flight in 1843!<sup>48</sup>

Thomas went on to depict Marsh as caught on one of two horns of a dilemma. Since Marsh had once believed in the Millerite doctrine of the millennium and denied the restoration of Israel in the flesh, then he had either apostasized since his conversion in 1828 (the year was actually 1823), in which case he could not return to the faith, or he had never actually been converted. Thomas "charitably" opted to tell Marsh that he had not yet been converted, for then he still had hope. "An ignorant man might very honestly and sincerely become a Millerite, Mormon, Mohammedan, Jew, Papist, Infidel, or anything else; but a man once enlightened by God's knowledge—no, never sir, never!"<sup>49</sup> Marsh was either ignorant or a dishonest, wicked apostate. These were the only two options.

Responding to this article, Marsh wrote that:

These fearful threatenings are used by Dr. Thomas to justify him in judging all *true Christians* as worthy and sure of eternal damnation, who embraced the errors of 'Millerism.' The only hope of salvation he offers to them, and of course to all others who may at any other time have embraced any other error is, that they were not Christians previous to falling into their errors, but were ignorant of the 'one faith,' and were 'accursed' 'sinners!' . . . To say that all professed Christians sustain the character either of 'an accursed sinner,' or of 'an accursed apostate,' who have embraced or entertain some errors in faith, as Dr. T. teaches, is unchristianizing all, with the exception perhaps of a few inspired persons, who ever bore the

name of Christ, the doctor not excepted; for all have been more or less defective in their knowledge of, and faith in the gospel.<sup>50</sup>

In "Historical Reminiscences,"<sup>51</sup> Thomas reiterated his point that ex-Millerites could not become Christians without seeking baptism into the proper doctrine of the Kingdom. He then defended himself against Field's charges that he had broken his treaty with Campbell.

In 1834, Thomas explained, he had begun to question whether a person destitute of the "One Faith" previous to his immersion could be the subject on the "One Baptism." He had also begun to question whether man was immortal by nature. These questions disturbed the Campbellites. He had never agreed not to discuss them, however; he had agreed not to discuss *certain things* about them. "Certain things" was a vague term; Thomas agreed to the contract with no intention of ceasing to teach the mortality of man, but intending to avoid the topic of the non-resurrection of infants, idiots and pagans, "things" which were related to the topic of man's mortality.

Thomas explained that it was in 1838, not 1840, that Campbell had visited Richmond, Virginia. Thomas was neither residing nor editing a paper there, as Field had alleged; rather, he was residing and editing his paper forty miles away from Richmond. Thomas went to Richmond to hear him preach; Campbell preached "at" him and "against" him in a two-hour discourse, but a friend encouraged him not to reply on the spot, as they were in the midst of enemies.

A few days later Campbell went to Painesville, about eight miles from Thomas' home, to preach. Thomas went to hear him again. Campbell's clique, who hated Thomas, suggested that Campbell challenge Thomas to a debate on the immortality of the soul, thinking that Thomas would be caught off guard and trampled into the dust. Thomas agreed. The debate continued for three days, but without the result desired by Thomas' enemies. The debate was cut short, and each speaker was asked to talk for an hour on some unrelated topic. Thomas acquiesced, speaking on 1 Corinthians 12:3, but Campbell cheated and spoke on the immortality of the soul after all, stealing the opportunity to have the last word on the subject. Worse, Campbell did not want the debate to be published, as his others had been.

After the debate, Thomas agreed to avoid discussing those undefined "certain things" relating to the mortality of man, but that was because he was ignorant of the gospel. Besides, the agreement did not state that *he* regarded them of no practical benefit, but that those who drafted the document regarded them so.

<sup>50</sup>"Perfection of Faith in Degree," *Expositor*, 1858, 495.

<sup>51</sup>*Herald*, 1859, 64-67; 81-86.

<sup>46</sup>*Ibid.*, 36.

<sup>47</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>48</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>49</sup>*Ibid.*



To Field's accusation that he, in obedience to Campbell, agreed that "the doctrine he is now teaching, and for not believing which, he now non-fellowships everybody, was of no practical benefit," Thomas wrote:

Now, when Nathaniel, the gentile indeed, penned this, he doubtless gleefully thought he had cornered us up into a very tight place, indeed; but when he had done laughing and rubbing his hands, and about to eat us up like bread, he would find that we were not there.<sup>52</sup>

Field was not willfully lying, Thomas explained, but was just ignorant or stupid, or both. Thomas had done "nothing 'in obedience to the dictum of A.C.,' for A.C. said nothing in the premises; *secondly*, the doctrine we are now teaching as the gospel and its obedience, we were ignorant of in 1838."<sup>53</sup>

Neither was it true that Thomas had abandoned publication of the *Advocate* in obedience to the dictum; on the contrary, he had continued to publish the *Advocate* for another year.

"Having thus annihilated Nathaniel of Indiana," Thomas proceeded "to wipe out of controversial existence his brother Joseph, of Rochester, N.Y."<sup>54</sup> Thomas' involvement with Campbellism could not be styled as "great sins unconfessed," because he, unlike Marsh, had not only confessed his error, but had obeyed the gospel by being baptized in 1847.

Marsh and Field were quick to respond in the *Expositor*. Marsh wrote that:

The controversy between us and Dr. Thomas on the pre-requisites to baptism, for some time at first was confined to the Scriptures. We met all of the doctor's arguments, and as we think clearly showed that his position was unscriptural and unreasonable. We treated him, however,—with Christian courtesy, and felt no disposition to make a breach of Christian friendship between us, on account of a difference of sentiment. But he manifested a different disposition, and commenced a *personal* attack upon us, Dr. N. Field, and others who sympathize with us in reference to these matters.<sup>55</sup>

In the article that followed, Field caricatured Thomas' belief:

All mankind are wrong in *everything* and cannot be saved unless they acknowledge themselves block-heads, and adopt the views of this second Solomon. . . . His Elpis Israel is the sum total of the Gospel, and

the creed of his brethren. It may be called Thomasism, in contradistinction to all other isms. It is a wonderful production, and as great a discovery as the philosopher's stone. No one who doubts it, is fit for the kingdom of heaven. It contains everything necessary to salvation, the three frogs [of Revelation] included. . . .

I am glad that he has found moorings at last, and is now satisfied. I like the doctor, and think he may do some good. . . . He claims originality in his discoveries, but I think the English literalists considerably in advance of him. That, however, is a matter of no importance, provided he is right. He publishes a neat and interesting periodical well worth the subscription price.<sup>56</sup>

In the second installment of "Thomasism,"<sup>57</sup> Field promised to address Thomas' views in a series of articles:

I hope he will not take it amiss, but keep in a good humor. If he will eat more sugar, it will neutralize some of the vinegar in his veins. He has lived too much on wormwood. I fear it has engorged his liver and made him a misanthrope. If he wants to reform the world he must exorcise himself of bitterness. Hard arguments and soft words will do more than the cat-o'-nine tails to convert men to his views. Joseph and Nathaniel have Nathaniel have [sic.] disturbed his equanimity by publishing his Virginia compromise. Dates and places were not material to the fact. He admits that he did accede to it, but endeavors to explain it away by special pleading.

. . . His reply shows that all that I have said about the compromise is substantially true. I never refused to fellowship the doctor, but since his conversion to his present views he refuses to fellowship me. Very good; every man to his liking.<sup>58</sup>

In the third installment,<sup>59</sup> Field refuted Thomas' refutation of the charges that he had broken his treaty with the Campbellites:

In his "Historical Reminiscences," he admits every material fact in my report of the Virginia compromise. He merely quibbles about dates, places and constructions. It is a historical fact, that everybody in and out of Virginia, once thought that he, in that compromise, ceded away his right to teach the absolute mortality of man, the destruction of the wicked, and the non-resurrection of infants, idiots and Pagans. Years afterwards he confessed that he did wrong in agreeing "to hold discussion of these subjects in abeyance."

But now he says that he meant "the things in *relation* thereto"! What nonsense! . . . His play upon the phraseology of the compromise and the *sense* to which

<sup>52</sup>*Ibid.*, 84.

<sup>53</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>54</sup>*Ibid.*, 85.

<sup>55</sup>"Dr. Thomas," *Expositor*, April 15, 1859, Vol. 29, No. 22, 305.

<sup>56</sup>*Ibid.*, 605, 606.

<sup>57</sup>*Expositor*, May 1, 1859, Vol. 29, No. 23, 627, 628.

<sup>58</sup>*Ibid.*, 628.

<sup>59</sup>*Expositor*, May 15, 1859, Vol. 29, No. 24.

he accepted it, may go for what they are worth. Sensible men will construe it by the *sound*. It is a plain and intelligible document, which precluded the doctor from preaching on the mortality of man, destruction, and the non-resurrection of infants, idiots, and pagans.<sup>60</sup>

Having said this, Field went on to chastise Thomas for being so unkind to Adventists:

The doctor is very hard on the Adventists, Millerism, and Storrism. I fear he is ungrateful. For had it not been for the Advent movement, I do not believe that this day, he would have a corporal's guard of followers. A broken down ex-Campbellite, he goes north to take advantage of the movement, and is now building on other men's foundation, and all the while exposing its rottenness! Such, at least, is my opinion of his course.

With all his ultraisms, I could have borne, and did bear with him, until he turned his back on his friends, because they could not subscribe to his views. He suddenly became intensely sectarian, and withdrew from all Christendom, myself included, and opened his batteries upon everybody and everything, not exactly according to his notions.<sup>61</sup>

Commenting on the article, Marsh added that Thomas was "extremely inconsistent in his course, to say nothing of his manifest ingratitude to those who raised him from obscurity to his present notoriety among us. If he could fellowship us and others of our faith, which he well understood, *then*, unless we have changed, and we have not, he should do it *now*, or acknowledge that he erred then."<sup>62</sup> To this Thomas would undoubtedly have answered that he had never really fellowshipped Marsh in the first place.<sup>63</sup>

Two of Thomas' correspondents implored Thomas to retaliate. One of them, whose name is not given, wrote:

Drs. Field and Marsh are out as large as life in "*The Expositor*," and pouring the vials of their wrath on the devoted head of their victim; that is, upon yourself. Your last article upon their case evidently cut deep. Publishing the truth, and applying it to their individual cases, is too humiliating for their pride, and makes them squirm considerably. I fear that Marsh is now a hopeless case; for I perceive for some time back that he has been apparently retrograding, especially since he has set his face against the truth. I am sorry for this, as once I had some hope that he would fully obey the gospel.<sup>64</sup>

<sup>60</sup>*Ibid.*, 664.

<sup>61</sup>*Ibid.*, 665.

<sup>62</sup>*Ibid.*, 665, 666.

<sup>63</sup>Cf. "Historical Reminiscences," *Herald*, 1859, 65: "with Joseph Marsh, as a Christyan, Millerite, or ought else, we have had no ecclesiastical relation."

<sup>64</sup>"A Hopeless Case," *Herald*, 1859, 166.

In response to the second correspondent, who asked that Thomas comment on Field's latest article, Thomas wrote that he had too much important writing to do about other topics. He went on to write:

We have weathered during the past twenty odd years, intenser hurricanes than they can breeze up, though they might blow big guns till they have cracked their cheeks. Let them blow till their wind is exhausted. . . .

We fear, too, that friend Marsh is a hopeless case. We commiserate his blindness, or perverseness, or whatever else it may be called, that prevents him from obeying the truth. . . . Whatever person or thing is adverse in principle or practice to the gospel of the kingdom, in its simple apostolic ministration, is Satan. Though they may assent to some of its principles, they mix these up with so much of their own foolishness, and the sentiments of the apostacy [*sic*], that as far as their influence goes, they destroy the gospel and pervert the people. In this they are of the Satan, and must be rebuked. . . .

As to the suggestion of "J.C." to correct some of their "assertions," we conceive that it would only be time and trouble thrown away. They will assert what they please, and what they think will best serve their unhallowed purpose. It is impossible for us to follow them through all the mazes of their circumlocution. . . .

Adieu, then, to Messrs. Marsh and Field, for the present. Time may come when they will acknowledge the truth in spite of "the sentiments of all Christendom;" and when they will deeply regret that they ever sought our destruction. There is a mine excavating under friend Marsh's feet, which when it explodes, will knock a hole into his hull that will founder him in the abyss profound. His efforts to sink us will not enable him to float. As for Dr. Field, his reckless impetuosity unfits him for successful strategy against the truth. Let him take care of his brains, or he will find them scattered, and himself *hors de combat* among the things that were. . . . We like the doctor, *malgre* the flocks of sheep and windmills he charges with his spear; and have not yet been able to get angry with him. If we could only get the Don Quixotte out of him, and the truth into him, he is just the man to be all right. Well, this world will not stand still; so we will hope on that all will yet be well, even with friends' Marsh and Field. Amen.<sup>65</sup>

The conflict over rebaptism had now come to a head. Years had passed since Marsh had affirmed the restoration of Israel according to the flesh, yet he had never become obedient to that faith in Thomas' estimation, since he had never repudiated his former baptism. Though Marsh had desired to work with Thomas and those who were in

<sup>65</sup>*Ibid.*, 167.

sympathy with Thomas over the baptism issue, such a union could not be created. By 1859, Marsh's willingness to defend his view of baptism had degenerated into a willingness to join a mutual name-calling contest. Thomas harped on Marsh's and Field's Millerite past; Marsh and Field in turn harped on Thomas' Campbellite past. Marsh and Field were Satan, enemies of the gospel; Thomas was a bitter, broken-down ex-Campbellite. Marsh and Thomas were so near to each other, yet so far.

### A Church of One

Though Thomas had bid Marsh adieu, he did not hesitate to publish the remarks of Mark Allen and Augustus Sintzenick in 1860. In "The Gospel of the Kingdom in Rochester, N.Y.,"<sup>66</sup> Allen joyfully reported that five more had been rebaptized in Rochester. Three of the baptisands were from Cook's congregation, and two of them from Marsh's. One of the converts from Marsh's church was Sintzenick, who had been Marsh's publisher for nearly ten years. Allen gloated:

It is now some three years since a fanatical preacher of Adventism from the east<sup>67</sup> succeeded in estranging from Mr. Marsh a part of his former friends, together with J.B. Cook. This caused a deadly breach in what was called "the Church of God," which breach has never been closed; but each of the two parties has claimed that itself was the true Church of God in Rochester, and the other not. . . .

But within a few months past a change for the better has taken place, and that One Body, of which many looked upon Joseph Marsh as a head, has arrived at such a perfect state of unity that it can no longer be rent and divided, unless individuality itself be divided: for Joseph is not only head, but shoulders and front, and hands and feet, and all things in all things: for that body is now concentrated and consolidated in himself, as he now stands entirely alone in Rochester—an *Editor and Minister without any Church or congregation*—as that body, so often noticed in the *Expositor* as the Church of God, meeting in Chapel Hall, ceased to exist some months ago.

Similarly, Sintzenick rejoiced because Marsh and Cook "have pretty much left the field, and there is now a prospect that Millerism and its blighting influences are departed from our midst."<sup>68</sup>

Not only had Marsh lost the respect and friendship of Thomas and those who shared Thomas' views on rebaptism; now he had lost his church as well.

### Epilogue

Marsh sold the *Expositor* to Thomas Newman in 1860. Newman took possession of it in August of that year. Marsh began publishing a brand new publication, *The Bible Teacher*. However, Marsh soon gave up the publication because of an apparent conflict of interests (both Newman and Marsh served the same subscribers). While editing *The Bible Teacher*, Marsh had begun working on his next book, *The Light of Life*, but to the best of our knowledge it was never published.

Freed from his editorial responsibilities, Marsh made his Eastern and Northern evangelistic tours, but his deteriorating health began to hinder his efforts.<sup>69</sup> Before moving to Canada, Marsh gave his supply of *Age to Come* books (and the accompanying songbooks entitled *The Millennial Harp*) to Newman for distribution. Evangelist R.V. Lyon described the *Age to Come* as having done "more good than any other work ever published on the subject in this country."

Marsh became a member of the Christian church in Oshawa, Canada, periodically preaching. Within two years, he had grown restless, desiring to embark on another evangelistic tour. He began the tour, but died in Michigan in 1863 of typhoid fever.

His death was passed over in relative silence by much of the Church of God, particularly by leaders such as the Wilsons who shared Thomas' views on baptism. Other leaders continued to carry the torch, defending the doctrine of the *Age to Come*.

The equipment Marsh had used throughout the years he had been publishing was the same equipment that was used to publish the *Restitution* (begun in 1871) before it was ultimately destroyed in the Chicago fire. In that sense, Marsh was the founder of what became the *Restitution*,<sup>70</sup> though Church of God extremists (Thomasites like Huggins and some of the Wilsons) never publicly acknowledged that fact. In 1911 *The Restitution Herald* was founded, however, and it soon replaced the *Restitution* as the official magazine of the Church of God.

<sup>69</sup>"My Health and Designs," *Expositor*, Nov. 28, 1860, Vol. 1, No. 13, 99.

<sup>70</sup>*Restitution*, Vol. 56, No. 24.

#### Errata and Oversight Department:

It was an oversight last issue (HN 5:4 April/May, 1993) to neglect adding J. W. McLain's name to the credits on the Lindsay/Conner photo. J. W. McLain took the photo and has stated it was his favorite. Thank you for sharing it with our readers.

<sup>66</sup>*Herald*, 1860, 131, 132.

<sup>67</sup>We believe H. L. Hastings is the preacher to whom Allen refers.

<sup>68</sup>"Rochester, N. Y., and some of its Religious Vagaries," *Herald*, 1860, 229.

## HN Letters

Dear Janet:

I enjoyed reading your article in the April-May issue of *The Herald* titled, "The Church of God Abrahamic Faith and Other Thoughts." Also I enjoyed the picture of Bros. Conner and Lindsay. Though much different in style and personality, they were two of our best ministers. I knew them both real well. Lindsay was great on doctrine and prophecy and Conner was a commanding figure and speaker. I have sat in classes taught by each one at General Conference. Bro. Lindsay was one of the Instructors at the six weeks' training class I attended in 1937. Bro. Lindsay was a good teacher in that he would ask questions that made the students think. Bro. Conner was a fine speaker, and his being a lawyer showed in his logical approach to subjects. He was a fine singer too.

You mentioned Bro. Underwood as being Editor of *The Restitution*, and later that there were hurt feelings and charges of financial wrongdoing. That I know nothing about. Lindsay was a former school teacher and was an honest man. I recall him telling my mother one time that after he took over as editor of *The Herald* he paid some debts that a former minister had left behind when he left Oregon. I am not sure just who this minister was. Speaking of hurt feelings, Bro. Lindsay left Oregon deeply hurt. This is what he told my mother and me. He had been the Editor

of *The Herald* and then was forced out when Bro. Austin was elected as Editor. Lindsay went to Tempe, Arizona, and for many years would have nothing to do with the General Conference. He would hold meetings at different churches during the summer. Later on Lindsay became quite ill and was out of action for quite some time. During his illness people were so good to him, sending him money, cards, etc. When he recovered he was a different man. He again attended conference at Oregon, and he and Bro. Austin again were on speaking terms.

Thanks for your good article in *The Herald*.

In Faith,  
Harry Goekler.

Dear Janet,

This Stilson/Mattison/Drabenstott exchange is exciting reading. I'm rather disappointed we're no longer the Church of God of the Abrahamic Faith. In my blind ignorance over the years, I became attached to the phrase, but I guess now I must drop it.

Our family is well. Enjoy having Mark home for a while.

Rex Cain.

Dear Rex,

I also regret that our conference did not incorporate in 1920 as COGAF, but perhaps we could start a new marketing promotion—Church of God General Conference with a subheading, "Faith in Abraham's God" quoting from R. V. Lyon in the *Prophetic Watchman*, Oct. 12, 1867.  
—Editor.



Business session of General Conference circa 1945. Familiar faces are Jim Mattison (left), Shirley (Logsdon) Urish (front), Roland Stilson, F. L. Austin, Francis Burnett, Fred Claussen (3rd row), Dale Dunbar (2nd row);

Melville Lyon (right end), 5th row; Harvey Krogh, William Dick (6th row left); Leota Hanson (back right). Speaker—unknown to Editor (Could be S. E. Magaw). If you know, write me.  
—Photo by J. W. McLain.

In the Old Testament Jesus and the Kingdom of God are inseparably linked. Of course this is equally true in the New Testament (Acts 8:12). It's a small wonder that when Jesus began His earthly ministry He announced to Israel: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 4:17). The Kingdom of heaven in this context is the rule of heaven (or God) over the earth.

Jesus had come to set up the messianic Kingdom then and there. God was ready; Jesus was ready; but His people were not ready, so it didn't happen. In view of national rejection of John and Himself, Jesus then offered an invitation to individuals to become His disciples which became the nucleus of the church.

Facing this rejection, Jesus recognized that the Kingdom he was offering Israel would not be fulfilled soon, but would come about at His second coming. Jesus had been offering the Kingdom in the form of offering Himself as the Messiah and king of Israel. As was predicted in the Old Testament, this rejection led Jesus to the cross which was a part of God's eternal plan for redemption of the world.

One might illustrate this rejection with the experience of Israel at Kadesh-Barnea. The Israelites had come close to the Promised Land and could have entered it, but ten of the spies said the land could not be taken. That unbelief cost Israel another 38 years of wandering in the desert. (See Deuteronomy 1:46; 2:14; Numbers 13:26 - 14:25.) Israel's entering the land flowing with milk and honey was postponed until that generation died and a new one came on the scene which went in and took Canaan from seven heathen tribes that infested the land (Deut. 7:1-7).

In a similar way the Jews rejected Jesus' offer of the kingdom at His first coming, and were dispersed to the four points of the compass (Luke 21:24). The kingdom was postponed, set aside, delayed for them until the second coming of Messiah when the believing remnant will accept Him as their King. During the inter-advent age, God has turned to the nations of earth to take out from among them a people for His name collectively called the Church of God (Acts 15:14; Eph. 3:14, 15; 1 Tim. 3:15). During the

church age Israel's program is not progressing and her promise of God's future blessing awaits fulfillment in the millennial Kingdom.

### A Foretaste of the Kingdom

During His past earthly ministry, Jesus gave man a foretaste of Kingdom conditions with all the miracles, healings, etc. As Isaiah prophesied: "Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart (deer), and the tongues of the dumb sing. . . ." (35:5, 6).

We must remember that Jesus presented Himself to Israel as her Messiah and King, but the Jews "received him not" (John 1:11).

Moreover, Christ commissioned the twelve to go to Israel only. Said He to them: "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not. But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matt. 10:5, 6). During Jesus' earthly ministry the law covenant was still in force, the temple system was still operative, the Sabbath was still being observed, etc. The new covenant could not come into force until the death of Jesus, the one who made the will (Heb. 9:16, 17). A leper that Jesus healed was told to go to the priest and offer for his cleansing "according as Moses commanded" (Luke 5:14).

On another occasion a woman of Canaan requested healing for her daughter who was "seriously afflicted with insanity" (Matt. 15:22, Lamsa). To her request, Jesus replied: "I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. . . . It is not meet to take the children's bread, and cast it to the dogs" (vv. 24, 26). Jesus was saying that it was not right to take the blessings of Israel and give them to the Gentiles (dogs). However, at the woman's insistence, Jesus healed her daughter. This, of course, was before the church came into existence.

### The Transition in the Four Gospels

Toward the end of Christ's ministry it became evident that the messianic Kingdom predicted in the Old Testament would not be fulfilled at Jesus' first coming,

although the disciples were extremely slow to understand and reluctant to accept it. The law covenant was fading away, the Kingdom was to be delayed, set aside temporarily, and the church was being introduced. All this left the disciples generally confused. They had their hearts set on the Kingdom and seemingly refused to accept the death and resurrection of Christ and the doctrine of the church. They were disturbed about becoming servants. They wanted to reign with Messiah right now. The disciples were facing a major crisis, and on top of it all Jesus was going to leave them (John 16:7). They were all "shook up" right down to the soles of their feet. This news must have fallen like thunder in their ears. I wonder if we sometimes make their mistake by placing so much emphasis on the Kingdom and not enough on telling people how to get there.

This transition continues on into the early chapters of Acts. At the ascension the disciples asked: "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" (Acts 1:6.) They were still focused on the Kingdom, and did not realize what Christ was teaching. They apparently had not grabbed the doctrine and program for the church. They spoke as men, as flesh, and did not see God's overall plan. Just because counsel comes from Christians, it doesn't mean that it is from Christ. It may be or it may not be.

This transition so evident in the Gospels, and continued in the first part of Acts, seems to reach its climax in Acts 13:46: "Then Paul and Barnabas answered them [the Jews] boldly: 'We had to speak the Word of God to you first. Since you reject it and do not consider yourselves worthy of eternal life, we now turn to the Gentiles' " (Acts 13:46, NIV). At this point it is clear that Israel's program is put on hold until the message of Christ crucified, risen, and coming again is preached to the ends of the earth.

Jesus in the New Testament becomes not only Messiah to Israel but the Savior of the world. That's how we as Gentiles enter by faith into God's redemptive plan. "Had the nation of Israel repented at Peter's call [Acts 2], the prophetic program outlined by Joel and Peter would have con-

tinued on uninterrupted. It would have culminated in the return of the Messiah and the establishment of His kingdom. In the four Gospels, the Lord Jesus and His kingdom were offered to Israel. This program was offered to them again during the Acts period, both to those in the land and to those in the dispersion. But since they rejected it again, this wonderful time, including the outpouring of the spirit upon

Israel, is postponed until a future Day"—Pastor Sid Hatch, *The Restitution Herald*, February-March, 1993, page 19.

Messiah was born at a time of gross darkness and spiritual ignorance (Isa. 9:2). Paganism and superstition reigned supreme. Greek mythology held man in its grip. Into the world of Herod's taxes, Caesar's armies, and man's inhumanity

to man Jesus was born as the light of the world (John 8:12).

History has a way of repeating itself. It seems even now that history has come full circle. We live in a world that at times seems hopeless, but then there is Jesus Christ, Messiah, the Savior of the world. Call upon Him and confess your deep need. R11

# God's People-The Church

(Part Two  
of Three)

by Pastor Francis Burnett  
Belle Plaine, IA

The church is a selected group for a very specific reason.

**A**S NOTED IN SEGMENT ONE, the world is divided into three groups of people. They are Jews, Gentiles, and the Church of God. (See 1 Cor. 10:32.) This general concept is accepted by nearly all, if not all, Bible students. Where does one begin to establish the beginning of the church? The most logical starting point is to understand the meaning of the word "church." It is the translation of the Greek *ekklesia*, which is formed from two base words: "*ek*," meaning "out"; and "*ka-leo*," meaning "call." So put together they form "out call." Or, expressed more understandably, "called out." Therefore, the group of persons spoken of as the *church* is made up of those who have been "called out" to become a different kind of people.

The forming of the church is most important and can be determined by knowing the Word of God. The church is built on a solid foundation. That foundation is Jesus Christ. The formation was from Jesus. The verification for this is found in Matthew's account. Jesus had asked the disciples what was being said about Him. What did the people think of Him and who did they think He was? Answer was given and then Jesus said, "But what about you? . . . Who do you say I am?" Simon Peter answered, 'You are the Christ, the Son of the living God' " (Matt. 16:15, 16, NIV). This was a profound statement. It established simply, yet forthrightly, what the apostles knew;

Peter, at least. But it further established the opportunity for Jesus to build thereon. Jesus said, "And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it" (Matt. 16:18, NIV). "The church is not Judaism improved and continued." . . .

Christianity is a new wine poured into new wine-skins. . . . Jesus declared that the Church was something future. . . . Paul regarded the truth concerning the Church as a mystery that 'in other generations was not made known unto the sons of men, as it hath now been revealed unto His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit.' "1 " 'My church,' says our Lord, calling the Church His own; a magnificent expression regarding Himself, remarks Bengel, nowhere else occurring in the Gospel."2 "The Church has one foundation, and only one, the Christ, the Son of the living God."3

" 'The church is built upon the foundation of apostles and prophets, with Jesus as the chief cornerstone' (Eph. 2:20). Jesus is the only sure foundation for the building, and the only suitable Head for the body."4 The Old Testament has the prophecies to show that Jesus was the cornerstone which is the beginning for any foundation. "The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone; the LORD has done this. . . ." (Psa. 118:22-24, NIV.) "So this is what the Sovereign LORD says: 'See, I lay a stone in Zion, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone for a sure foundation; the one who trusts

will never be dismayed' " (Isa. 28:16, NIV).

As one examines the facts, it becomes very evident the church is a very special people to God. The number-one reason is found in the famous words of John 3:16, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Paul enhanced this thought in writing, "While we wait for the blessed hope, the glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good" (Titus 2:13, 14, NIV). Jesus' death was to purchase the believers with His "own blood" (Acts 20:28b). "For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect" (1 Pet. 2:18, 19, NIV).

The church has been called. Yes, it is a special calling to bring honor and glory to God through His Son Jesus. "To the church of God in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be holy" (1 Cor. 1:2a). "But to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God" (v. 24). "Just as you were called to one hope when you were called" (Eph. 4:4b, NIV). "But join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God, who has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time." (2 Tim. 1:8b, 9, NIV.) One thing that makes the "calling" very special is to belong to God. "How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! and that is what we are!" (1 John 3:1a, NIV.) "Therefore come out from them and be separate. . . . I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor. 6:17, 18, NIV). What a blessed privilege which can come only through Jesus.

The church is a selected group for a

very specific reason. "You did not choose me, but I chose you to go and bear fruit—fruit that will last (John 15:16, NIV). We can understand this in the words of Jesus' prayer as recorded in John 17. "My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one. . . . May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. . . . I in them and you in me. . . . Father, I want those you have given to me to be with me where I am" (John 17:20-24, NIV). The thoughts in this paragraph should help anyone seeking to know why the Christian was given an opportunity to know Jesus. It is to show the world who Jesus is and to bring forth the glory of God in so doing. Peter wrote, "To God's elect . . . who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and sprinkling by his blood. (1 Pet. 1:1, 2, NIV).

---

## Jesus declared that the Church was something future. . . .

---

The church is the basis for the truth of God that was to be given to people of every generation since Jesus and the apostles. The church has become "lights" to show that Jesus is the "light of the world." Paul wrote to Timothy, "If I am delayed, you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God's household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth" (1 Tim. 3:15, NIV). "The importance of the church is that it is the only great living witness of goodness and righteousness in the earth today. God's church people stand for truth. Where else in this world is truth found, or righteousness, or goodness, except in the true church? Outside the church there is a famine of hearing the words of the Lord."<sup>5</sup> Much

emphasis has been given in this century in meetings of the Churches of God and in the Church of God General Conference as to what name should be used and just how it was to be set forth. As always, the guide should be the Word of God. "Much emphasis and importance is placed on the name of the saints in the New Testament. So . . . we, also, should understand why emphasis is placed on the name of God's people. . . . Ownership of the church belongs to the Father of Jesus Christ, Jehovah the Almighty God. This is emphasized many times throughout the Scriptures. . . . Paul called the church the church of God and churches of God. . . . The household of God is called the 'church of the living God.' . . . It is a great honor to be known by the world as the Church of God. Let us be sure to live up to our name. The Church of God, then, is made up of those people who stand for the truth, and speak it in love. A great sacrifice was made to bring such people to God, to help them to become saints. Let us, therefore, understand it is a great honor for us to be called by the name Church of God and not bring disrepute to His Holy name, but bring to it only honor, respect, and reverence."<sup>6</sup>

The church, the "called out ones in Jesus," has been given or described, because of position, with some very distinct names. Some of those names are: Christian, which means to follow Jesus or to be one of Christ's believers (Acts 5:14); saints (Eph. 4:12); ambassadors (2 Cor. 5:20); brethren (Rom. 12:1); the body (1 Cor. 12:27); household of God and building (Eph. 2:19-22); espoused to one husband, even Jesus (2 Cor. 11:2); temple of the living God (2 Cor. 6:16); heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus (Rom. 8:17); and to be the future bride or wife of Jesus (Rev. 19:7-9).

We conclude this segment desiring to emphasize the fact and Biblical truth that the church is distinct, very special. There is nothing like it set forth in God's Word. "The purpose, mission, and work of the Church are to glorify God, to evangelize the world, to instruct and edify its members in Christian doctrine and character, to promote love and fellowship among believers, and to be a medium for Chris-

tian service."<sup>7</sup> Paul gave it distinction in these words: "Because of his great love for us, God . . . made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions. . . . And God raised us up with Christ . . . in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace . . . in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:4-7, NIV). <sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Henry Clarence Thiessen, *Introduction Lectures in Systematic Theology*

(Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Pub., 1949), pp. 405-406.

<sup>2</sup>Jamieson, Fausset and Brown, *Commentary on the Whole Bible* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Pub., 1967), p. 931.

<sup>3</sup>Vivian Kirkpatrick, Sr., Lesson 10 in *Truth Seeker's Quarterly, Adult Lessons, March, 1953* (Oregon, IL: Church of God General Conference, 1953), p. 43.

<sup>4</sup>T. M. Ferrell, Lesson 11 in *Truth Seeker's Quarterly, Adult Lessons, March, 1967* (Oregon, IL: Church of God General Conference, 1967), p. 47.

<sup>5</sup>James Mattison, Lesson 12 in *Truth Seeker's Quarterly, Adult Lessons, March, 1960* (Oregon, IL: Church of God General Conference, 1960), p. 50.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup>Alva Huffer, *Systematic Theology* (Oregon, IL: THE RESTITUTION HERALD, 1960), p. 465.

# "FATHERS . . . Children Are Unique"

by Pastor John Hearp  
Lawrenceville, OH

Instead of always criticizing and communicating your disapproval, begin to focus on your child's strengths.

**R**AISING CHILDREN IS ONE of the most important responsibilities a man can face in his entire lifetime. How well fathers fulfill their role has both immediate and eternal implications. There are many facets to fathering, but a critical area is helping children develop their God-given strengths.

A father once approached his pastor and said that he was completely frustrated. One of his boys had become such a discipline problem at home. The dad said, "I just don't understand it. He's the only one giving me trouble, and I've treated all of my kids the same."

Well, that was a part of the problem! Every child is not the same. Every child is unique. Each one has special interests, certain strengths, and some weaknesses. You can't treat all children the same when they are so different. Treat them impartially, yes. Treat them the same, no. In this particular case the dad's expectations were totally unrealistic in light of his son's abilities. You see, what may motivate one child to perform may drive another one to rebel. A similar application is

made concerning the gifts given to Christians in 1 Corinthians 12:4-7, 11.

## Children Are Individuals

To father effectively, it's essential to become sensitive to each child's special interests and areas of strength. Keep in mind, it is highly possible that their God-given abilities won't be consistent with your preconceived expectations for them.

Your desires have the best of intentions in back of them, not every child has the capacity to be a straight "A" student, or an all-state quarterback. Actually, a disservice is done to children when they are pressured to excel only in areas we think are important. When this is done, we may be overlooking their potential in areas of greater consequence.

## "He's Chosen Who?"

A biblical example of this is found in 1 Samuel. In chapter 15, the Lord rejects Saul as King of Israel. Then in chapter 16, the Lord gives these instructions to Samuel, His prophet and special servant, "I'm sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem.



I've chosen one of his sons to become king, and I'll show you which one to anoint."

So Samuel made the trip. Then Jesse, the father, had seven of his sons pass before Samuel. But Samuel said, "The Lord's chosen is none of these. Are these all the sons you have?" "Well, there is the youngest son," Jesse answered. "But he's out tending sheep."

Samuel said, "Send for him *at once!*" So Jesse obliged. The Scripture implies that he was reluctant. Maybe he was thinking, "Oh, come on! The Lord wouldn't choose David! Why, he's so young, and different from the rest of my boys. He plays the harp. He loves poetry, and he's addicted to that silly slingshot. He won't lay the crazy thing down. And he has the temperament of a redhead. Surely God wouldn't choose him for anything special!"

Well . . . when David arrived, the Lord said to Samuel, "Rise, anoint him. He's the one." Jesse was looking on the outside, but God was looking on the heart (1 Sam. 16:7, 12). The Scripture says that Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and from that day on, "The Spirit of the Lord came upon David" (1 Sam. 16:13).

### For the First Time

Now, I am sure that this encounter with Samuel caused Jesse to see his youngest son in a brand-new light. It was a moment of truth for him. Perhaps for the first time he recognized that, yes, this youngest boy was different from his brothers. However, his unique abilities and unusual interests were actually God-given, and they needed to be affirmed. In fact, they needed to be developed and improved. Apparently, Jesse became a perceptive father, because he began to do all that he could to encourage David to pursue his areas of strength. For example, when the opportunity came for David to be King Saul's personal musician in the palace, Jesse enthusiastically granted his permission. All those years of practicing the harp paid off after all.

Later Jesse gave his son another new experience. He broadened his experience by sending him to the army's battlefield

to visit his three brothers. He was supposed to go there, deliver some supplies, and hurry back home with the report. But that's where he met the Philistine giant, Goliath. . . . Need I say more?

### Encouragement to Grow

Think of it. Jesse was an obscure and humble man, but he fulfilled well his role as a father. He affirmed David's strengths, and helped him develop his God-given abilities. To this day, some thirty centuries later, Jesse is still remembered as the father of a great king!

Now, here is the point I want to make. Don't miss it! Perceptive fathers affirm their children, and encourage them to develop their unique areas of strength. Obviously, mothers should also do this as well. But in this day of absent fathers, I'm especially concerned that Dad sees this as something important to do. Again, perceptive fathers affirm their children, and encourage them to develop their unique areas of strength. This ministry of encouragement is spoken of in Hebrews 3:13 and 10:25.

### Words of Wisdom

A favorite passage often referred to concerning the raising of children is Proverbs 22:6. We are told there: "Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it."

We usually think of this verse as a mandate to teach children spiritual truth, and undoubtedly that's one of the major meanings. But there is another meaning found in the phrase. "Train up a child in the way he should go" literally means "according to the child's way, or the child's inclinations, his strengths, his unique aptitudes."

So the point is, this verse also highlights the parents' responsibility to give children individual attention. Encourage them to develop their God-given strengths and abilities.

### Personal Application

Dad, are you able at this moment to distinguish in your mind the strengths unique to your child or children? Can you accurately list their special areas of interest?

Now, probably most people can easily rattle off their flaws: the kid never cleans his room . . . poor grades in math . . . always put things off that need to be done . . . watches too much television . . . addicted to those stupid video games . . . listens to that mindless loud music . . . never wants to be with the family. Perhaps Ephesians 6:4 (from various translations) has some helpful thoughts. "Fathers, *provoke not . . . don't overcorrect . . . stop exasperating . . . do not irritate* your children to anger or resentment, but bring them up with the sort of education and counsel the Lord approves."

Obviously, problem areas have to be dealt with, but let me suggest another approach. Instead of always criticizing and communicating your disapproval, begin to focus on your child's strengths. Don't let that go by too quickly. Again, begin to focus on your child's strengths. Yes, he does have them. Encourage him in areas where you can. Like Jesse, maybe you need to see your child through someone else's eyes in order to recognize something positive. Try talking with someone who knows your child in a different setting than at home. Perhaps a coach, friend, teacher, youth leader, or any other adult who might know your child well. Maybe this will help you see your child through God's eyes, and appreciate how He values your child.

### New Horizons

It might also be helpful if you can think of ways to broaden your child's experiences. Introduce him to what might become new areas of interest. Visit a museum or go to a puppet show. Take him to a pop concert. A what? Yes, a pop concert complete with refreshments if they are available. Give it a try. Another idea, let him shadow you for a day on the job and see what your work is all about. Nah, he wouldn't be interested, you say. Hey, you might just be surprised. He might love it. In fact, this kind of exposure could trigger a new interest he might have, and help you discover one of his latent abilities. As areas of interest appear, and they will, be sure to give affirmation and encouragement.

*(Continued on page 28)*

# Bible Basics

by Duncan Heaster, London, England

*Bible Basics* is available from Inez Schneider, 101 South Symington Ave., Baltimore MD 21228 (360 pp., \$7.75.) Other books by Heaster from the same source: *The Last Days* (375 pp.); *In Search of Satan* (145 pp.).

This work by a well-known and prolific writer from the Christadelphian community is highly recommended to our readership. In the introduction the author states his goal: "To analyze the Bible's message in a business-like, systematic way." He keeps his focus on this purpose throughout the book. In a letter to this reviewer, Heaster indicated the likeness of his book to *Systematic Theology* by Dr. Alva G. Huffer. One might say that *Bible Basics* is to the Christadelphian communion what *Systematic Theology* is to our conference.

Study questions at the end of each chapter make *Bible Basics* appealing for Bible study groups.

In the chapter, "The Personality of God," Heaster argues a strong case "that God is a real, tangible person, with a body similar in appearance to our own" and gives convincing evidence "for a personal, corporeal God," all of which is necessary "for Him to have a son who was the image of His person" (Heb. 1:3).

The author sees the plural pronouns of Genesis as referring to angels. It might be better to interpret the plural pronouns as the plural of majesty since God created all things alone and by Himself (Isa. 44:24). Psalm 33:6, 9 seem to teach that God spoke His creation into existence. He didn't share the glory with anyone. Genesis one is in harmony with this concept. Heaster's conclusion that angels do not sin or die has strong biblical support. He rightly reasons that if immortal angels can sin or die, then our eternal life in God's kingdom is put in jeopardy.

The chapter on "The Principle of Personification" is well worth the cost of the book. Our Christadelphian friend affirms that a recognized feature of the Bible is that inanimate or non-living things are often personified. Examples cited are wisdom, riches, sin, the Spirit, death, Israel, and the church, some of which is adapted from *Christendom Astray* by Robert Roberts.

As we would certainly expect, the conditional immortality concept is reflected throughout the book. Heaster deals with man's condition in death, the soul, etc., in a masterful way. "From the time of death until the resurrection, the believer has no conscious existence at all, seeing that it is impossible to exist in any form without having a body" (p. 128).

*Bible Basics* follows the normal Christadelphian view of "limited resurrection," which may be a surprise to some of our readers. The wicked to be raised are called "responsible wicked," the ones who heard God's plan. The term seems somewhat artificial inasmuch as Scripture says all the dead will be raised: "All that are in the graves" (John 5:28, 29); "the small and the great" (Rev. 20:12); "the just and unjust" (Acts 24:15). One would be hard pressed to find any other group in Scripture besides the "just and unjust." Jesus taught that the residents of Tyre and Sodom would be raised for judgment (Matt. 11:21-24).

Although it will meet a mixed response among our readers, the most helpful chapter to me is "God and Evil." Heaster argues a most convincing case

for the non-personality of satan. "Satan is defined as 'adversary' and 'devil' as 'a liar,' an enemy or false accuser" (p. 183).

"These words 'devil' and 'satan' are also used to describe the wicked, sinful world order in which we live. The social, political, and pseudo-religious hierarchies of mankind can be spoken of in terms of 'the devil.' The devil and satan in the New Testament often refer to the political and social power of the Jewish or Roman systems. Thus we read of the devil casting believers into prison (Rev. 2:10), referring to the Roman authorities imprisoning believers" (p. 187).

Personification is defined as "speaking of an abstract idea as if it is a person. Thus Proverbs 9:1 speaks of a woman called wisdom building a house, and Romans 6:23 likens sin to a paymaster giving wages of death" (p. 186). The author's treatment of demons is equally thorough and convincing.

In spite of the light criticism in this review, *Bible Basics* is a valuable tool for all Christians regardless of one's position in the body of Christ. Written from a conditionalist's perspective, it will find wide acceptance among our readership.

**NOTE:** Two copies each of *Bible Basics* and *In Search of Satan* have been donated to the Atlanta Bible College Library.

—Reviewed by Hollis Parlrowe

# Rethinking Our Heritage

by John Carr

Lakeshore Bible Church of God, Tempe, AZ

**T**HE FOURTH OF JULY is a time for celebrating the declaration by our country of its independence from the British. By that act a new nation was born, a nation to be built upon freedoms no other nation had experienced. Two hundred seventeen years later the citizens of this nation are again in turmoil and division based on the same cry for more freedoms. Only now the demand is for rights that infringe on the rights of others. Morals are being challenged, multitudinous cultural behaviors are being woven into the national fabric. All of these changes are coming at a breakneck pace, and citizens are confused about how to respond. Seemingly, the old standards have been removed with no new clear-cut standards to replace them.

Daniel the prophet wrote about such a time. He was interpreting a dream of the world ruler. In it he revealed the glory of future world kingdoms. While describing the last of these kingdoms he described it as being composed of iron and clay. The combining of the iron and clay represents the intermarriage of the diverse populace of that nation. However, it also means that the diverse nature of the peoples making up this kingdom will prevent bonding from taking place.

In a nation composed of people all from one race and ethnic background, the harmony, understanding, and trust which are developed between its members help to adhere each member more closely to the other members. But this kingdom of iron and clay of which Daniel writes is composed of diverse peoples, cultures, and behavioral practices which so conflict with one another that attempts to unify the whole is like trying to make iron form a homogeneous union with clay.

At the same time this new world kingdom has the strength of iron. Militarily speaking, this nation will be able to dominate the world, and

subject its people to its rule. When it comes to military strength, the United States ranks right at the top in the world.

We have reason to be concerned that these prophecies bear such similarities to our own country. It is, in the least, a warning to us that something is amiss in our land as compared to the past. It is also a warning about the end of this age for man. For these prophecies of Daniel end with the destruction of the kingdom represented by the iron and clay mixture, and the establishment of the Kingdom of God. We must be ready to recognize and overcome these challenges to our walk with God. The Apostle Peter wrote of such things when he said: "Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, on account of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat! But according to His promise we are looking for new Heavens and a new Earth in which righteousness dwells." (2 Peter 3:11-13, NASB.)

Peter asks the question, "What sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness?" Do you know on what principles you base your attitudes and conduct in life? Are you losing your focus on knowing what to do when confronting tough questions? Are you being led to consider alternatives contrary to Biblical teachings? In such times as these it is all the more important for us to bind together as a church family to stand firm on God's Word as our standard and to confront with confidence the trials thrust at us by the world. Make your stand to keep your family well informed on how to live for God and maintain a stable standard for your attitudes and behavior. RH

# “Hey! That's Ours!”

by Kent Ross, Vice President  
Atlanta Bible College

We spend our time examining Daniel's visions and images, John's visions in Revelation, and Jesus' prophecies concerning the end of the world. That is all appropriate and ought to be, but . . . what then?

**I**T WAS OVER 40 YEARS AGO that my folks first brought our family to General Conference, back when it was still held at the Oregon Church of God. As I recall, we stayed with Mr. and Mrs. Sydney Magaw and their family that year. I still recall driving up for the first service and my child's mind being overwhelmed with the picture of people sitting on benches all over the lawn. The picture that remains is of them sitting there under the trees with Bibles open on their knees in deep discussion concerning Scripture. I remember hearing the discussions that had regard to prophecy and things concerning the Kingdom of God. I was too young and too ignorant to enter in on those discussions, but that picture remains with me, of God's people of the Church of God in deep discussion concerning the extraordinary message concerning the coming King and Kingdom.

That came to my mind over an incident in one of my classes at Oregon Bible College. “That makes me mad,” was the response I first received when I shared with my Pastoral Procedures class an article I had read from April 12, 1989's *The Christian Century*, entitled “Christian Fulfillment and Jewish-Christian Dialogue,” by Isaac C. Rottenberg, a minister of the Reformed Church in America. In that article Rottenberg quotes some amazing words from Eugene Fisher,

“While earlier generations of Christian thinkers tended to stress only the ‘already here’ aspects of the New Testament kerygma, more recent scholarship has sought to reintegrate the eschatological (last things) ‘not yet’ into their vision. In other words, we ought not to make claims for redemption today as if the kingdom of God had already arrived, and we should not spiritualize redemption in such a way that we remove it from history.”

The reason the student was incensed was not over the thinking, for which we can be very

grateful, but over the fact that people like Fisher and Rottenberg are just coming to an appreciation of the message of the Bible that they call “recent.” That “recent” message is one the Church of God has known since its beginning. The Kingdom of God is coming into history and will totally change the political landscape. It will be on this earth and Jesus will rule in God's stead for one thousand years.

Rottenberg adds two more citations which further ought to disturb us. He quotes John T. Pawlikowski,

“All talk of a ‘realized eschatology’ must be buried once and for all. What we Christians in our faith now profess is that through the coming of Christ we have a clearer vision of the final dimension of the kingdom.

“Fisher also contends that the term fulfillment should be ‘reserved for its proper eschatological usage, that is to the End time when the Kingdom will be made manifest and the One God, the God of Israel, will be all in all.’ ”

I feel much as did that previously mentioned student. “That makes me mad! Who do they think they are? taking away from us our message of the Kingdom??” That's the way I immediately felt, but then reality began to set in as I reflected that it may be that God, who entrusted us with that message of the Kingdom of God, seeing our contentment with allowing it to lie idle, has turned to others to get this message out! Perhaps He has become discontented with our efforts.

It was a message that was distinctive to and representative of our movement from its very beginnings. While it may well be that the Church of God preceded the Millerite movement, it is also certain that many of our early leaders in this country had roots in the Millerite movement. That movement had Five Fundamental Principles. The first three speak to this issue of the future and the Kingdom of God:

1) The earth will be regenerated, restored to

the Edenic state, and be the eternal abode of the resurrected righteous.

2) The only Millennium spoken of in the Bible is a period of 1000 years between the first and second resurrections.

3) All prophecies have been fulfilled, except those relating to the coming of Christ.

As a General Conference and as individuals in that conference, we have greatly enjoyed studying prophecy, and properly so. But too frequently we have become bogged down in the minutiae of details. We spend our time examining Daniel's visions and images, John's visions in Revelation, and Jesus' prophecies concerning the end of the world. That is all appropriate and ought to be, but . . . what then? That's the very issue, "What then?" If it is study just to try and get the details correct in our minds, then that is not enough. Doctrine needs to be studied and truth determined, but then that truth must be told for its makes *eternal* differences in people's lives.

In the early days of the "adventist" movement, the eschatological message was the cause of great excitement, but the

desire of the "adventist" lecturers was to encourage people to come to faith, not just to become prophetic students. Peter, in the concluding eschatological passage of 2 Peter, chapter three, verses 1, 8, 11, indicates this as the thrust of the New Testament church's preaching of the gospel of the Kingdom:

"Dear friends, this is now my second letter to you. I have written both of them as reminders to stimulate you to wholesome thinking. . . . But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like a day. The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. . . . Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming."

We have not lost the message of the good news of the gospel of the Kingdom of God and the things concerning Jesus Christ, but it appears we need to rekindle within ourselves a strong motivation to

get that message out to the world. It is good if we are already doing our part in evangelizing our communities, but more is needed. We need men and women, and especially young people, who become convinced that this message God entrusted to us must be proclaimed for the salvation of people.

How? It may be through television, with what Pastor Steve Taylor has initiated in Blanchard, Michigan, and now Lafayette, Indiana. It may be through planting of new congregations wherever Church of God people are located, be it Alaska, Las Vegas, Maine, or Russia. It may be through dialogue with other theologians and ministers, via more education, or ministerial meetings, or intentional correspondence, or instruments such as the *Journal From the Radical Reformation*. It may be through provocative "letters to editors" in newspapers around the country.

However individuals may be led to do their individual ministry, it seems imperative that we get back on the cutting edge of proclaiming this "good news." It is not a job for the professionals, but a job for all who believe, in every church and every region. R41

# Memorial Day

by Cheryl Norwood  
North Kent Church, Rockford, MI

**S**HE GETS OUT the photo album and remembers the plump baby taking those uncertain first steps. A few more pages and her baby is on a new shiny tricycle. More pages go by and she remembers his first day of school, his little league games and his first date and that first car. All too soon, it seems, he is posed with his cap and gown for high school graduation, near the end of the album. Tucked in a page, a homemade Mother's Day card falls out. Written in his own handwriting, the card says, "I love you, Mom." *Isn't it funny how fast they grow*, she thinks. *How fast that chubby little baby grew up and became a man*. On the last page of the album is a picture of a handsome young man in his

uniform. *He looks so healthy, so strong, so handsome, and so young in his uniform*. He was only 19 when the picture was taken—just one month before he went overseas. She remembers his last words, "I'll be back, Mom. After this war is over and we have made the world safe again, I'll be home."

Later, at the cemetery, she looks at the long rows of white headstones with American Flags waving in the light breeze. She wipes tears from her eyes as she thinks of her son and the thousands of other sons, husbands, fathers, and brothers who never made it back alive. She tries to think of how many years she has made this trip—another Memorial Day. For millions of people, this is a day for fun parties, picnics, and campouts. But

for her, this is a day for memories, for wondering what her son would be like today. What would he be doing? What would her grandchildren be like? What kind of grandmother would she have been?

Freedom and living in the United States is something we take for granted. But what a terrible price to pay; so many thousands of strong, healthy, hopeful young men. She wishes everyone would remember the real meaning of Memorial Day and understand the cost. Time to go! She places the flowers on his grave and quietly leaves.

Let's all give thanks to God today for those thousands of men and their families who paid the ultimate price for our freedom. R41

# What Does John 1:1 Really Say?

by Sid Hatch

Sid Hatch  
Brief Bible Studies  
Fall, 1991  
Vol. 22 No. 3  
Used with kind  
permission.

**W**E WERE DISCUSSING the person of Christ when someone spoke up and said, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." There, this person exclaimed, "that proves that Jesus is God."

The passage of Scripture which this individual quoted was the opening verse of the Gospel of John. It is a common assumption that it teaches the deity of Christ.

"Word" in Greek is *logos*. It occurs over 300 times in the New Testament and simply means a spoken word, an account, a saying, a teaching, a report, etc.

John 1:1 says three things about this *logos* or spoken word. It was in the beginning, it was with God, and it was God. What do these remarkable statements mean?

The phrase "in the beginning" tells us immediately that John is talking about creation, the events described in Genesis One. The spoken word of God was the great force in those momentous days.

To say that the Word was "with God"<sup>1</sup> tells us that it was the spoken word of God Himself, not that of another person. Here John answers the Gnostic idea that God is too aloof and remote to do the creating Himself, and so He did it through an agent. This idea penetrated Christianity with the teaching that the second person of a triune God did the creating. (Colossians 1:16 does not say that Christ created all things. It says that God created all things because of Him and for Him.)

To say that the spoken word was God is a Hebraic way of saying that it was mighty or powerful. The Greek word is *theos*, but its Hebrew equivalent is '*elohim*'<sup>2</sup> which means essentially that something is mighty or powerful.

The third verse of the opening chapter of the

Gospel of John tells us that the world was created by the spoken word: "All things were made by it; and without it was not any thing made that was made." This is confirmed by Psalm 33:6-9 which says that God spoke and it was done, He commanded and the world stood fast.

Finally, the fourteenth verse of John One tells us that this *logos* or spoken word was made flesh, a human being, and dwelt among us. It does not say that God became flesh. It says that God created "flesh," a human being, who would be His messenger or spokesman.

The purpose of the entire passage, John 1:1-18 is to prove that Jesus was God's Messenger, the final expression of His will and purpose to the world. He was the spoken word incarnate, not God incarnate. Hebrews 1:1, 2 sums it all up when it says that in times past God spoke in various and fragmentary ways, especially through the prophets, but in these last days He has spoken to us "in a Son."

The person who quoted John 1:1 did so as though it said, "In the beginning was Jesus, and Jesus was with God, and Jesus was God." This is indeed the popular understanding of the verse, and Christian people can hardly be blamed if they take it this way. The responsibility rests upon the shoulders of religious professionals who teach this interpretation. That, however, is not what it says.

An amplified paraphrase of John 1:1 would be: "God's spoken word was in the beginning at creation. It was *His* word, not the word of another, and it was mighty and powerful—sufficiently powerful to create all things." R.H.

<sup>1</sup>Greek *pros ton theon*.

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Franz Delitzsch's *Hebrew New Testament*.

# God Manifestation in Moses

by Duncan Heaster  
London, England

Note that both the Spirit-gifted leaders of Moses' time and the angels are called *elohim*.

**T**HE DOCTRINE OF GOD manifestation must be familiar to most readers, but perhaps we fail to always appreciate the degree to which Scripture is framed to emphasize God's manifestation in men. This study seeks to demonstrate how one man in particular carried God's name and represented God. These connections first start to develop when we carefully consider Exodus 7:1, where God says that He would make Moses "as [a] God to Pharaoh," and similarly Exodus 4:16, where Moses was told "thou shalt be to [Aaron] instead of God." There are so many others that, although individually they may not seem significant, when taken all together they appear conclusive that God chose to especially manifest Himself through Moses:

1. God's memorial name of Yahweh means "*I will be who I will be.*" He said to Moses, "*I will be with thy mouth*" (Ex. 4:15), as if to say that He would be manifested through the words Moses spoke.

2. The angel, representing God, told Moses, "I am come down to deliver [Israel] out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land" (Ex. 3:8). Yet two verses later the angel says, "I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that *thou* mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt" (Ex. 3:10). The similarity of language indicates that the angel was delegating God's power to Moses. It must be for this reason that the (one) rod referred to in Exodus is sometimes called Moses' rod, and other times "the rod of God" (i.e., of the angel; Ex. 4:20). A clear example is in Exodus 9:15, 22: "I [God] will stretch out my hand, that I may smite thee and thy people with pestilence. . . . And the LORD said unto Moses, Stretch forth thine hand toward

heaven, that there may be hail." And the New Testament subtly makes the same point: Moses "supposed his brethren would have understood how that God by his [Moses'] hand would deliver them. . . . this Moses . . . did God send to be a ruler and a deliverer by the hand of the angel" (Acts 7:25, 35).

3. The angel told Moses to speak these words to Pharaoh: "Thus saith the LORD, In this thou shalt know that I am the LORD: behold, I will smite with the rod that is in mine hand upon the waters." (Ex. 7:17). This sounds as if God intended there to be an apparent confusion between whether Moses was speaking about himself or God. Moses said, "I will smite with the rod," talking plainly about himself; but in the preceding phrase he says, "Thou shalt know that I am the LORD"; i.e., "You will realize that I am representing *Yahweh* when you see my miracles!"

4. When the people despised Moses they were rebuked "because that ye have despised the LORD which is among you" (Num. 11:20); i.e., Moses? A similar example is found in Numbers 26:9: "Dathan and Abiram . . . strove against Moses . . . when they strove against the LORD." Psalm 78:18-20 comments upon how Israel "tempted *God* in their heart by asking meat . . . they spake against *God*; they said, Can *God* furnish a table? . . . He [God] smote the rock . . . can he give bread also? . . . Therefore *Yahweh* heard this." This passage is clearly alluding to Exodus 16:2, 3, which chronicles how Israel tempted and spoke against *Moses*, accusing *him* of being unable to provide food for them, despite the fact *he* had previously smitten the rock to provide water. The manner in which it is recorded that *Yahweh* heard what the Israelites were saying about *God* would lead us to conclude that "God" is used as a refer-

ence to Moses' manifestation of God.

5. Moses stretched out his arm and rod to part the Red Sea; that this is what *Moses* did is stressed in the record (Ex. 14:16, 21, 26, 27). But time and again we are reminded how the Lord brought Israel out with an outstretched arm (e. g., Ex. 15:12), apparently alluding back to Moses' arm outstretched over the Red Sea. The man of God's right hand (Psa. 80:17) is therefore primarily Moses (note the Exodus context of Psa. 80).

6. Similarly, "From His [the Lord's] right hand went a fiery law for them. . . . Every one shall receive of Thy words. Moses commanded us a law" (Deut. 33:2-4). This all implies that Moses' giving the law by his hand was as a manifestation of God giving Israel the law. It was both the law of God, and of Moses. The law "was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator" (Moses; Gal. 3:19). Yet from the Lord's hand went a fiery law (Deut. 33:2). Given this great association of Moses with God's hand it may be possible to interpret "Would to God we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt . . . for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly [now, here] with hunger" (Ex. 16:3) as meaning "We wish you, Moses—the hand of the LORD—had killed us then back in Egypt, in the plagues which you brought, rather than decide to bring us out here to kill us."

7. It was by Moses' close association

with the word of God that he manifested God to such a great degree; and in that must be a great challenge to us in our Bible study. Thus the people pleaded to Moses, "Speak thou with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us" (Ex. 20:19). Thus by speaking to them the word of God which they would not hear directly from God they made Moses the representative of God. Thus Moses is described in 2 Corinthians 4:4 as "The god of this [Jewish] world."

8. There are several instances where Moses says something which is clearly on behalf of God, but the text does not tell us specifically that Moses is speaking on God's behalf. Thus the impression is given that Moses is a very great manifestation of God. Deuteronomy 31:23 is an example: Moses said to Joshua, "Be strong and of a good courage: for thou shalt bring the children of Israel into the land which I swear unto them: and I will be with thee." The last part of those words are clearly words of God rather than Moses personally, and yet Moses spoke them.

9. "The LORD will come down . . . upon mount Sinai. . . . Moses went down [same Hebrew as 'come down'] unto the people" (from Sinai; Ex. 19:11, 25), implying that the Lord's coming down upon Sinai was mirrored by Moses coming down to the people.

10. "And Moses did look upon all the work, and, behold, they had done it as

the LORD had commanded, even so had they done it: and Moses blessed them" (Ex. 39:43) is full of references to God's inspection of the creation back in Genesis, and His blessing of it after seeing that the word of God had been fully obeyed. This implies that the completion of the tabernacle was the beginning of the Jewish heavens and earth, which were to be finally destroyed in A. D. 70 (see 2 Peter 3); and that Moses was representing God, his inspection of the work of his Spirit-gifted helpers echoing God's review of the angel's work. Note that both the Spirit-gifted leaders of Moses' time and the angels are called *elohim*.

11. Although to some degree we bear the Name, we are sore tempted to abdicate the vast responsibilities this brings by reasoning that God has chosen us to manifest Him over and over our choice; and Moses too had this problem. He is told to go, bearing God's words. But "he said, O my Lord, send, I pray thee, by the hand of him whom thou wilt send" (Ex. 4:13). This must surely refer to the memorial name, "I will be who I will be." It is as if Moses was saying "Manifest yourself as you wish. If you chose me well, OK, I've got no choice." Thus immediately "The anger of the LORD was kindled against Moses." Moses had to learn that he had been chosen to bear God's Name, and it was for him to lovingly respond to that honor. The same applies to us. RH

## So What's New?

"Children today are tyrants. They contradict their parents, gobble their food and tyrannize their teachers."—  
Socrates, 470-399 B.C.—  
*Selected.*

## "FATHERS. . . Children Are Unique"

(Continued from page 21)

I realize all that I'm suggesting requires patience, along with a commitment of time. It will take thought, a lot of prayer, and even a certain amount of trial and error. But Dad, hear this. Affirming and encouraging your child to develop his or her God-given abilities might lead to the most significant contribution you'll ever make to the cause of Christ. Now, there's a thought to hang onto! RH



# Promised Healing

by Pastors Darrell and Delbert Rankin  
Church of God, Belle Plaine, IA and  
Pastor Russell Rankin  
Maple Grove, MN

Note, however, that these miracles were done in the context of preaching the Kingdom message.

**T**HE GREAT MESSIANIC prophecy of Isaiah 53 foretold the death of Jesus' soul as an offering for sin (vv. 10-12). Isaiah foresaw Jehovah offering through Jesus total healing for the total man. The complete scope of help and hope through His sacrifice is healing from sin and from sickness and death.

To apply this grace as God would give it, we understand it in the perspective of the prophets. Isaiah perceived that there was strength and courage available for today; but he also saw full bodily healing in the Kingdom of God restored on the earth in the age to come (Isa. 35:1-10). Jesus came preaching repentance and the coming of that Kingdom. He showed Israel what the Kingdom of the future would be like, which was His way of confirming the not-yet-fulfilled Abrahamic promises (Matt. 4:17, 23; Rom. 15:8; Acts 2:22; Heb. 2:3, 4). The restoration of health to many people during Jesus' ministry was immediate and one hundred percent. Jesus tells us that this was what Isaiah foresaw in Isaiah 53:4, 5 (Matt. 8:1-17; 11:1-5). Note, however, that these miracles were done in the context of preaching the Kingdom message. They were simply illustrations or samples, temporary as they were, of the age to come, concerning which all the prophets testified. These healings did not remove mortality or grant immunity from illness, so they could not be viewed as "realized eschatology."

The Apostle Paul saw eternal (age-lasting) life as a hope that we do not see today (Titus 1:2; Rom. 8:24, 25). Though many other blessings were for this age, Jesus taught that His disciples would receive eternal life in the age to come (Mark 10:29, 30). It is the resurrection from the dead that will take away corruptibility, weak-

ness, pain, sorrow, mortality, and death (1 Cor. 15:42-54; 1 John 2:25 - 3:3; Rev. 20:4-6; 21:4).

Having received the power of God, can we claim a guaranteed healing today? In Romans 8:14-26, Paul shows that even the truly faithful "groan within ourselves," and have "infirmities" and "sufferings of this present time," just like everyone else. The Lord promised to "help our infirmities," but we must patiently wait for a future event when "the redemption of our body" will occur. We look for Jesus to come from heaven to "change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body." This is GUARANTEED! (Cf. Phil. 3:10-21; Eph. 1:13, 14.)

In James 5:13-18, God offers healing for the spirit and the body through forgiveness of sins and restoration of health. It is the sick believer who summons the elders, not the elders who call the sick (v. 14). He is to call whenever he is sick, not wait for his deathbed, to have this service. "And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up" (v. 15). Having been raised in a congregation that taught and practiced this service, we observed God's answer was both temporal and eternal according to the perspective of the prophets.

Nothing in James 5:15 implies a guarantee for God's IMMEDIATE CURE. In the text God reserves unto Himself the privilege of three options in answering these prayers of faith: 1) Yes, NOW. 2) Yes, but WAIT a while; like verses 10, 11. Job's faith cannot be faulted; so consider his patience while he waited out his illness. 3) Yes, but WAIT till the RESURRECTION when Jesus comes (Cf. Rom. 8:23-25; 1 Thes. 4:14-18; 1 Cor. 6:14; 15; Matt. 11:5; 16:21; Acts 3:15; the Greek word *egeiro*, "raise up," describes the resurrection of the dead in

many cases). "This is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: and if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him" (1 John 5:14, 15). Jesus prayed like this in Gethsemane, and God answered according to His will (Matt. 26:38, 39).

Furthermore, Paul's faith cannot be faulted either. Nor was he short on power (2 Cor. 12:12). Yet he prayed earnestly

three times that his "thorn in the flesh" be removed. God's answer is not always the "yes" that we would like. He said to Paul, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness." Paul accepted that answer, "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." This humbling experience did not allow Paul the error of self-exaltation in the things of the Spirit (2 Cor. 12:7-11).

Be it grace to bear or a gracious touch of God's healing hand, we taste "of the heavenly gift," "the good Word of God," "the powers of the age to come," and, as has been the heritage of the churches of God throughout the centuries, have been made "partakers of the Holy Ghost." "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb. 6:4, 5; 4:16). RH

# Do All Speak in Tongues?

by Allon Maxwell  
Heathmont, Victoria, Australia

**A**MONGST PENTECOSTALS, the "gift" of tongues is virtually central to the rest of their teaching about the Baptism with the Holy Spirit.

In conversation with Pentecostals, I have found that the intensity of emphasis on this experience does tend to vary from, "All can, even if they don't," to "All eventually will," to "All must."

However, for most of them, speaking in tongues is regarded as the *infallible proof* that they have received the Holy Spirit. It is *the sign* that God has accepted them. Some even go so far as to say that without this gift, no one is born again, or saved at all.

My problem with this "infallible proof" is that, judged by what the Bible really does say about tongues, it is *not infallible* at all!

It is not infallible proof when the "spirit" which inspires the experience is clearly NOT the *Spirit of Truth* promised by Jesus. (John 16:13.)

It is not infallible proof when it is accompanied by dangerous false teaching—about who Jesus is; about what the gospel of the Kingdom of God is; about what the real Christian hope is; about the place and importance of baptism; and most important of all, about what repentance and real obedience to Jesus means.

It is not infallible proof in those who take to themselves a false sense of security from it; whose lifestyle shows little convincing evidence

at all of the *fruit* which is the *real mark* of the Spirit's presence. (Gal. 5:22-25.)

It is not infallible proof when it is found in false prophets, accompanied by signs and wonders, which even the elect are in danger of being deceived. (Matt. 24:24.)

It is not infallible proof in Catholics, who still hold to all the false teaching of their false church system.

No "spiritual" experience in anyone, even if real in itself, can ever be infallible proof of anything at all, when an **identical but false** experience is found in so many others.

Bible truth, **from the Spirit of Truth**, about speaking in tongues, is that it is NOT FOR EVERYONE. In 1 Corinthians 12:7-11, Paul makes it quite clear that it is one of a number of gifts given **individually**. Just as a human body is not all eye, or ear, or hand, or head, or foot, neither is there one single universal or indispensable gift for all. It is plain that **not all** are apostles, or prophets, or workers of miracles. **Neither do all speak in tongues.** (Verses 27-31.)

Any "spirit" which claims otherwise, is not the Spirit of Truth promised to those who love Jesus and obey Him.

We should be cautious about any who wrest the Scriptures to present us with a "lying wonder." (2 Thes. 2, 9.) RH

# Supplies Order Form

Prices effective May 1, 1993

Quantity	Part A	COST
<b>BOOKS AND BOOKLETS</b>		
...	Christ or Confusion (Gospel Pub League)	.95 .....
...	Concerning the Nations (Gospel Pub League)	.95 .....
...	Daniel's Prophetic Outline of History (Partlowe)	.95 .....
...	Daring to Differ: Adventures in Conditional Immortality (Hatch)	9.95 .....
...	Emphatic Diaglott (Wilson)	4.95 .....
...	"Except" (baptism, Bilton)	1.15 .....
...	First Principles (Marsh)	.75 .....
...	Fundamentals of the Christian Faith (Lyon)	.75 .....
...	God's Covenant with Abraham (Lindsay)	.75 .....
...	God's Great Plus Sign to the World (Partlowe)	.75 .....
...	Making the Most of Your Marriage (Partlowe)	1.95 .....
...	"Must Not Fight" (Bilton)	.95 .....
...	One God (Judd)	3.95 .....
...	Prophecies of the End of the World (Mattison)	3.95 .....
...	Russia, Israel, Christ and You (Bilton)	1.25 .....
...	Scripture Searcher's Assistant	.95 .....
...	Systematic Theology, Hard Cover (Huffer)	12.95 .....
...	Systematic Theology, Soft Cover (Huffer)	9.95 .....
...	The Bible: Its Principles & Texts (Huggins)	3.95 .....
...	The Abrahamic & Davidic Covenants	1.75 .....
...	The Coming Kingdom of the Messiah (Buzzard)	4.95 .....
...	The Last Will & Testament of Jesus	.75 .....
...	The Law, Sabbath & N.T. Christianity (Buzzard)	1.95 .....
...	The Miracle of Pentecost (Partlowe)	1.95 .....
...	The Seventh Day Sabbath (Gospel Pub League)	1.50 .....
...	Triumph of the Resurrection, 176 pp., Soft Cover (Huffer)	4.95 .....
...	What Happens When We Die? (Buzzard)	1.95 .....
...	Words of Truth, Subject Concordance	1.25 .....
...	Who Is Jesus? (Buzzard)	1.95 .....
...	Wrested Scriptures	16.00 .....
<b>HYMNALS</b>		
...	Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs	5.95 .....
...	Loose Leaf for Musicians	9.95 .....
<b>CHURCH SUPPLIES</b>		
...	Baptismal Certificates (doz. 5.00)	ea. .50 .....
...	Caring System File Folders	ea. .23 .....
<b>EVANGELISM FLIP CHART</b>		
...	Opportunity of Eternal Life	1.50 .....
<b>RECORDS—OREGON BIBLE COLLEGE CHORALE</b>		
...	Sing to the Lord	3.00 .....
...	Sheltered, Protected	5.00 .....
<b>SUNDAY SCHOOL SUPPLIES</b>		
Please specify starting date for quarterlies		
...	Kindergarten Creative Teaching Aid Packet	8.25 .....
...	Kindergarten Teacher's Guide	2.95 .....
...	Kindergarten Bible-In-Life (for teachers)	1.95 .....
...	Kindergarten Make-It/Take-It (for students)	1.95 .....
...	Primary Creative Teaching Aids Packet	8.25 .....
...	Primary Teacher's Guide	2.95 .....
...	Primary Student's Books (2) grades 1-3	3.65 .....
...	Junior Creative Teaching Aids Packet	8.25 .....
...	Junior Teacher's Guide	2.95 .....
...	Junior Student's, grades 4-6	1.95 .....
...	Junior High Creative Teaching Aids Packet	8.25 .....
...	Junior High Teacher's Guide	2.95 .....
...	Junior High Student's—THE ROCK	1.95 .....
...	Teen-Age Creative Teaching Aids Packet	8.25 .....
...	Teen Teacher's Guide	2.95 .....
...	Teen-Age Lessons I. D. (for High School)	1.95 .....
...	Adult Teachers' Guide	2.95 .....
...	Adult Student's	1.95 .....
...	Sample Kit of all Sunday School Lessons	Free .....
...	Superintendents' and Workers' S.S. Manual	1.95 .....
...	Sunday School Openings Idea Book	2.50 .....
<b>BIBLE STUDY COURSES</b>		
...	Berean Scripture Studies, No 2 (52 lessons)	1.95 .....
...	BYF Focus 10 @ \$1.75 each or	1.95 .....
...	The Nature and Destiny of Man (13 lessons)	1.95 .....
...	Where Do I Fit? (8 lessons—Partlowe)	1.95 .....

## SYSTEMATIC BIBLE STUDY COURSES (29 lessons)

...	Correspondence course ( <i>enrollment only</i> )	Free .....
...	Loose Leaf edition	2.95 .....
...	Bound edition	3.95 .....

## ISSUES, Paperback Books

...	The Case Against Pornography (Wildmon)	1.00 .....
...	The Home Invaders (Wildmon)	2.00 .....

## SLIDE-CASSETTE PROGRAMS

<b>God's Plan for This Planet</b>		
...	Oneness of God	10.00 .....
...	Worth of Each Person	10.00 .....
...	Salvation Through Christ	10.00 .....
...	The Empty Tomb	10.00 .....
...	World's Only Hope	10.00 .....
...	Christ's Coming Kingdom	10.00 .....
...	All Six Complete Programs	50.00 .....

THE RESTITUTION  
HERALD

Box 100  
Oregon, IL 61061

Box 100,000  
Morrow, GA 30260

Total Cost of Part A

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Part B:** The tracts listed are available from the Church of God General Conference at \$3.50 per hundred. Please order each tract in lots of 50. You may order single copies at 6¢ each and a minimum of 25.

## EVANGELISM TRACTS

Quantity	Tracts
...	Signs of Jesus' Coming and the End of the World
...	Signs of the Times
...	An Invitation
...	The Kingdom of God
...	An Invitation to Life
...	The Kingdom of God (Spanish)
...	Better Than Money in the Bank
...	The Pre-millennial Coming of Christ
...	Bible Faith Stands the Test of Time
...	The Purpose of the Millennium
...	Can God Help Me?
...	Can You Believe?
...	Do You Ever Think About God?
...	Do You Prefer Insurance or Assurance?
...	Have a Good Day
...	Here's My Tip
...	Meet My Friend
...	One Step From Death
...	Puzzled?
...	See What Real Love Is
...	Resurrection
...	The Blood Bank of the Bible
...	Seven Bible Reasons for Christian Baptism
...	Traveler's Credit Card
...	The Covenants of Promise
...	Use the Past to Build a Future
...	The History of Baptism
...	Why Be Baptized?
...	The Marriage God Planned
...	Your Introduction to the Church of God
...	The Meaning of the Word "Soul"

## BIBLE DOCTRINE TRACTS

...	Baptism
...	Christian Tithing, An Act of Faith
...	God's Laws Concerning Marriage
...	Is Going to Heaven Our Reward?
...	Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God
...	One God
...	Resurrection
...	Seven Bible Reasons for Christian Baptism
...	The Covenants of Promise
...	The History of Baptism
...	The Marriage God Planned
...	The Meaning of the Word "Soul"
...	The Nature of the Soul
...	Two Hells
...	What Happens After Death?
...	What is Man?
...	Who Owns the Wool?

## MISCELLANEOUS TRACTS

...	Chart of the Ages
...	From One Who Cares
...	How to Grow in Christ
...	How Your Pastor Can Help You
...	What Can We Read Tonight?

## BIBLE PROPHECY TRACTS

...	Death of the Dollar
...	God's Tomorrow
...	Newsday 1992

Total Number of Tracts \_\_\_\_\_

Total Cost of Part B \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Postage and Handling	Total of Part A	\$ _____
Order up to \$10: add \$2.40	Total of Part B (Tracts)	\$ _____
Order \$10 to \$20: add 20%	Amount of Complete Order	\$ _____
Order \$20 to \$99: add 10%	Postage & Handling	\$ _____
Order \$100+: add 5%	Total	\$ _____
Overseas: Actual Cost		

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

# ABC

*"Atlanta Bible College has a unique role in the ongoing restoration of neglected biblical truth prior to the coming of the Kingdom.*

*Students interested in searching out the teaching of Jesus in an atmosphere of freedom should consider Atlanta Bible College as a first choice."*

*Anthony F. Buzzard,  
Instructor*

**ATLANTA  
BIBLE  
COLLEGE**

For more information call: 1-800-347-4261

#### Subscription Expirations

The three-digit number on the top right of your address label identifies the renewal date of your subscription. If the number is 93.0, it expires with the February/March issue, 1993. A 93.2 number means a June, July, expiration. This method will assist the subscriber in keeping tabs on his expiration date and serve as a reminder for renewal.

Church of God General Conference  
P.O. Box 100,000  
Morrow, GA 30260

**Address Correction Requested**

U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
PERMIT 21  
Oregon, Illinois  
Nonprofit Org.

Please check  
the mailing  
label to the left  
for your RH ex-  
piration date  
and renew  
promptly to  
keep  
THE  
RESTITUTION  
HERALD  
coming to your  
home  
bimonthly.

*Thank you for subscribing to  
THE RESTITUTION HERALD.*

Dear RESTITUTION HERALD,

I am writing for the following reason:

- My address label is incorrect, please note the changes.
- I am moving in the next six weeks; please send the magazine to my new address printed below.
- I wish to send a gift subscription to the person listed below. Enclosed is \$12 payment.
- Subscription renewal, payment enclosed—1 yr. \$12, 2 yr. \$21, 3 yr. \$30. [British subscribers send U. S. funds]. Thank you.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

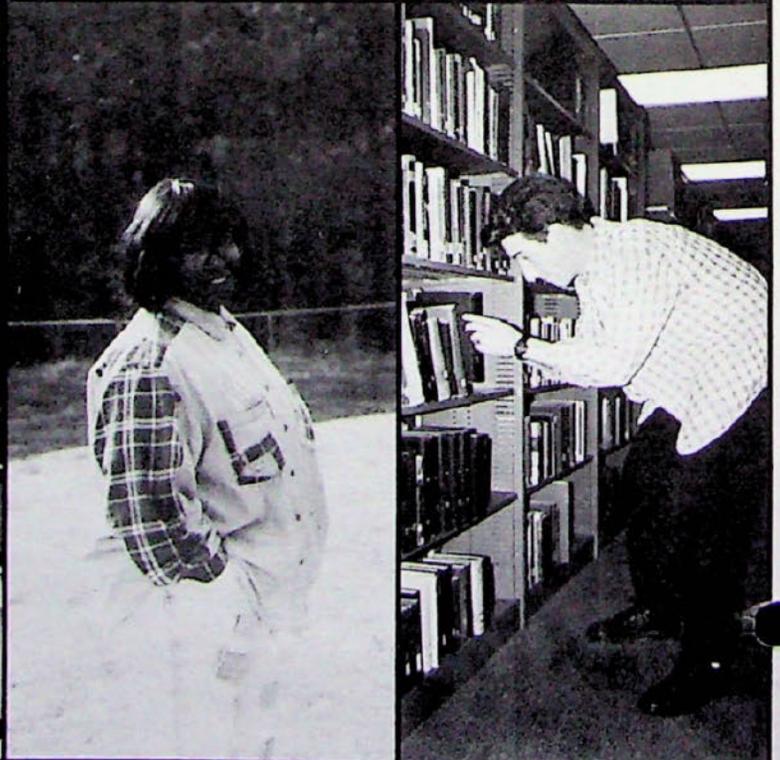
Mail to: THE RESTITUTION HERALD, P.O. Box 100,000, Morrow, GA 30260.

**IS IT TIME TO RENEW?**

Atlanta Bible College  
**Maranatha '93**



PROGRESS JOURNAL, Volume 35, Number 5  
July - August 1993



## 1993 Graduates

The faculty and staff of Atlanta Bible College are extremely pleased to present the 1993 graduates of ABC. On the evening of June 11, Oregon/Atlanta Bible College observed its 50th commencement.

Our outstanding graduates are prepared to take their place in the Church of God as leaders and workers.

Lee McMinn is planning to accept a pastorate this fall.

Christy Ross and her husband are moving to Omaha, Nebraska to pursue Master's Degree programs.

Seth Ross is continuing his education in Atlanta to receive a second Bachelor's Degree.

Daniel Smead has been employed by the Church of God General Conference to be the technical supervisor of the Publishing Department.

Jason Turner is interested in serving as a pastor this fall. He is exploring the possibility of starting a new church in the Beloit, Wisconsin area.

Aaron Wells will continue as an employee of the Church of God General Conference in charge of computer operations.

We are grateful for the dedication of each of these individuals. They are a credit to the Lord, to themselves, to Atlanta Bible College, and to the Church of God as a whole. As faculty and staff we are pleased with their spiritual development, their academic performance, their present involvement in ministry, their plans for future ministry, their love for the Lord, and their love for God's truth.

We pray God's richest blessings upon them in their future ministry.

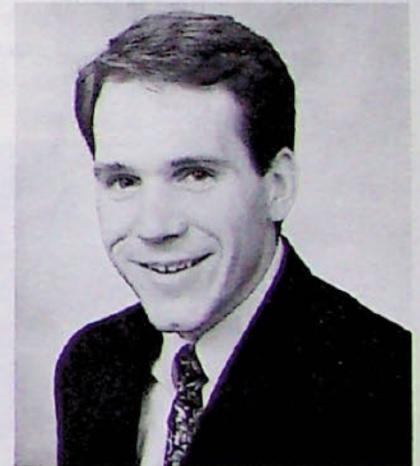
David Krogh, President



Lee McMinn



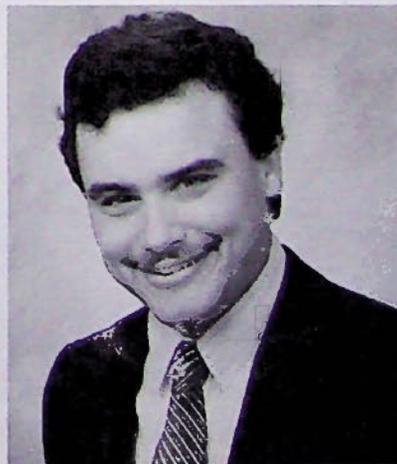
Christy Ross



Seth Ross



Daniel Smead



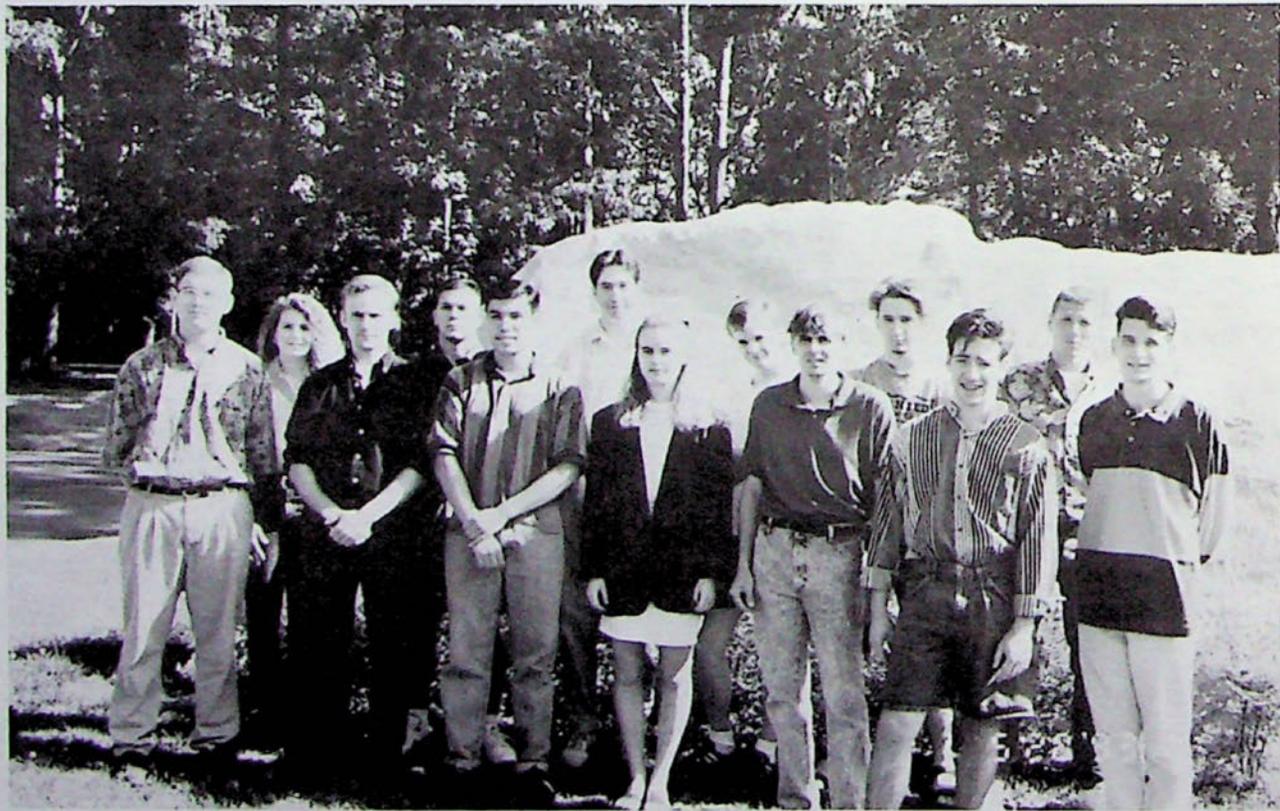
Jason Turner



Aaron Wells



Returning students include (front row l to r): Carolyn Swartz, Christy Ross, Julie Vance; (back row): Steve Zimbelman, Lonnie Bennett, Seth Ross, and Dan Kennedy. Not pictured: Jason Cooper, Aaron Wells, Lee McMinn, Tim Driskill, Jason Turner, Daniel Smead, Mark Cain, Jeremy Smith, Susan Savage, Lonnie Craig, Ryan Smith, and Shawn Yager.



First-year students include (front row l to r): Christopher Seiders, Greg Landry, Andy Cisneros, Melinda Nelson, Mark Tschaenn, Bradford Gaspar, Dale Harshuman; (back row): Amy Berry, Brent Simon, John Nelson, Jeff Zimbelman, Brent Bengtson, and Mark Louderback. Not pictured: Carol Bonek, Roy Bonek, Jason Brown, Jeff Graham, David Holmes, Phil Osborn, Vicki Rabenberg, Joshua Ward, and Michelle Yager.



# STAFF



David Krogh



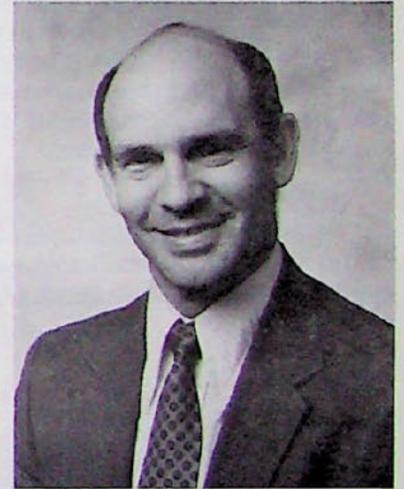
Kent Ross



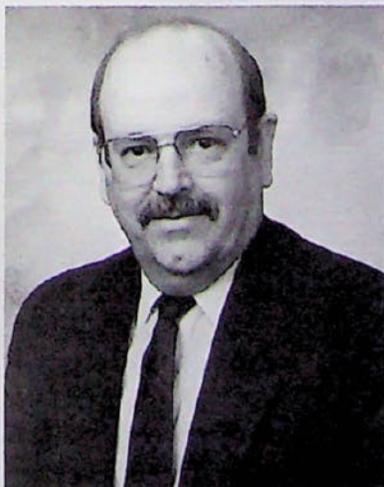
Anthony Buzzard



Joe Martin



Dale Ramsey



Our Controllers:  
Old and New  
Harry McMinn  
and  
Terri Tschaenn



# Chorale '93 Tours

The 1992-93 Atlanta Bible College Chorale has traveled extensively during the past two months. They left Atlanta on March 19 for their Spring Concert Tour which included presentations at Eldorado, Illinois; Morse Mill, St. Charles, and Raymore, Missouri; McGintytown, Magazine, and Royal, Arkansas; Gatesville, Texas; Hammond, Louisiana; and back to New Friends Bible Church in Morrow, Georgia. In April, they visited the Virginia Conference, Church of Resurrection Hope in Lenoir, North Carolina; Second Hope Advent Church, Monroe,

North Carolina; and Bethel Church of God in South Carolina.

Those participating in the Chorale are Brent Bengtson, Amy Berry, Jason Brown, Brad Gaspar, Dale Harshman, Melinda Nelson, John Nelson, Christy Ross, Seth Ross, Chris Seiders, Carolyn Swartz, Julie Vance, and Michelle Yager.

Dale Ramsey has directed the Chorale since its inception in 1970.

## ABC CHORALE SCHEDULE

- March 19 ..... Restitution Church, Eldorado, IL
- 20 .. Morse Mill Church of God, Morse Mill, MO
- 21 .. St. Charles Comm. Church, St. Charles, MO
- 21 ..... Raymore Bible Church, Raymore, MO
- 22 ..... McGintytown Church, McGintytown, AR
- 23 ..... Clark Chapel Church, Magazine, AR
- 24 ..... Forest Hill Church, Royal, AR
- 25 ..... Gatesville Church of God, Gatesville, TX
- 26 Happy Woods Church of God, Hammond, LA
- 28 ..... New Friends Bible Church, Morrow, GA
- April 2-4 ..... Virginia Conference
- 17 ..... Church of Resurrection Hope, Lenoir, NC
- 18 ..... Second Hope Advent, Monroe, NC
- 18 ..... Bethel Church of God, Bethel, SC



High atop Mount Magazine, the chorale prepares to take off for another blessed destination along the almost 3,000 mile trek.



# College/Conference Update

## Annual Maranatha Issue

The July/August Progress Journal is annually designated as the Maranatha issue to tell the story of Atlanta Bible College. We rejoice in the sizable enrollment increase for this school year. We also rejoice in the major accomplishments which are reflected on the attached pages.

## Ministers/Theological Conference

Atlanta Bible College/Church of God General Conference was pleased to host the Annual Ministers' Conference followed by our Third Annual Theological Conference. It was a pleasure to have so many pastors participate in both conferences. We appreciate the churches that provided financial support for their pastor to attend. (See Attached article for a more complete report of the Theological Conference).

## College/Conference Staff

Terri Tschaenn has been appointed Controller of Atlanta Bible College/Church of God General Conference. She replaces Harry McMinn. She has been bookkeeper and assistant to the controller during the past year. She is the wife of Mark Tschaenn who is a student at the Bible College.

Julie Isham has been employed to replace Terri Tschaenn as Bookkeeper and assistant to the controller. She and her husband Clayton have moved to Atlanta where Clayton will be enrolled at Atlanta Bible College this fall. We are happy to welcome Julie to our staff.

Hollis Partlowe, Interim Editor of the Restitution Herald, has chosen not to accept reappointment to this position for another year. A successor is being sought.

We are thankful to Dennis and Mary Cheatwood for managing the apartment building in Oregon during the past two years. This building was sold on April 12.



Steve Fewell teaching a Pastoral Counseling Class at the recent Minister's Conference.

Judy Myers will continue as Mission Coordinator during the coming year. Gayle Guthrie will continue as Christian Education Coordinator and Pastor Jim Graham will continue as Youth Coordinator.

## Church Builders Appeal

Church Builders Appeal #70 has been issued for the Jay Street Church of God, Kokomo, Indiana. This church which was first organized in 1927 has experienced consistent growth during the past five years. The church has purchased a six-acre tract of land in the southwest section of Kokomo for \$36,000. Land in the area is selling for \$25,000 - \$45,000 per acre. A large subdivision is being built across the street from the property.

Those who would like to assist with this Church Builders Appeal should send checks to the Church of God General Conference designated for Church Builders Appeal #70.

We would also invite our readers to become members of the Church Builders League. Members are asked to contribute \$25 or more to each appeal. There are two appeals each year. At the present time there are nearly 850 Church of God members who belong to the League.

## Trip to Peru

Anthony Buzzard and William Wachtel visited Lima, Peru June 4-10 to meet with the congregation there and to discuss the work with Mario Olcese and Beder Ucanay. A report of their trip will be provided in the next Journal.

## Russian Outreach

Tracy Savage and Olya Efina have been visiting many of our churches to report on outreach activities in Russia. They will be returning to St. Petersburg following the summer General Conference. Tracy was commissioned by the Pine Grove Bible Church and the Minnesota State Conference. We appreciate their interest in missions and their financial support of this project. We also appreciate the other churches and groups who have provided money for translation and printing of tracts and booklets.

## New Churches Being Planned

Family Bible Fellowship in Rockford, Illinois is considering the planting of a new church in the Beloit, Wisconsin area. New Friends Bible Church in Morrow, Georgia is discussing the starting of another church in the Atlanta area. We are grateful for these new churches that have been started with a vision of planting daughter churches. We encourage local churches and state conferences to discuss church planting opportunities in their area.

## Financial Update

The College/Conference fiscal year ended on May 31. Con-  
(Please turn page 11)

# Proposed Constitutional Amendments

## Recommendation #1

At the Summer General Conference, Pastor Francis Burnett moved and Pastor Darrell Cardwell seconded a motion to reinstate part of Article 2, Section 1, which would read as follows: "Atlanta Bible College which was established by the Church of God General Conference, August 8, 1939, as Oregon Bible College, exists to educate men and women for Christian ministries on the collegiate level through Biblical and Theological studies, general education in the arts and sciences, and professional studies in pastoral ministry and church vocational areas deemed desirable."

This proposal was tabled to be considered at the 1993 General Conference.

The Board of Directors would like to propose that the delegates adopt this constitutional amendment, and that it be placed in the By-Laws, Article 1, which pertains to the purpose of Atlanta Bible College/Church of God General Conference. The Board proposes that the above item become Section 2 and that the present section 2 be renumbered section 3.

**Explanation:** This amendment acknowledges the organization of our Bible College in 1939 and states its purpose.

## Recommendation #2

The Board of Directors proposes an amendment to the Constitution, Article 2, Section 3, b to insert the following phrase after the words "the following licensed or ordained ministers": "authorized under the auspices of the General Conference License Board:"

**Explanation:** This amendment was suggested by the License Board. It clarifies which licensed and ordained pastors are eligible to vote at General Conference delegate business sessions.

## Recommendation #3

The Board of Directors proposes the following amendment to the Constitution: By-Laws, Article 2, Section 7, new G: "to employ a president who shall be responsible to the Board of Directors for administering the day-to-day business of Atlanta Bible College/General Conference, for personnel, for planning, and for such specific matters of business as shall be assigned him. The president shall meet the qualifications given in I Timothy 3, Titus 1, and such other Scriptures as teach the qualifications of church leaders. The president may be either male or female."

The present item G will be changed to H.

**Explanation:** This constitutional change was proposed by members of the Northeast Conference. The Constitution and By-Laws currently do not make any provision for an administrator of the College/Conference other than stating he has voting privileges. This amendment provides for the position, the title, the qualifications, the duties, and the accountability of the administrator.

## Additional Conference Information

### PRE-CONFERENCE EVENTS

The Timberland Bible Church, South Bend, Indiana is inviting anyone to come to their church on July 25 just prior to the start of the Summer Conference. Services will be held Sunday morning with guest speaker Pastor Stephen Bolhaus, member of the General Conference Board of Directors, followed by a picnic dinner. If you are able to attend, please call the church office 219-277-8577. South Bend is about 125 miles northeast of Lafayette.

The Hedrick Church is having special services on July 25. Sunday School is at 9:45 and Worship is at 11:00. A meal will be furnished at noon. At 5:00 P.M. there will be a cookout and a program. A limited amount of overnight accommodations is available Saturday night. Please call 317-762-6395 for reservations. Hedrick is about 35 miles west of Lafayette.

Regular Sunday services will be held at New Hope Community Church in Lafayette. Call 317-474-6763 for directions to the church.

### CONFERENCE PROGRAM CHANGES

Tuesday night at 8:30 the worship and praise time will consist of a concert by John Richert. He is a member of the Timberland Church.

Gayle Guthrie's workshop on Contemporary Issues in Christian Education will be moved from Wednesday 1:15 P.M. to Thursday at 1:15 P.M. An additional mini course has been added Wednesday at 11:00 A.M. particularly for pastors. The title is "The Pursuit of Excellence" by Donna Deane. Three continuing education units will be granted to pastors for taking this course. This mini course will be the compliment of mini course #2 offered on Wednesday at 9:45 A.M. This seminar will deal with excellence and pastor professionalism from the viewpoint of a lay person who is also involved in a profession. This session will be a time of encouragement.

### ADULT QUIZ TEAM

For more than 20 years Church of God young people have participated in the National Bible Quiz program. Many were richly blessed by this study and memorization of Scripture. This year, adults have been invited to form their own quiz program based on the same material being studied by the youth. Quiz competition will take place on Tuesday and Wednesday afternoons at 3:45 P.M.

A couple of churches have already formed quiz teams for this summer's competition. The material that will be used for competition is Hebrews 10:19-13:25.

# Give and Ye Shall Receive

The laws of the United States Government have been written to encourage charitable giving. It is possible to deduct up to half of one's income that has been given to a charity, as an itemized deduction on form 1040 Schedule A. Though most believers are committed to giving to the Lord's work regardless of the tax consequences, tax laws permit even more sizable gifts to be given to the Lord's work than might be imagined.

One means of giving is through what is officially called a charitable remainder trust.

The charitable remainder trust is essentially a way to sell low income assets that have increased in value, and reinvest the cash in income producing investments without paying any capital gains tax on the sale.

For example, suppose someone has a piece of real estate that produces no income but has increased in value from \$100,000 to \$500,000 since it was purchased. The owner can give it to a charitable trust. The trust, sells the property tax free and then buys a portfolio of investments that earns an average 8% per year, or \$40,000. This income is given to the donor and his spouse as long as they live. At the death of the donor (and spouse) the charity becomes the sole owner of the \$500,000 of investments.

What has happened is that the donor who was receiving 0- income from the real estate and would have a potentially large tax liability if the property were sold, is able to receive \$40,000 per year of interest income.

Therefore, in this illustration the donor benefits, and the Lord's work benefits. The losers would appear to be the heirs of the donor. However, that can be easily remedied. The donor can take a small portion of the \$40,000 of annual income and purchase a life insurance policy that will pay the heir a comparable amount when the donor dies.

Since each person's financial situation is different, it is best to consult your own financial planner or if you would like to be put in touch with a Church of God member who could give you counsel, please contact David Krogh at Box 100,000, Morrow, GA 30260 or call 1-800-347-4261.



Pastors were able to secure continuing education credit attending Steve Fewell's counseling class at Ministers Conference.



Pastors and students at 1993 Ministers Conference.



Workshop at Ministers Conference.

# Third Annual Theological Conference

Much preparation and prayer preceded our Third Annual Theological Conference, held at Atlanta Bible College, April 30 - May 2. Some twenty of our pastors stayed on for the conference and the more than 100 who attended sessions included a number of special visitors and speakers.

I had come across the *Anchor Bible Commentary on Hebrews* some three years ago. The author of that volume is Professor G. W. Buchanan, a retired theologian of Wesley Theological Seminary, Washington, D.C. I had been amazed to read in his comments on Hebrews 11 that Abraham was expecting, along with all New Testament Christians, to inherit the land of Palestine, i.e., the Kingdom of God, not "go to heaven," at death. Buchanan dialogues with a number of key expositors (Moffat, and Delitzsch, etc.) and protests that "heaven" is never the goal of Biblical Christians. A letter to George Buchanan expressing my delight at his plain talk about what Scripture teaches produced a friendly reply and revealed that George had spent a lifetime researching the issue of the Kingdom of God and also the matter of Jesus being the agent of God and not God in the Trinitarian sense. George has long seen that if you read the Bible in its Hebrew context, Jesus is not presented as God but as His legal agent, the Messiah. Intrigued to find a distinguished scholar confirming elements of our Abrahamic Faith, our committee decided to invite George Buchanan and his wife Harlene to address us at ABC. This he was delighted to do. He spoke to us about the gospel hope for the land of Israel. It should be added that scholars of the liberal school, like George, do not share our certainty about the resurrection, but are often more sympathetic



A panel discussion at the recent Theological Conference. Left to right: George Wesley Buchanan, Allon Maxwell, Jay Kuntsman, William Wachtel, and Geoff Davies.



Charles Hunting addressing those in attendance at the Theological Conference.

to our "unorthodox" views than evangelical "Bible believing" conservatives. This exposure to liberalism was mind expanding to our students, who often assume that all who study the Bible accept it as a divine revelation.

Also visiting us was Professor Marian Hillar of Texas Southern University. Here our connection is even more unusual. Marian Hillar calls himself an atheist and former Catholic and Buddhist. What possible reason could bring him to our conference? Simply that he is Polish and as a historian and philosopher is attracted to the Polish Socinian brethren of the 1600's, who produced a remarkable document called the Racovian Catechism. This book represents almost exactly the Church of God understanding of Jesus as Messiah, not God. Professor Hillar plans to write a book on the Polish brethren as an expression of his admiration of these Christians who were so much gentler than their rivals in the Roman Catholic Church. Marian considers that their good example deserves attention. When he discovered Atlanta Bible College (through reading our *Journal from the Radical Reformation*), he came to see for himself an institution which (in his words) "still taught those magnificent doctrines," i.e., that God is one and not three. We can only hope that the professor was pleased with what he saw here. He addressed us briefly on his forthcoming writing project. It is interesting to note that the Racovian Catechism is currently being reprinted by Christian Educational Services.

We were delighted to welcome Jay Kuntsman to our conference. He had about a year earlier encountered Church of God literature by being lent a booklet on Jesus which a friend had left lying in a pile of unread books for several years. The message



Allon Maxwell from Australia spoke on "Things Which Unite Us."

about Jesus as Messiah made good sense to him and he found (as many have) that his participation in an evangelical church was much less easy, once he made known his discovery that Jesus is not God.

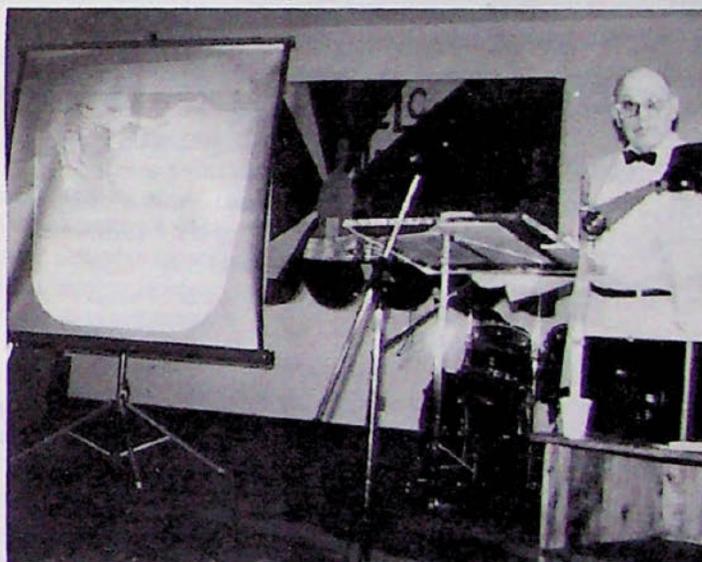
Two visitors from Australia challenged us with their various insights and emphases. Both Allon Maxwell with his wife Doreen, and Geoff Davies preached memorable sermons. Allon, as a former Christadelphian, has changed his thinking on a number of issues, and stressed the need for taking radically to heart the "difficult" teachings of the Sermon on the Mount, including the command of Christ to love our enemies. Geoff Davies stresses a warmth of devotion to Christ and he encouraged us by telling of us of his recent conversion to the oneness of God and to Conditional Immortality.

Other speakers invited reflection on the "Marks of a Living Church" (Charles Hunting), on Divorce and Remarriage (Bill Wachtel), and on Luke's Emphasis on the Future Restoration of Israel in Acts 1:6 (Anthony Buzzard) and on Eschatology and Ethics (Mark Mattison). The paper on Acts 1:6 is to be published in the *Evangelical Quarterly* next year. There was also a discussion on the "Gift of Tongues" in which various different opinions were represented.

Conferences like this help to extend the influence of the Church of God into areas where we have not so far been visible. We want other students of the Bible to know of our existence and our desire to see the original teachings of Jesus triumph in a world which seems certainly to have lost its way both doctrinally and ethically. That Jesus was a Jew whose teaching was rooted in Hebrew Scripture is a simple but strangely overlooked fact. Such has been the power of tradition to separate Jesus from his own teachings—a paradox which surely challenges us to action. "He who has the teachings of Jesus maintains his hold on the Father and the Son" (2 John 9).

- Anthony Buzzard

Tapes and video recordings of the conference are obtainable from Atlanta Bible College, Box 100,000, Morrow, GA 30260.



George Wesley Buchanan, author of the Anchor Bible Commentary on Hebrews spoke on "The Gospel of the Kingdom and the Land."

## College/Conference Update

(Continued from page 7)

Contributions for the year totaled \$386,617 including some special bequests. We are deeply grateful to all who have contributed to the work of the Conference and College during this fiscal year.

Contributions were \$60,933 less than our Goal for Giving. A portion of the shortfall was made up from increased sales, and much larger tuition income than was anticipated two years ago when this budget was prepared. \$16,000 has also been borrowed from restricted funds to cover this year's operations. These funds must be repaid.

Contributions needed for the new fiscal year that began June 1, 1993 are \$422,550. In order to meet the goal for giving for

this new year contributions will need to increase by nearly \$36,000 over last year.

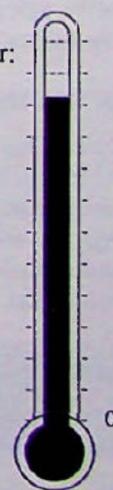
We encourage each Church of God family to include the College/Conference in their giving for the Lord's work.

Goal for year:  
\$447,550

\$386,617

Actual Income  
as of May 31

1992-1993  
Cumulative  
Budget Needs



# CHURCH NEWS

## BAPTISMS

### CALIFORNIA

*Pomona*—Andrea Jones, Wendy Jones, and Scott Jones (4/18/93) by Delbert Jones.

### ILLINOIS

*Rockford*—Nicholas Pinnon (11/29/92), Timothy Spickler (12/6/92), and John Robinson (5/2/93) by Gary Turner.

*Macomb*—Jake Lucan (4/25/93) and Robert Fisher (5/2/93) by Richard Alcumbrack.

### INDIANA

*Burr Oak*—Tabatha VanderMark (3/8/92), Robert Lloyd (8/11/92), Steve Downey (8/11/92), Aimce Jo Scott (5/2/93), and Danielle Renee Weaver (5/2/93) by Don Nunemaker.

### NORTH CAROLINA

*Lenoir*—Beatrice Holden (4/11/93) and Melody Harvey (5/9/93) by James Ritch.

### OHIO

*Cleveland*—Becky Joyner (5/2/93) by Rick Phyllis, Sr.

## MARRIAGES

### ILLINOIS

*Rockford*—James Rodely to Tammy Ames (4/17/93) by Gary Turner.

## DEATHS

### OHIO

*Dayton*—Clara Winkle (5/19/93) by Ralph Childs.

### ILLINOIS

*Oregon*—Marie Johns, age 75, member (5/27/93) by Darell Maddock and Michael Hoffman. Marie was the wife of Pastor Arnold Johns who preceded her in death.

## PASTOR NEEDED

An Advent Christian Church in Shamrock, Texas is looking for a pastor. There are several active families there and potential for growth. The congregation owns a church building and a three-bedroom parsonage. Anyone interested may contact Mrs. Floyd Poer at 806-256-5157.

## PASTOR NEEDED

We at the Holbrook Church of God at Holbrook, Nebraska are looking for a retired

couple or individual who would be interested in coming to a rural area to live and hold Sunday services for a small church.

We have a very nice parsonage for you to live in and a place for you to garden and a very nice church. This would help us here at Holbrook and help you supplement your Social Security. Please send correspondence to: Curly Miller, Rt. 3, Box 9, Cambridge, Nebraska 69022 or call collect (308) 697-4799 or Mary Lou Hornaday, Rt. 2, Box 170, Arapahoe, Nebraska 68922 or call collect after 7 p.m. (308) 962-5393.

## AVAILABLE FOR PASTORATE

Pastor Tom Schmitt is available for a pastorate. He can be contacted at (216) 963-0614 or 9977 Darrow Park Drive #125 A, Twinsburg, OH 44087.

## AVAILABLE FOR PASTORATE

Pastor Bob Alcumbrack will be available for a pastorate on November 1, 1993. He seeks a flexible situation where he can attend a local college while pastoring. He can be contacted at (815) 732-2027 (Home) or 732-6847 (Office) or 511 S 9th Oregon, IL 61061.

## REPORT OF TODAY'S GOOD NEWS MINISTRY

A year ago, the Today's Good News Ministry moved from Blanchard, Michigan to Lafayette, Indiana when Pastor Steve Taylor moved to become involved in starting a new church. The past year has been a time of thinking, planning, and praying regarding the future of TGN and its specific use in the establishment of a new church. God has opened some wonderful doors of opportunity and given some specific direction on how he wants to use this ministry.

One of the great blessings is that God has provided a working relationship with the First Assembly of God Church in Lafayette. This church has a \$100,000 television facility with a very professional studio and a video toaster (a computer program which is extremely valuable in video production). The church allows TGN the full use of their facilities and help with personnel in taping programs. There is an exchange of services arrangement where Steve Taylor assists them with their projects in return.

TGN has completely revised their program format. Due to the access to the First Assembly video toaster, professional graphics are now included in the programs. Each half hour program is divided into three segments: 1) reflections - a devotional segment featuring outdoor scenery with Scriptural overlays, set to music; 2) a closer look - a ten minute in-depth Bible Study; 3) viewpoint - discussions between two or more individuals on Church/Christian living topics. Interspersed between these segments are 30 second commercials. They are used to advertise the local church. These programs can be customized for other churches who wish to use these programs. Each program is hosted so that each segment is introduced and explained.

Three programs have been completed and a fourth one is nearly completed. The goal is to cable cast these programs on a rotating basis and produce an additional new program once a month to add to the rotation giving a total of about 13 programs within a year's time.

In Lafayette, it costs \$55 a week to cable cast a one half hour program. This cost includes advertising on the channel about future programs as well as a listing in the local television directory published by the city newspaper.

It appears that this ministry can be a tremendous boost in establishing a presence of the new congregation in Lafayette. It will also provide a "proving ground" for the development of television ministry to benefit other congregations throughout our conference.

- Steve Taylor

## PUT YOUR WHEELS TO WORK!

Serving our churches is the ministry of Atlanta Bible College/Church of God General Conference. Transportation is an important ingredient in that ministry.

We are in need of dependable automobiles. If you are considering trading in your vehicle, why not give the trade-in to the College/Conference for use in its ministries? You will receive a tax-deductible receipt and our hearty thanks. In addition, you will gain the satisfaction of knowing you are having a vital part in the Lord's work.

Please contact the President at 1-800-347-4261.



## Report of Baptisms

### 2,000 by the Year 2000

Jan. 1, 2000

April 1, 1993 - May 31, 1993*	23	Total 580
April 1, 1992 - March 31, 1993*	164	
April 1, 1991 - March 31, 1992	170	
June 1, 1990 - March 31, 1991	168	
Jan. 1 - May 31, 1990	55	

\* More complete figures are being collected with delegate information.

### Calendar of Events

July 11-16	1993 Youth Congress at John Brown University, Siloam Springs, AR
July 25	Pre-Conference Homecoming, Timberland Bible Church, South Bend, IN
July 26-30	Annual Summer General Conference at Purdue University, Lafayette, IN
Sept. 8-15	Holy Land Trip sponsored by ABC
Sept. 16	Orientation for ABC Freshmen
Nov. 19, 20	Men's Retreat, Camp Mack, Milford, IN
April 26-29	Annual Minister's Conference, Atlanta, GA
April 29-May 1	Fourth Annual Theological Conference, Atlanta, GA

### Continuing Projects in Atlanta

ITEM	NUMBER NEEDED	COST (Each)	STATUS
Wood decking for walkway			
5' section	100	\$40	15 selected by donors
Hardware for doors	50	\$125	5 selected by donors
Load(s) of gravel	25	\$100	10 selected by donors
Fence:			
10' of fence- 8' high	10	\$80	2 selected by donor
100' of fence- 5' high	10	\$300	1 selected by donor
100' of fence- 8' high	9	\$800	
300' of fence- 5' high	3	\$900	
Sod (1,000 square feet)	8	\$160	1 selected by donor
Refrigerators for Apt Bldg	10	\$500	3 selected by donors
Stoves for Apt Bldg	10	\$400	1 selected by donor
Outside lighting	6	\$500	
Fax Machine	1	\$450	\$108 contributed

### PRAYER AND PRAISE—August, 1993

- 1 Pray for your church family as you join together in worship today.
- 2 Pray for the successful implementation of decisions made at General Conference.
- 3 Praise God for the faithful ministry of the ABC/General Conference staff.
- 4 Pray for Tracy Savage as she returns to St. Petersburg, Russia.
- 5 Pray for students who are making plans to attend Atlanta Bible College this fall.
- 6 Praise God for His faithfulness in your life.
- 7 Pray for God's Spirit to be present in the activities of your local church.
- 8 Pray for your pastor and his family today.
- 9 Praise God for the challenges He will send your way this week.
- 10 Pray for the brethren and leaders in Peru.
- 11 Pray for the leaders of your nation.
- 12 Praise God for the beauty of His creation.
- 13 Pray for the Badillo family in Mexico.
- 14 Pray for new staff members as they assume responsibility.
- 15 Praise God for the dedicated years of service of the Oregon publishing staff.
- 16 Pray for a successful completion of the move to Morrow.
- 17 Pray for the Grant family, members of the Valley View Church, who are serving in missions ministry.
- 18 Praise God for the steadfast faith of the brethren in the Philippines.
- 19 Pray for individuals who feel led of God to pursue mission careers.
- 20 Pray for the Board of Directors who give of their time to lead the ministries of the Conference.
- 21 Praise God for a recent answer to prayer.
- 22 Pray for the leadership of your local church.
- 23 Pray for brethren in India.
- 24 Praise God for the editors of various Conference materials.
- 25 Pray for the pastors of your state or regional conference.
- 26 Pray for isolated members who are not able to meet regularly with other believers.
- 27 Praise God for your heritage of faith.
- 28 Pray that God might speak through you to someone hurting.
- 29 Pray for someone you know who needs to make Christ, Lord.
- 30 Pray for an opportunity to share your faith this week.
- 31 Praise God for the promise of a perfect age to come.



## PRAYER AND PRAISE—September, 1993

- 1 Pray for the youth of your local church and the General Conference.
- 2 Pray for pastors beginning new ministries this month.
- 3 Praise God for Tracy Savage and her ministry to Russia.
- 4 Pray that God might provide many witnessing opportunities to the people of St. Petersburg.
- 5 Pray that God might be praised through your worship today.
- 6 Praise God for Roberto, Lupe, Leonardo, and Alice Badillo's ministry in Mexico.
- 7 Pray for healing for someone you know who is in need.
- 8 Pray for the staff of the General Conference and Atlanta Bible College.
- 9 Praise God for the gift of His Son.
- 10 Pray for Mario Olcese in Lima, Peru.
- 11 Pray for the preparations being made for this coming year at ABC.
- 12 Praise God for your grandparents.
- 13 Pray for the brethren in India and the Philippine Islands.
- 14 Pray for David Krogh and Kent Ross in their leadership roles.
- 15 Praise God for the prayer partners and financial supporters of the Conference and College.
- 16 Pray for the new staff members.
- 17 Pray for Sergey and Lucy as they continue in Bible study in Russia.
- 18 Praise God for Olya Efina and the help she has provided to Tracy Savage.
- 19 Pray for your pastor as he presents God's message to you today.
- 20 Pray for your family and friends.
- 21 Pray for the teachers in your local church.
- 22 Praise God for the beauty of each season.
- 23 Pray for Steve and Pam Grant in the Middle East.
- 24 Pray for those who are seeking God's path for their lives.
- 25 Praise God for His Word to provide guidance for your life.
- 26 Pray for your church family and any guests who worship with you today.
- 27 Pray that you might be an example to an unbeliever.
- 28 Praise God for new believers in your church family.
- 29 Pray for the faith to stand firm even when tempted to stray.
- 30 Pray for the soon return of Christ and that you might be found faithful.



## Book Offered

S.O. Ross served the Church of God General Conference nineteen years from 1961-1980. During those years he developed a close and loving relationship with people through our churches. After serving the Conference, he "retired" to his old home in Litchfield, Minnesota where he became their pastor for the next ten years, before really retiring in 1990.

Over the last years of his life, S.O. Ross gave over 1100 brief messages on his radio program. When he knew that his ministry was ending, he wanted to leave something of his work for others. This small book contains 34 of those messages he selected to be his legacy.

The book may be ordered through the Church of God General Conference offices at Box 100,000, Morrow, GA 30260. A donation of \$4 is suggested. This will be added to the S.O. Ross Memorial Scholarship at Atlanta Bible College.

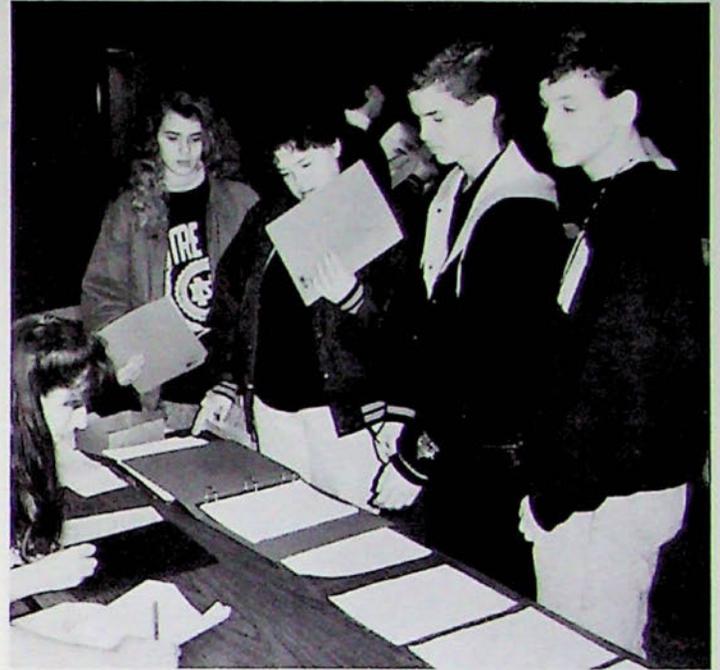
## TRUTHS FOR TODAY



BY PASTOR STAN ROSS



ABC is ready for the almost seventy students that attended this year.



Students register for the next morning's classes and tours.



Invitational students sit and listen intently to the instruction of Joe Martin.

## High School Invitational '93

The College hosted its largest College Invitational Conference ever. Approximately 62 students and 18 sponsors visited the campus on the weekend of March 5-7. We are grateful to sponsors who made it possible for students to come to the campus.

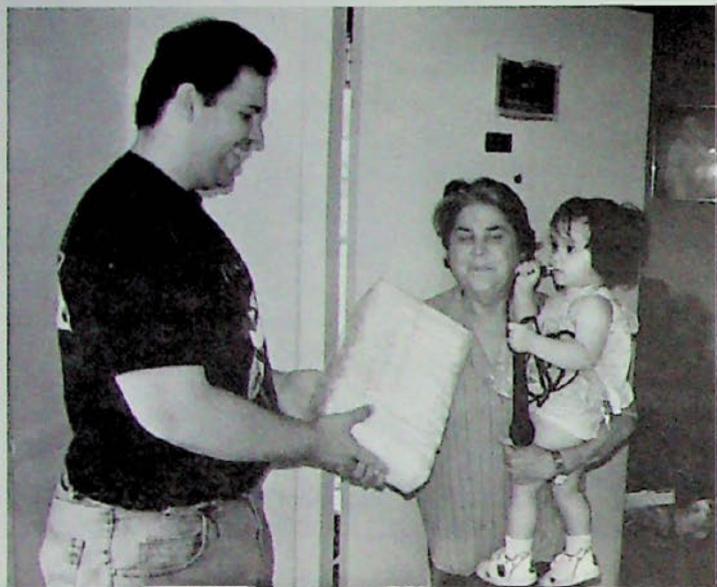
The students that attended Invitational seemed to really enjoy the time that they spent on campus. The students were able to hear the sounds of "Abe's Offspring", a band that originated here at the Bible College. They were also able to participate in a choir concert on Saturday evening.

Students also took part in an expedition to Cyclorama and an excursion to Stone Mountain.



The end of an eventful weekend is spending worship time with the members of New Friends Bible Church.

# Ministry Groups



## Fast Forward

The Fast Forward ministry program was in its second year and underwent some changes from its first year. In the fall we went to an Atlanta Braves game. We broke into small groups and went through a six week series of "On Sight" lessons where each group would go to a designated place to have their lesson. We also had fund-raisers such as car washes and egg sales to raise money for summer camps.

Mark Cain left the ranks at the end of winter quarter after more than 1 1/2 years of service to Fast Forward, and Seth Ross stepped down from the position of Youth Leader after running the program for two years. It is exciting to see younger students begin to fill positions of leadership. These include Ryan Smith, Susan Savage, Brad Gaspar, Julie Vance, Mark Tschann, and others who have helped. The program has a bright future.



## Calling and Visitation Ministry Group

Students and Staff have ministered to many individuals by calling in homes and in the hospital, as well as distributing leaflets in the neighborhood to invite people to church. Follow-up calls have been made on people who have received diapers. Individuals who telephone New Friends Bible Church to ask for assistance are visited and invited to church. Members of this ministry group have also provided transportation to church services and to grocery stores.

God has made us aware of many needy individuals. Our ministry group has worked to meet physical, spiritual, and emotional needs.



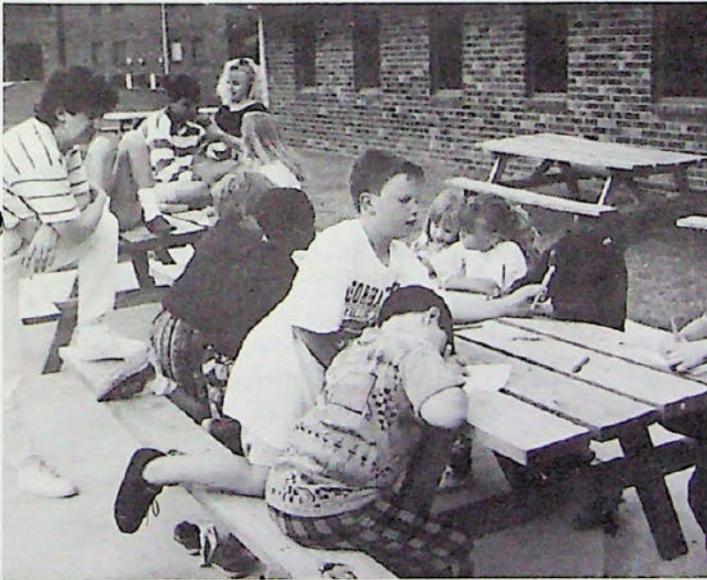
## C.M.G. - The Community Ministry Group

If grace is meeting a need with a gift, the C.M.G. attempts to find the needs of our immediate community and then show God's grace. We have done this in several ways. First, is the diaper ministry. Through ABC and New Friends Bible Church, we continue to service the community of young families who are in desperate need. A large diaper manufacturing company generously calls us on occasion with overruns and test packages. Second, we have a food pantry! Members of the C.M.G. built shelves to be prepared in meeting community food needs. On cold (30°!) nights in winter, C.M.G. members drive downtown to feed the homeless. One night about 50 people were fed! Finally, anything that a young college student can do to meet a need in our community we have tried or might try! We've done tutoring, given rides, baby-sat, etc.! All in the name of Jesus! Matthew 25:35, 36 is our guiding scripture. "You did it for me!"

## Prison and Nursing Home

The members of this ministry group have been visiting the area nursing home, Health Care of Lake City on Sunday afternoons, and Clayton County Detention Center on Mondays and Wednesdays. At the nursing home, individuals walk around the hallways and sing choruses in various rooms to some of the residents. At the prison, students and staff lead the men and women in their worship services. Each week, one student brings the inmates the message, which is very uplifting and encouraging to them.

Through this ministry, we have realized how vital this ministry is to the men and women who cannot get to a church for services, but who still wish to worship God.



## ABC/ New Friends Softball Ministry

New Friends Bible Church and Atlanta Bible College added a new twist to our list of activities by forming a Softball team which was involved in a local city league. We purposely chose not to be in a 'Church league' in order to be "Salt and Light" in our community. God has truly blessed us in this area. We were able to involve several men who did not previously attend New Friends Worship Services and God is allowing bridges to be built in this area.

Best of all, great fun was had by all, and we were one of the best teams in the league which was really surprising. Softball was a great opportunity to enjoy recreation, each other, and provided evangelistic outreach. We praise God for allowing us this enjoyment.



## Children's Ministry Group

The members of this ministry group have had the opportunity to reach out to the younger children of the community surrounding Atlanta Bible College. Involvement in this ministry group requires dedication from the student toward the development of the children of our community.

The Children's Ministry Group is responsible for the instruction of the younger aged children and nursery care during Wednesday and Sunday services. This group is also responsible for the Friday Afternoon Kid's Club that is held at New Friends Bible Church. The group plans a time of games, snacks, and Bible stories for those that attend.





SGA members (l to r): Julie Vance, Bradford Gaspar, President Seth Ross, Christy Ross, and Mark Tshaenn.

## SGA

The Student Government Association was busier this year than it has been the past several years, and much was accomplished over the year. A lot of activities and changes prompted by the SGA that had significant impact on the campus. The SGA made a large financial commitment to the student body by deciding to subsidize any apartment wanting to install a phone, and every apartment took advantage of the offer. Also, a candy machine was purchased for the downstairs lounge in the apartment building, and it has proven to be a valuable addition.

One chapel a month was given to the SGA as student forums,



Pastor Dave Riley presents God's Word to the students of Atlanta Bible College.

## New Friends Bible Church

A great year is behind us here at New Friends Bible Church of God. We've been used by God in awesome ways and we praise Him for counting us as part of His plan. As you are aware, New Friends is a relatively new church which meets at the Atlanta Bible College in which both students, staff families, and those from the local community worship together. This past year has been a year of "Vision" as we have been involved in "Reaching God's Lost People and Growing Up Into Christ With Them."

We praise God for the many baptisms throughout the year, the

and T-shirts were designed and printed for sale. The SGA also voted to give some financial assistance to an ABC student to go on a missions trip to the Philippine Islands in the summer. Through SGA committees, student activity fees were hard at work all year long.

This year a number of positive discussions have taken place between the SGA and the Staff, and staff/student relations have been very good. In fact, the college staff approached the SGA and asked for recommended changes for the Student Handbook which were typed up and presented to the staff by Seth Ross. Any changes that are accepted by the staff will not take effect until the fall of '94.



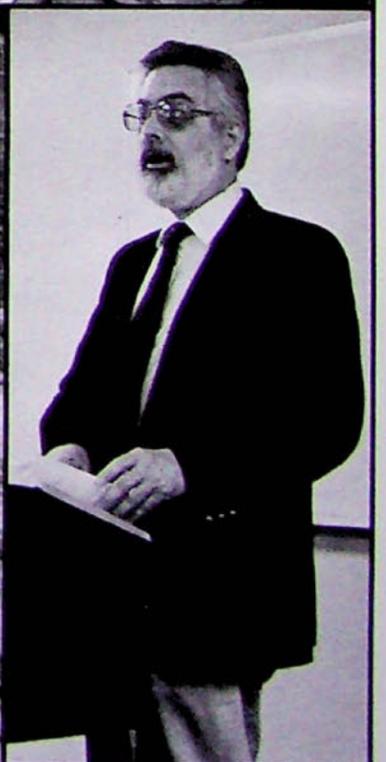
The third annual Steak Fry that concludes the school year was once again sponsored by the SGA Social Committee.

outreach opportunities that he has given to us, and the chance to grow closer together. We've experienced God's Spirit work through the Afterschool Children's Club, Prison Ministry, Fast Forward Youth Ministry, Community Outreach, and of course, weekly Worship to our Creator and His Son.

We look forward to the many opportunities God will give us in the future as well and we thank Him for them. New Friends Bible church exists to be a church where God's people are free to exalt Him, be involved in the use of individual Spiritual Giftedness, and of course, proclaim the truths of God's Word as we await the blessed return of Jesus Christ to this Earth and the establishment of God's Kingdom.



Seth Ross baptizes Norberto Esteves into the body of New Friends and Christ.



# Two Years in Atlanta

With the largest incoming group of students in years, one can see the effectiveness of the move to the Atlanta area. With students and faculty reaching out to the community, touching the lives of those surrounding us with the love of Jesus Christ, you can see our ability to effect people. Students now receive hands-on training in ministry that was never quite available in Oregon, Illinois.

Come and see what possibilities the Bible College could have in store for you. You never know what the future holds for Atlanta Bible College!



The ground breaking by Kent Ross and Dick Eldred at the present day site of Atlanta Bible College. The school has grown in such a short time.

## See How We Have Grown!

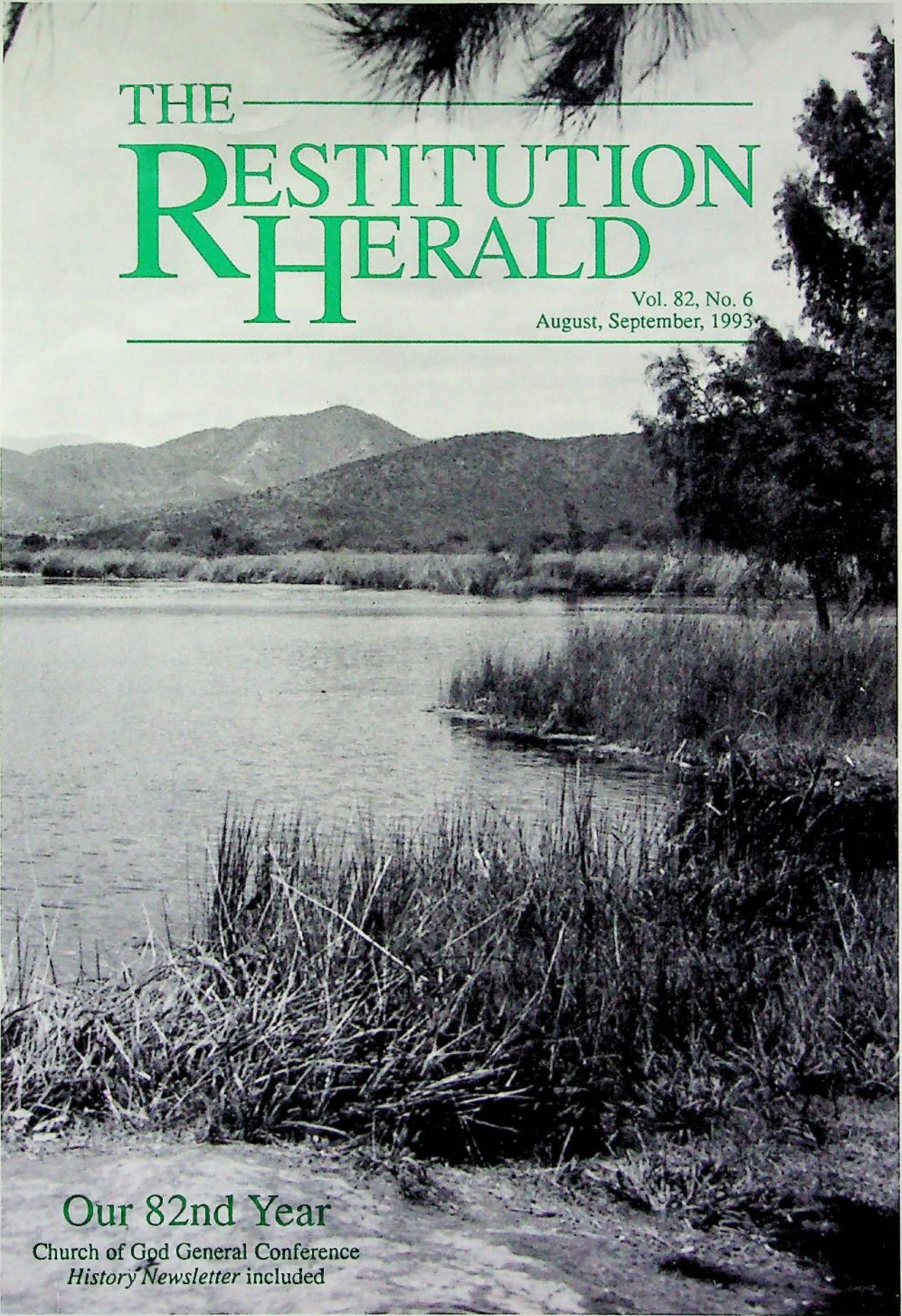


Atlanta Bible College  
Church of God General Conference  
P.O. Box 100,000  
Morrow, GA 30260

U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
PERMIT 21  
Nonprofit Organization

**Address Correction Requested**





THE  
RESTITUTION  
HERALD

Vol. 82, No. 6  
August, September, 1993

Our 82nd Year

Church of God General Conference  
*History Newsletter* included

# Grandparents Are Special



## THE EDITOR'S OPINION

**S**EPTEMBER 12 IS Grandparents' Day. How quickly the years roll by. It seems only yesterday you were young and carefree, living at home under the care of parents. Then came the college years or full-time work.

Next was marriage; then children. Before you knew it they were grown and settled in jobs. They are married and you are in-laws. One day you receive the news that you are about to be grandparents. Such are life's cycles. There is nothing new under the sun (Eccl. 1:9).

Some of the most important people in the family are grandparents. Unfortunately, in many segments of our Western societies, the art of grandparenting has been nearly lost. In our mobile society many young families move away to pursue careers far away from home.

The Bible teaches respect for age and its accompanying wisdom. "You shall give due honor and respect to the elderly, in the fear of God" (Lev. 19:32, LB).

In Japan there is much more respect for the aged than in our Western world. Young people are seen giving seats to the elderly on crowded subways and in crowded rooms. That kind of respect seems rare today in our country. With the declining respect for age comes an attendant lack of regard for experience and wisdom.

After the birth of a child a grandmother is absolutely essential. Somehow grandmothers know everything there is to know. New parents may read many books on having and caring for babies, which is great, but there is no substitute for experience. Experience is a great teacher. Grandparents can fulfill a much-needed role.

Probably many new fathers would have nearly starved if grandmothers had not come to take over the household after the new baby arrived. Never underestimate the influence of grandparents. Perhaps the importance of grandparents is best captured in Proverbs 17:6: "An old man's grandchildren are his crowning glory. A child's glory is his father" (LB). If Hilda and I had known how much fun grandchildren could be, we would have

had them first. Children and grandparents are natural allies.

In these later years of life, perhaps the greatest joy of all is seeing the grandchildren grow to maturity and take their place in our society and especially in the church. "When a good man dies, he leaves an inheritance to his grandchildren . . ." (Prov. 13:22, LB).

### What Is a Grandparent?

"A grandparent buys you gifts your mother says you don't need. A grandparent is the only babysitter who doesn't charge money to watch you. A grandfather can always be counted on to buy anything you are selling from flower seeds to ten chances on a pony. A grandmother will put a sweater on you when she is cold, feed you when she is hungry, and put you to bed when she is tired. A grandparent will believe you can read when you have the book upside down. But most of all, a grandparent loves you."—Erma Bombeck.

### What Are Grandparents?

"A grandmother is a lady who has no little children of her own. She likes other people's. A grandfather is a man grandmother."

"Grandparents don't have to do anything but be there. They are old so they shouldn't play hard or run. It is enough if they drive us to the market and have lots of dimes ready. When they take us for walks, they slow down past things like pretty leaves and caterpillars. They never say, 'Hurry up.'"

"Usually grandparents are fat, but not too fat to tie your shoes. They wear glasses and funny underwear. They can take their teeth and gums out. Grandparents don't have to be smart, only answer questions like, 'Why isn't God married?' and 'How come dogs chase cats?' When they read to us they don't skip, or mind if we ask for the same story over again."

"Everybody should try to have a grandparent, especially if you don't have television, because

*(Continued on page 4)*

# Contents

- 4 Drying Up of the Euphrates  
*James Mattison*
- 5 Transformed by the Renewing of Your Mind  
*Richard Alcumbrack*
- 7 A Bad Rap Why Christians Aren't Absolutists  
*Chuck Colson*
- 8 God's People  
*Francis Burnett*
- 13 Who Me? "The Path Peter Took"  
*David Riley*
- 14 "Ye Editor" "Retires" Again  
*Hollis Partlowe*
- 15 Just for the Record  
*Hollis Partlowe*
- 17 Back to the Future: "this Generation"  
*Michael P. Brown*

- 18 Adorning the Doctrine  
*William Wachtel*
- 19 Self-Esteem: Being the Person God Intended  
*Aaron Wells*
- 22 Jeremiah, The Weeping Prophet  
*David W. Cheatwood*
- 24 "The Courage to Change"  
*Thomas R. Schmitt*
- 26 Tell Me Again  
*Susan Lapp*
- 29 They Will Say That You Are Mad  
*Allon Maxwell*

## FEATURES

2 EDITOR'S OPINION

21 ESPECIALLY FOR THE PASTOR'S WIFE

THE  
**RESTITUTION  
HERALD**  
Vol. 82, No. 6  
August, September, 1993

Photograph on cover by  
Stephen Myers, Oregon, IL.

THE RESTITUTION HERALD is owned and published by the Church of God General Conference, a non-profit Christian corporation located at 5823 Trammell Road, P.O. Box 100,000, Morrow, GA 30260. THE HERALD is mailed six times a year.

THE RESTITUTION HERALD advocates: the oneness of God (1 Cor. 8:6); the Holy Spirit is God's power (Acts 1:8); Jesus Christ is God's only begotten Son (Matt. 16:16), and is our Mediator (1 Tim. 2:5); the Bible is the inspired Word of God (2 Tim. 3:16); the mortality of man (Job 4:17; Psa. 146:4); the near return of Christ (Acts 1:11), and life only through him (Col. 3:3); the literal resurrection of the dead (John 5:28); the immortalization of those in Christ (1 Cor. 15:53, 54); the destruction of the wicked (Rev. 21:8); the final restoration of Israel as the Kingdom of God under the kingship of Christ (Luke 1:32), the church to be joint heirs with him (Rom. 8:17), and Israel to be made head over Gentile nations (Isa. 60:1-3); the "restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began" (Acts 3:21). It also firmly advocates repentance and immersion in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38), and a consecrated life as essential to salvation.

Editor: Hollis Partlowe  
Associate Editor: Gordon Landry  
Make-up Editor: Christopher Seiders  
Typesetter: Becky Hall  
Proofreader: Barbara Landry  
Contributing Editors: Richard Alcumbrack,  
Susan Lapp, Dr. Alva G. Huffer,  
Delbert Jones, Paula Kirkpatrick,  
Gordon Landry  
Mailing and Subscriptions: Becky Hall, Terri  
Tschaeann, Judy Myers, Harry McMinn

Address all correspondence to: THE RESTITUTION HERALD  
P.O. Box 100,000  
Morrow, GA 30260

## SUBSCRIPTIONS

One Year, \$12  
Two Years, \$21  
Three years, \$30

Most subscriptions begin with the February or August issue. Readers may begin full-year subscriptions at any time. Use the form on page 32 when corresponding concerning your subscription.

they are the only grown-ups who have time.”—*Selected.*

“And the things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, these entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also” (2 Tim. 2:2, NASB). This clear admonition from Paul the apostle to Timothy is certainly applicable to grandparents. Do your children and grandchildren know Jesus Christ in a personal way? Let’s teach our families well in word and in deed that we may all inherit eternal life in the age to come. Remember our mission is to teach others to teach others to teach others.

“Older men are to be temperate, dignified, sensible, sound in faith, in love, in perseverance” (Titus 2:2, NASB). Observe that this verse is focused on “older men” and many of them no doubt were grandfathers.

Verses 3 and 4 address older women. “Older women likewise are to be reverent in their behavior, not malicious gossips, nor enslaved to much wine, teaching what is good; that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children.” At first glance that may not seem earthshaking in importance, but if you take time to observe our hectic modern society, you will find those are some of the very qualities most lacking.

Young men often don’t know how to be loving, understanding husbands and how to exert

gentle leadership in the home. Young women often don’t know how to be properly motivated wives and mothers. Grandparents have much to contribute to the family structure and even the moral fiber of a nation. We’d do well to turn our attention and respect to them. In fact, all the adults in the church should be involved in teaching and directing the younger ones—modeling the Christian life before them.

Ideally grandparents should never have the primary responsibility for rearing their grandchildren. God gave that to parents, but grandparents can reinforce what parents do. Grandparents are important people! ❦



Pictured above are Brian (7 1/2) and Kimberly (5) Hall of Oregon, Illinois, your editor’s two grandchildren.

---

# Drying Up of the Euphrates

by Pastor James Mattison  
Pelzer, SC

“**T**he sixth angel poured out his bowl upon the great river, the Euphrates; and its water was dried up, that the way might be prepared for the kings from the east” (Rev. 16:12, NASB).

The 1,460-mile-long Euphrates River begins in Turkey and flows through Turkey, Syria, and Iraq into the Persian Gulf. In January, 1990, Turkish President Turgut Ozal, in a ceremony attended by

10,000 people, stood on the bank of the Euphrates, and with the push of a button, diverted the waters of the Euphrates into the newly built giant Ataturk Dam. The Turkish irrigation project, when finished, will have 15 dams and 18 hydroelectric power plants. Then Turkey will have a stranglehold on the Euphrates River, which, like the Nile, is the lifeblood of that entire desert region. (The Tigris and Euphrates join in Iraq about 90 miles from the Persian Gulf.)

Ozal promised Syria and Iraq: "Turkey will never use the waters of the Euphrates as a threat. . . . This was a technical necessity, but we have taken all possible care not to cause any damage to our neighbors."

Turkey, Syria, and Iraq use the waters of the Euphrates for irrigation of crops. All three countries have drawn up estimates of how much water they will need: Turkey planning on 27 billion cubic meters; Syria, 13.4 billion; and Iraq 18 billion, totaling 58 billion cubic meters. However, the Euphrates only flows 32 billion cubic meters per year. The planned usage is impossible. The Tigris supplies 47 billion cubic meters of which Iraq is using 32 billion cubic meters.

King Hussein of Jordan recently (1990) predicted that the next Middle East war

would be fought over access to water. (All this information taken from The Greenville, SC News, January 14, 1990, and Present Day Events, Australia.)

Thus it is very possible that the entire water supply of the Euphrates River can be diverted from the river bed into dams and irrigation canals, and not flow at all.

It is estimated that within less than 30 years (by 2020), the population of the two-river basin will double from the present 88,000,000 to over 175,000,000. If this happens, the need for water to grow food will become even more pressing. Perhaps as Hussein says, water will be a major factor in last-day events. However, the Bible predicts that the lack of water in the Euphrates will serve the purpose of God to allow huge numbers of men, perhaps 200,000,000, to pour into Israel from

the east for the Judgment of God.

Revelation 9:13-16 speaks about the loosing of the four angels bound in the Euphrates that are prepared for the slaying of two hundred thousand thousand (200 million) men.

This reminds us of what Jeremiah said: "The slain of the LORD shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth" (25:33). However, Christians will be saved from that wrath. As Paul said, "God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thes. 5:9).

✠

---

Editor's Note: This article is an excerpt from Pastor Mattison's book on prophecy which he is currently republishing.

# Transformed by the Renewing of Your Mind

by Pastor Richard Alcumbrack  
Macomb, IL

(Part Two of  
Two)

**G**OD INTENDS FOR EVERY Christian to be transformed by the renewing of their minds. In this article we are concluding our examination of exactly how the process of renewal transpires in the mind of the believer.

In our first article we set forth how the Christian life is a *process of transformation*. Even the most miraculous conversions do not rule out the progressive nature of Christian transformation. "Attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ" (Eph. 4:13) is a lifetime project of maturation. This process involves transformation of our minds from sinful to spiritual. Becoming Christlike does not happen overnight, it involves

deep-rooted patterns of thinking, a well-cultivated way of looking at things, and dealing with situations around us. It involves characteristics deep within our personalities. There will be many immediate changes to be sure, but the continuing work of God's Spirit within us will bring about transformation as even our "inner man" becomes Christlike.

## Just Step Out and Walk the Aisle

According to Romans 12:2 this transformation is accomplished by the renewing of the mind of the believer. In this article we will attempt to be extremely practical in our discussion of the renewing of our minds. It is my belief that some immature Christians have fallen away from the faith

because they were under the impression that the change in their lives would be total, instantaneous, and complete. Thus they were not prepared for the struggle with old habits and patterns of decision-making, much less to do "spiritual battle." Surely many are misled into thinking that the victory is ours when we walk the aisle.

What happens when a person accepts the Lord as his or her Savior? What lies at the heart of a genuine conversion? Surely God's Spirit is at work, calling and convicting. Surely there is the new "spiritual birth" that takes place as a person places his faith in Jesus Christ, repents of his sins, and is baptized. According to John 1:13 we are born into God's family as an act of God. Apart from God's active involvement, no person could be saved, for it is God who forgives our sins and gives the Holy Spirit.

But what exactly is it that a person can do to trigger this active response by the Lord God? Of course, it is that a person places his faith in Jesus Christ. And from where does our faith arise? Although we often speak of receiving Jesus Christ "into our hearts," faith is actually an activity of the believer's mind. It is purely and simply a decision to believe God, to act according to the gospel.

### **Put Your Hand on the Television Set, and Pray With Me . . .**

Sometimes this singular act of the mind is separated from all other decisions as the way to be saved. We've all heard preachers say, "All you have to do is believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved." Faith in Jesus Christ is an action of the mind which cannot stand alone. If we truly believe that Jesus died for our sins, we must also believe that we are sinners, and stand in need of forgiveness. We recognize that we are spiritually dead apart from Christ, separated by our sins. Faith in Christ must issue into action, for the first converts in Jerusalem believed, but then asked, "What shall we *do*?" Peter told them to repent (of their sins) and be baptized. Faith in Christ necessarily involves, then, a decision to change our lives, to follow the teachings of Jesus

Christ rather than following our old way of life.

Christian baptism underscores this pivotal truth: "We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. . . . For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin. . . . In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 6:4, 6, 11). Any responsible presentation of the gospel informs the prospective convert that the decision to accept Christ is a decision to change our way of life.

The decision to place our faith in Jesus Christ is therefore a simple, yet profound decision. It is the first step in establishing a new way of life. A pattern of thinking and decision-making developed over the course of the person's life has been interrupted, and hopefully broken. A decision has been reached which will form the basis of all future decisions. The convert has embarked on a new journey involving a new way of thinking and a new perspective. Jesus said, "No man can serve two masters," and the new believer has just chosen a new Master. Just as it was not the easy choice to choose the new Master, it will not be the easy choice to remain loyal to the new Master. As a strong undertow pulls the swimmer underwater, the old patterns of thinking are entirely capable of drowning the new believer. Hence it is vital to . . .

### **Break Out of the Old Ruts**

If you've ever driven in frozen snow or mud you know about the perils of driving in ruts. Ruts are formed in the snow or mud by vehicles traveling over the same path, and it can become difficult to break out of those ruts. Sinful thought patterns are much like those ruts on an old country road. When we follow the same pattern of thinking the outcome will be the same—sin. The more we repeat the same thoughts and actions, the more engrained our behavior becomes. Accepting Jesus Christ

is the decision to break out of the old ruts and patterns of thinking and behavior.

### **The Battle for Our Thoughts**

In James 1:14, 15 we find the pattern of thinking that leads to sin. Sinful actions and activities begin as thoughts are processed in our minds. To break out of the ruts of sin there must be a transformation that takes place in our minds. The transformation begins with the decision to believe in Jesus Christ, but it continues as we learn to believe in Jesus in all situations. Let's look at the pattern of thinking that leads to sin:

"Each man is tempted." Temptation is a fact of life. There is no way to avoid all temptation. A monk living in a monastery may not have to deal with certain temptations, yet there will be others he will face because of his environment. Jesus recognized that His followers would not be delivered from this world of sin, and He prayed, "My prayer is not that you would take them out of the world but that you would protect them from the evil one" (John 17:15). It is wise to avoid what temptations we can, but it is impossible to avoid all temptation. We need to accept the fact that temptation is a part of the struggle with sin we will always have to face. Temptation did not end for Jesus following the episode with satan in the wilderness. Temptations were present every step of the way, yet even in the garden His prayer was, "Not my will, but thine be done."

"He is dragged away and enticed." James makes it clear that it is not God who tempts us with sin. In fact it is not even the object itself which tempts us. James says it is our own evil desires that drag us away and entice us. In other words, we get stuck in those old ruts, patterns of thinking, and we find it hard to break free. A decision to allow Jesus Christ to be the Lord of our life includes allowing Him to have control of the activities of our minds, and this must be an urgent, continual prayer of the believer. If the new Christian comes to church regularly, reads his Bible, and prays, all appears to be fine outwardly. But Jesus wants to go to work on our

desires and motives and attitudes, for sin springs from deep within our minds. Jesus said, "A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit" (Matt. 7:18).

Let us illustrate how a person is "drawn away and enticed" by his own evil thoughts. Let's say a young boy is in a store and his mother allows him to walk through the toy department. He walks down an aisle where he sees a display of small cars. He looks through the card and finds one he would love to add to his collection. But when he looks at the price tag he realizes he doesn't have enough money to purchase it. The boy realizes it is small and he could probably stuff it in his pocket without being caught, but he quickly decides against stealing it. So he sets out to find his mother to ask if she will buy the car for him.

Later another boy is looking at the same display of small cars. He knows he doesn't have the money to pay for the one he wants, but he realizes it is small enough to put in his coat pocket. He thinks about how nice it would be to have this car, and how much fun he would have with it. He thinks about showing it off at school. He may think about where he could hide it at home, and how he could get out of the

store without being caught. This young boy is being drawn away and enticed by his own thoughts. It is the pattern of his thoughts that is enslaving him.

"After desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin." The small car had no power over this young boy's actions. But the power of his thoughts did. Our thought patterns can become just like deep ruts. They will always lead us down the same road unless we take deliberate action to change our course. Yielding our thoughts to Jesus Christ is just the action we need to take. These old patterns will not change overnight. But we need to understand that they can change in time. Jesus has broken the power of sin, and if we will allow Him to be Lord of our thoughts, He'll smooth out the ruts.

#### Winning the Battle

During the stages of temptation there is always time to stop and think. Eve had time to stop and consider the commandment of the Lord. The young boy in our earlier illustration had time to think about the command of God, "Thou shalt not steal." There is always time to stop and think about the choice being made. A good question to get a new believer out of the old rut is, "What would Jesus do if He

were in my place?"

Avoid situations of known temptation. We cannot avoid all temptation, but we can usually avoid areas of weakness, and if you're serious about living for Jesus you will do just that. I know of a man who made a vow that he would not enter a video rental store because of the temptation to rent movies he knew he shouldn't be watching. Avoiding the video store saved him from many needless temptations. It was a way to break out of a sinful rut. Are there temptations that you need to avoid? Too often Christians play with temptation as if it were a game. If it is a game, it is a deadly game: "Sin, when it is fullgrown gives birth to death" (Jas. 1:15).

Finally, memorize Scripture relating to your areas of weakness. Read the Word of God, searching for scriptures that deal with your area of weakness. It won't be hard to find verses that deal with it specifically. Repeat the scripture every morning, and every hour on the hour. Repeat it whenever you are being tempted, for as you repeat it, God's Word is speaking to you. Of course, the decision will still be yours. For those who are serious about living for Christ, the answer lies in being transformed . . . by the renewing of your mind. ✠

---

# A Bad Rap

## Why Christians Aren't Absolutists

by Chuck Colson

There's a world of difference between absolutes and absolutism.

**I**N THIS PAST PRESIDENTIAL campaign, evangelicals took a bad rap—and it's time to set the record straight.

I heard it when a friend told me, "I hope Bill Clinton wins. Then you people in the Religious Right will get what's coming to you, for trying to impose your values on everyone else!"

We heard the same sneering tone every time

the media made bogeymen out of Pat Robertson and Pat Buchanan. They've captured the Republican party for the religious right, we were told. George Bush was just a puppet of Christian fundamentalists, we were warned.

The media was playing on a well-established fear in America. A Gallup poll found that 50 percent of Americans are worried about fundamentalism. What worries them is that fundamen-

talists actually believe in moral absolutes. Why does that send a chill down people's backs? Because they have confused belief in absolutes with absolutism—a rigid mentality that is inflexible, irrational, and hostile.

But there's a world of difference between absolutes and absolutism.

This is a critical point for us to grasp. You see, every time you tack "ism" onto a term, you change its meaning. Think of the word *individual*—a good word, suggesting individual dignity and worth. But *individualism* denotes something altogether different—an egoistic mentality that puts individual interests above everything else.

Think of some other examples: There's a huge difference between material and materialism, between human and humanism, between feminine and feminism.

So Christians ought to boldly maintain the reality of absolutes. But that doesn't

mean we are absolutist in our mentality.

A belief in absolutes simply means we believe there is a created order; that there are virtues—like courage, fortitude, and patience—which are morally obligatory; that there are normative patterns for marriage, business, and government.

In short, we believe that there are laws for human behavior just as there are laws for the physical world.

Believing these things doesn't make you an absolutist any more than believing in gravity does. And if I try to persuade you of a moral law, I'm not "imposing my views" any more than if I teach you the effects of gravity.

Because people fail to understand these things, Christians are given a bad rap in today's political climate. Every time we raise a moral issue in the public arena, we are slapped down, scolded for being bigots, and accused of imposing our values.

Maybe it's time to take our neighbors

one by one and explain what values are in the first place. Values aren't based on private convictions which we try to impose on our fellow citizens. Values are based on objective truths about the created order, and we search them out the same way we search out scientific laws.

So next time someone accuses you of being an absolutist, explain the difference between absolutes and absolutism. You may even want to call in for a transcript of this commentary to help you make your case.

If you demonstrate a loving and patient attitude while you're talking, you will prove by your own action that believing in absolutes *doesn't* make you an absolutist.

Copied from *Break Point*, Prison Fellowship, November 6, 1992. Used with permission. PH

# God's People

by Pastor Francis Burnett  
Belle Plaine, IA

(Part Three  
of Three)

## UNDERSTANDING THE APOSTLE PAUL

It is important to take note that Paul divided the persons of the world into three divisions: the Jews, Gentiles, and the Church of God (1 Cor. 10:32). Paul was born a Jew, actually an Israelite in the full meaning of the issue—and specifically of the tribe of Benjamin. "Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church . . ." (Phil. 3:5, 6a, KJV). Paul loved his heritage and was fighting for it when he was called of God for another purpose. "For you have heard of my previous way of life in Judaism, how intensely I persecuted the church of God and tried to destroy it. I was advancing in Judaism beyond many Jews of my own age and was extremely zealous for the traditions of my fathers" (Gal.

1:13, 14, NIV). That faith was shown when Paul stood before King Agrippa and said, "They have known me for a long time and can testify, if they are willing, that according to the strictest sect of our religion, I lived as a Pharisee. And now it is because of my hope in what God has promised our fathers that I am on trial today. This is the promise our twelve tribes are hoping to see fulfilled as they earnestly serve God day and night. O king, it is because of this hope that the Jews are accusing me. Why should any of you consider it incredible that God raises the dead?" (Acts 26:5-8, NIV.)

Because of such dedication, God knew the kind of evangelist that Paul would become in taking the gospel to literally thousands of persons. The story of Paul's conversion is found in Acts, chapter nine. During that event, Paul met a man named Ananias who acted as the mediator between God



and Paul. It was to Ananias that God said, "This man is my chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles and their kings and before the people of Israel" (Acts 9:15, NIV.)

Yet Paul could not forget his own people, the Jews. In his wonderful declaration to the brethren in Rome, he said, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ . . . to the Jew first, and also to the Gentiles" (Rom. 1:16). This is verified as one follows Paul's ministry written in the Book of Acts, which shows that wherever he traveled he went first to a synagogue. His yearning for his own people was so great that he declared, "I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart, for I could wish that I myself were cursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, those of my own race, the people of Israel" (Rom. 9:2-4a, NIV). And Paul showed that his "own people" did have an advantage over and above everyone else. "What advantage, then, is there in being a Jew, or what value is there in circumcision? Much in every way! First of all, they have been entrusted with the very words of God. What if some did not have faith? Will their lack of faith nullify God's faithfulness? Not at all!" (Rom. 3:1-4a, NIV.) This exaltation is further emphasized in these words: "They are Israelites: they were made God's sons; theirs is the splendour of the divine presence, theirs the covenants, the law, the temple worship, and the promises. Theirs are the patriarchs, and from them, in natural descent, sprang the Messiah. May God, supreme above all, be blessed for ever! Amen" (Rom. 9:4, 5, NEB).

We have presented all these texts to show Paul's deep feeling for his own people, the Israelites. Yes, Paul called them by that name. "Men of Israel, and ye that fear God, give audience" (Acts 13:16b). YET Paul well knew what his calling entailed. "But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God" (1 Cor. 1:23, 24). He did go primarily to the Gentiles. "For I will not dare to speak of any of those things

which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed, through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ" (Rom. 15:18, 19). His preaching declared, "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me . . ." (Gal. 2:20, NIV).

Paul was called to teach the Gentiles. This was clearly established at a meeting in Jerusalem of the apostles and elders, including Paul and Peter. "Simeon has told how it first happened that God took notice of the Gentiles, to choose from among them a people to bear his name;

---

## Israel, the nation, is separate from the church.

---

and this agrees with the words of the prophets, as Scripture has it . . . that they may seek the Lord—all the rest of mankind, and the Gentiles, whom I have claimed for my own. Thus says the Lord, whose work it is, made known long ago" (Acts 15:14-18, NEB). Here is one statement of God concerning those persons: "I revealed myself to those who did not ask for me; I was found by those who did not seek me. To a nation that did not call on my name . . ." (Isa. 65:1, NIV). Once converted to Jesus, Paul's greatest desire was that all should come to know Jesus as he did. His zeal for Jesus after conversion was equally as great as it was previously when he "persecuted the church of God." YET, "My heart's desire and prayer to God for the Israelites is that they may be saved" (Rom. 10:1, NIV). In reality, Paul well knew the teaching of the prophets that God had promised the restoration of Israel as a nation with Jesus as king. Remember the words of the angel to Mary: "He shall rule over the house of Jacob forever." The salvation that Paul desired for the Israelites was the "high calling of

God" in Christ Jesus. It was the same kind of salvation that Paul was assured of receiving.

In light of that which has been presented, let us examine some of the passages that seem to be difficult to interpret, that is, to separate the church from Israel. In Romans 2:28, 29, Paul writes, "A man is not a Jew if he is only one outwardly, nor is circumcision merely outward and physical" (NIV). Some try to show from this that the Jews just made an outward sign of their religion and therefore forfeited their right to God's promises for them. Let us be fair in looking at those words. Certainly, there were many in Israel that did not live "from the heart" but only "outwardly." How many professing Christians do you know that "make a show" of their Christianity? If Paul was here among our churches (congregations) today, he would be obliged to write in the same manner about present-day Christianity. Yes! Many Israelites were living to impress others, not God. They had not been faithful, as Abraham their forefather, and this is why God gave the nation a bill of separation. And He (God) even withdrew the Holy Spirit from the Temple, and therefore from Israel. He caused the nation to do without a king since the time of Zedekiah. Paul knew and desired that those of his time would give their hearts to Jesus as he had done.

Then in Romans 9:25-29, we have the reference from Old Testament prophets that has to do with salvation. "What if he did this to make the riches of his glory known to the objects of his mercy, whom he prepared in advance for glory—even us, whom he also called, not only from the Jews but also from the Gentiles?" (Rom. 9:23, 24, NIV.) One must examine the whole of chapter nine. It begins with "speaking the truth in Christ," having sorrow and anguish for "those of my own race, the people of Israel" (Rom. 9:1-4, NIV). In continuing, Paul wrote, "For not all who are descended from Israel are Israel. Nor . . . are they all Abraham's children. On the contrary, 'It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned.' . . . It is the children of the promise who are regarded as Abraham's offspring.

... 'I will have mercy on whom I have mercy.' ... It does not, therefore, depend on man's desire or effort, but on God's mercy." (Rom. 9:6-16, NIV.) Finally in chapter nine, Paul quotes from Isaiah 8:14 and 28:16 showing Israel's downfall.

The previous quotes from Hosea and Isaiah do not in any way verify that God is forsaking His promise to Israel pertaining to their redemption. Paul was showing that God "will have mercy on whom [He will] have mercy." Again, this is why Paul desired that Israel might "be saved" in Christ Jesus. It was far better than even what will be theirs at the time of regathering. We will further look at this in the conclusion.

One section of the Bible that has puzzled many is Romans eleven. We quote: "Chapters 9-11 are dispensational and explain to us God's dealings with 'Jew' and 'Gentile.'" "The Jew is for the time being set aside, 'until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in,' and during this period 'blindness [hardness] in part is happened to Israel'" (11:25).<sup>1</sup> Let us not get disturbed about the word "dispensation," for it is found in God's dealing with the people of the world since creation. Dispensation is defined as "theology, 'the divine ordering of the affairs of the world. An appointment or arrangement as by God'"<sup>2</sup> A good example of such "order" is found in 2 Peter 3, where the three AGES are described—before the flood, the age now, and the age to come. A major point in Romans eleven is in verse one: "Did God reject his people? By no means!" Paul continued to show God's mercy in writing, "So too, at the present time there is a remnant chosen by grace. . . . What then? What Israel sought so earnestly it did not obtain, but the elect did. The others were hardened, as it is written." (Rom. 11:1-8, NIV.)

It is important to recognize that Israel had been blind to the ways of God for hundreds of years. "Hear, you deaf; look, you blind, and see! Who is blind but my servant, and deaf like the messenger I send?" (Isa. 42:18, 19, NIV.) The answer as to whom the servant is can be found in these words: "But you, O Israel, my servant . . . I said, 'You are my servant'; I

have chosen you and have not rejected you" (Isa. 41:8, 9, NIV). Paul wrote to the Corinthians about Israel's lack of seeing and understanding. "But their minds were made dull, for to this day the same veil remains when the old covenant is read. It has not been removed, because only in Christ is it taken away. Even to this day when Moses is read, a veil covers their hearts. But whenever anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away" (2 Cor. 3:14-16, NIV). Previously we have two important points verified: (1) God did not reject His people, and (2) there is a remnant chosen by grace.

As we continue in Romans eleven, verses 11-13a, it is very evident just how much Israel was on the mind of Paul. "Again I ask, Did they stumble so as to fall beyond recovery? Not at all! . . . salvation has come to the Gentiles to make Israel envious. But if . . . their loss means riches

---

### The church cannot claim any part of Israel's promises from God.

---

for the Gentiles, how much greater riches will their fullness bring! I am talking to you Gentiles." Paul argued all the time for Israel, while realizing they were blind to accepting their Messiah.

But take note of these words: "If the part of the dough offered as firstfruits is holy, then the whole batch is holy; if the root is holy, so are the branches" (Rom. 11:16, NIV). The "dough" refers to offerings made in Israel's worship. "The first fruits of dough" and "the root" refer to Abraham and the other patriarchs, Isaac and Jacob. (See Paul's stress on "the fathers" in Romans 9:5 and 11:28.) "The whole lump and branches refer to God's people, Israel, who have come from the patriarchs. . . . This is a legal holiness for the group by virtue of their being God's chosen people."<sup>3</sup> Paul had already written that the "transgression" of Israel meant

"riches for the Gentiles." He then brought in the example of the olive tree, telling the brethren that the Gentiles were grafted into the natural tree and were known as a "wild olive shoot." He warned the Gentiles not to boast: "Do not boast over those branches. If you do, consider this: You do not support the root, but the root supports you. . . . But they were broken off because of unbelief, and you stand by faith. Do not be arrogant, but be afraid. . . . Continue in his kindness. Otherwise, you also will be cut off" (Rom. 11:18-22, NIV).

Since the root is Abraham and eventually Israel, we must understand that the promise for the church which came from Abraham is through Jesus the Christ. "The promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. The Scripture does not say 'and to seeds,' meaning many people, but 'and to your seed,' meaning one person, who is Christ" (Gal. 3:16, NIV). Again, we have to go back to Paul's declaration that "a remnant chosen by grace" had come out of the Israelites. So! We must apply the same to the Gentiles, now being grafted into the olive tree. It is only by the grace of God that salvation was made possible for the Gentiles. "For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men" (Titus 2:11, NIV). The Gentiles were brought into a relationship with God through Jesus Christ. God had promised Abraham that "all peoples on earth will be blessed through you" (Gen. 12:3b, NIV). Paul wrote in the Galatian letter, chapter three, that the covenant made with Abraham was given 430 years before the giving of the law. That covenant, wrote Paul, was made with "your seed, meaning one person, who is Christ." The church was not called out of Israel or any part of the covenant made with Abraham except the part where the world would be blessed. The church cannot claim any part of Israel's promises from God. In fact, the position for the church even now is much greater in that the church has been commissioned to teach people in all nations the way of salvation. And in the future the church's position will be much greater than that of Israel.

Now let's look at the thought of Ephesians 2:11, 12. Some use this section to claim a part in the promises to Israel.

Again, it is very important to know what the context presents. "All of us also lived among them [the world] at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath. But . . . God . . . made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved" (Eph. 2:3-5, NIV). Paul included his own life along with the Gentiles in relating to God's wrath. Paul continued, "Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth . . . remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ" (Eph. 2:11-13, NIV).

What Paul was telling the Gentiles who turned Christian was that before being in Jesus, "YOU HAD NOTHING!" "You were not citizens of Israel. And you had no part in the agreements with the promises that God made to his people. You had no hope, and you did not know God. Yes, at one time you were far away from God. But now in Christ Jesus you are brought near to God through the blood of Christ's death" (Eph. 2:12b, 13, New Century Translation). "You were foreigners. You could not be part of Israel. You were strangers to the agreements of God's promise. You had no hope. You were in the world without God. You used to be far away, but now, in Christ Jesus, you have come near. This was made possible by the blood of Christ" (The Simple English Bible).

Let me repeat, Paul was telling the Gentile Christians, *they had nothing!* The Gentiles were brought to a relationship with God by the "blood of Christ." Nothing more, nothing less! This in no way made them a citizen of Israel, nor did it depend on any part of the covenant that had been made by their God with Israel. The Gentiles had become a part of the "called out" ones in Christ Jesus. And through all of this they were "reconciled to God." Israel, the nation, is separate from the church. Yes, the Jews can accept

Jesus. When they do, they are no longer "Jew or Greek," but one in Jesus.

For many years and in many writings on the Bible subjects, the text found in Galatians 3:29 has been used to teach that once in Jesus Christ, we automatically are a part of Israel. This is not what the text teaches. To begin with, Abraham was not a part of Israel. He was the grandfather of Jacob whose name was changed to Israel. BUT Abraham is shown both in the Old and the New Testaments to be a man of faith. In fact, Galatians three begins by questioning the "foolish Galatians" for not believing. "Did you receive the Spirit by observing the law, or by believing what you heard?" (v. 2, NIV). "Consider

---

And in the future  
the church's  
position will be  
much greater  
than that of Israel.

---

Abraham: 'He believed God.' . . . Understand, then, that those who believe are children of Abraham. . . . So those who have faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith" (Gal. 3:6-9, NIV).

Paul continued presenting arguments between the law and righteousness by faith. He made this very outstanding observation, actually a verified fact. "He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit" (Gal. 3:14, NIV). This is explained in other words of Paul. "Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, 'Abba, Father.' . . . And since you are a son, God has made you also an heir" (Gal. 4:6, 7, NIV). "Only if the requirements of faith and baptism have been successfully met are we 'Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.' Inheritance in the Kingdom is strictly conditional."<sup>4</sup> There can be only one interpretation concerning Galatians 3:29. To be "Abraham's seed,

and heirs according to the promise" is to be faithful in Christ Jesus. The example of Abraham's faith was used to show that God is merciful. And remember, Paul wrote that we are "heirs of God, and co-heirs with Christ" (Rom. 8:17). "It would seem that such overwhelming testimony would convince every fair-minded reader that there is a glorious future restoration in store for Israel. Yet many say that we must interpret all this Scripture "spiritually," and they fritter away the point and the force of such explicit declarations in attempting to apply them to the persecuted Church. This is a very great error, and we believe it has arisen principally from a misunderstanding of Paul's arguments in his epistles. He does not confound Israel with the Church when he says, "They are not all Israel which are of Israel." Nor does he confound the Church with Israel when he makes us children of Abraham by faith, but he demonstrates that we all stand by faith alone. In 1 Corinthians 10:32 he makes a clear distinction between the Jews, the Gentiles, and the Church of God. There are special blessings for the Church, and special blessings for Israel."<sup>5</sup> Abraham will be in the Kingdom because of his faith. Faithful followers in Christ Jesus will be with Abraham and heirs according to the promise, the promise to be with Jesus as His bride and to reign with Him.

Finally, let's examine Galatians 6:16. This verse—and especially the last phrase—has been interpreted by several in very recent time as including the church. "And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God" (Gal. 6:26, KJV). It is very important when looking at this section of Galatians six, verses 12 through 17, to understand what Paul was teaching. The argument in the entire book of Galatians was in regard to serving the law (flesh as with converted Jews) or Jesus the Christ. It is this section that has the very famous statement made by Paul. "May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ" (6:14, NIV). Just before that statement, Paul had written, "Yet they want you to be circumcised that they may boast about your flesh" (Gal. 6:13b). If one interprets correctly other words of

Paul, the converted Jews who were demanding the converted Gentiles to be circumcised were not in the "body" of Jesus. "You who are trying to be justified by law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace" (Gal. 5:4, NIV).

Back to Galatians 6:15 and on. "Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything; what counts is a new creation." Then follows Paul's petition, perhaps a silent prayer in his heart, "Whoever they are who take this principle for their guide, peace and a mercy be upon them" (6:16, NEB). The "rule" (NIV and Emphatic Diaglott) or "principle" (NEB), was to have that dedicated life in Jesus. "Through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world." There was no other way; there was no other demand.

As we have witnessed by the Bible in this section, "understanding Paul," it was his earnest desire that his "own people" could be saved with the same hope he had. His "own people" were always on his mind. And time and again Paul would do or say things to include Israel. So it was as written in Galatians 6:16a. Paul desired "peace and mercy" upon any who would be "crucified to the world," and *boast* only in "the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." Then he included his "own people," "upon the whole Israel of God!" (NEB.) The Greek reads, "and on the Israel of the God" (Emphatic Diaglott). Nowhere in any of this writing by Paul, Galatians 6:12-17, do we find the converted Jews being the ones referred to, nor does this phrase, "the Israel of God," refer to the church. Remember the Hebrew meaning of Israel is "to rule with God" (Strong's Concordance), and to have that name change meant that "God espoused Israel with an indissoluble bond" (from Soncino Chumash). Again, may we be reminded that the church is built upon Jesus Christ. It is *His church*. God gave the members (those who believe on Jesus) to Him.

Since the 5th and 6th centuries A.D., there have been Christian leaders and teachers who have used various phrases to refer to the church. All claim to be based on Paul's words, "the Israel of God." The phrases are "new Israel," "spiri-

tual Israel," and the "true Israel." When these phrases are used (and the past teachings show this), the nation of Israel is either diminished in importance or excluded. How can a "people" chosen of God and even given a name which means "he will rule with God" be supplanted with the church which is the body of Jesus with Jesus as its head? Concerning the phrase "the Israel of God," the Interpreter's Bible states, "He [Paul] never called the Church *the Israel of God*, but used the word 'Israel' to designate the Jewish nation."<sup>6</sup> Charles L. Feinberg states, "To claim that all believers are the Israel of God is to fail to realize the meaning of Galatians 6:16 and to lose sight of the climax of Paul's argument throughout Galatians. It is asserted that the New Testament refers to the church as the new Israel. Neither Romans, 1 Peter, nor any other book of the New Testament teaches this view; it is read into the passages that are cited. Because Peter speaks of believers today as a spiritual house, the inference is not that we are the house of Israel."<sup>7</sup>

## SUMMARY

### GOD'S PEOPLE—THE CHOSEN NATION, ISRAEL

Special, Deuteronomy 7:6; anointed, Psalm 105:15; named after God, Daniel 9:19; all sin and iniquity to be forgiven, Jeremiah 31:34; Micah 7:19, 20; forgiveness will be through the Messiah, Zechariah 12:9 - 13:1; Hebrews 9:15; redeemed of God, Isaiah 62:1; God's firstborn and also son, Exodus 4:22; engraved in the palms of God's hands, Isaiah 49:16.

In restoration (Rom. 11:26), to be restored as a nation, Jeremiah 31:8-12; Ezekiel 36:21-38; 37; 39:23-29 and more; will be a light to the nations, Isaiah 60:3; ministers and teachers, Isaiah 61:6; 66:19; all nations will serve Israel, Isaiah 60:12; praise and fame in every land, Zephaniah 3:19, 20; God will dwell in Zion in the midst of Israel, Zechariah 8:3.

### GOD'S PEOPLE—THE "CALLED OUT," THE CHURCH

Built upon Jesus Christ, Matthew 16:18; given to Jesus, John 17:20, 24; the

body with many members, 1 Corinthians 10:17; Jesus is the "head" of the "body," Ephesians 4:15; called Christian, Acts 11:26; disciples, Acts 6:7; believers, 1 Timothy 4:12; brethren, 1 Thessalonians 2:14; saints, Ephesians 1:1; branch(es) in the vine, John 15:5; a building likened to the temple, 1 Corinthians 3:16, 17; Ephesians 2:19-22. The church is espoused to Jesus, 2 Corinthians 11:2; and will be the bride of Jesus, Revelation 19:7, 8.

## CONTRAST

Israel is God's wife, now separated but to be renewed again to Him as bride of youth, for "your Maker is your husband" (Isa. 54:5). The church is Jesus' "body" called to be saints, engaged to Jesus, will be married to Him (2 Cor. 11:2; Rev. 19:7, 8).

## THE GENTILES

The Gentiles in Paul's time and before were "without God and without hope." Today the Gentiles are still "without God and without hope" unless they are brought to Jesus. R+1

<sup>1</sup>Humphrey Milford, *The Companion Bible* (London: Oxford University Press, n.d.), p. 1661.

<sup>2</sup>C. L. Barnhart, ed., *The American College Dictionary* (New York: Random House, 1967), p. 349.

<sup>3</sup>A. Berkeley Mickelsen, *Romans* in C. F. Pfeiffer and Everett F. Harrison, eds., *The Wycliffe Bible Commentary* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1968), p. 1216.

<sup>4</sup>James Mattison, Lesson for Jan. 9, 1949 in *Truth Seeker's Quarterly Adult Lessons*, (Oregon, IL: Church of God General Conference, 1949), p. 10.

<sup>5</sup>W. E. B., *Jesus is Coming* (London: Fleming H. Revell, 1932), p. 172.

<sup>6</sup>*Interpreter's Bible on Corinthians, Galatians, and Ephesians, Vol. X* (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1939).

<sup>7</sup>Charles Lee Feinberg, *The Prophecy of Ezekiel: The Glory of the Lord* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1969), p. 235.

# WHO, ME?

## “The Path Peter Took”

by Pastor David Riley  
Morrow, Georgia



**Y**ES... I'M WRITING THIS for you! Take five minutes and sit down, relax, and read this short article. I know you're busy, but the Apostle Peter is our subject and he represents a great example for us to follow. Take a break from your busy schedule and have a look for a few moments.

"Who, me?" Peter seems to say these words loudly, especially when we read of his denial of the Lord shortly before His crucifixion. The accusation comes loud and clear, "You also are one of them," and Peter's response is covered in denial; "Man, I am not!"

I enjoy studying and learning about the Apostle Peter because he reminds me so much of myself—and most of us, for that matter. He reminds us that we have qualities that we really don't like. For instance, he is easily provoked to anger which becomes evident when he pulls out his sword and cuts off Malchus' ear just before Jesus is arrested in the garden (John 18:10). Remember, it is Peter whom Jesus has to rebuke when it is made evident that the Son of God is to suffer, be handed over to the authorities, and be killed to fulfill God's plan leading up to the resurrection (Matt. 16:21-23). Peter gives us a clear picture of most of us—especially when it comes to the loyalty that we are required to give to God and His Son Jesus.

That's what I want us to focus on for the next few moments. Jesus called Peter to loyalty and his response rang out, "Who, Me?" Even Peter, who was with Jesus day and night, was taught by the Master, and even had a chance to discourse with Him, had a weakness when it came to giving total loyalty. Even when Jesus told Peter plainly that he would deny Him and Peter said that he never

would, his loyalty faltered.

How about you? How is your loyalty to Jesus Christ? Have you taken the steps to turn your life completely over to Him? Who sits on the "throne" of your life? For Peter it was often himself, but the risen Savior changed all that. You see, for all of us today, Jesus has risen and it's time to commit wholeheartedly to Him right now.

After Peter denied Jesus for the third time, the Bible says in Luke 22:61 "Jesus turned and looked straight at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word the Lord had spoken to him: 'Before the rooster crows today, you will disown me three times.' " Wow! I read this and think to myself, "If looks could kill," but then I realize that Jesus' love for Peter far outweighed the anguish that came upon Jesus at the face of denial. Peter's loyalty or lack thereof is what we need to focus on for a few moments.

Loyalty is so important. "Who, Me?" Yes, you! Jesus Christ is calling you to a loyalty that is expected of all who follow Him. Webster defines loyalty as "unswerving allegiance" to someone or something, and for the Christian that loyalty is to the Almighty Father and His promised Savior, Jesus the Messiah. Jesus is calling each of us to improve our loyalty and I'd like to submit four characteristics of loyalty that we need in our lives:

### (1) Loyalty Ties People Together

For the most part, the New Testament portrays the disciples as a "called out" group of men who shared commonalities because of the one, Jesus Christ, to whom they had pledged their loyalty. Peter, the fisherman, who was loyal to his occupation, changed his focus and became loyal to the

greatest man who ever lived. Think of the loyalty that you show to your own families. You know the old practice that says, "I can pick on my little brother, but when the local bully begins picking on MY little brother then it's time for me to step in because nobody picks on my brother." As Christians we should show that same kind of loyalty to our brothers and sisters in Christ. The loyalty that ties us together as the body of Christ is something that should not be easily broken. Oftentimes it can be expensive because it requires unconditional love on each individual's part, but it is necessary.

Jesus tells us in the Gospel of John, "Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends" (15:13). The Son of God knew exactly what He was saying. Christ knew what was ahead for Him with regard to the suffering and death He would incur for the sake of mankind. He knew the true meaning of loyalty. It is because of His loyalty to us that we can have eternal life. Thus we are

to share that same kind of loyalty with each other in the family of God. Loyalty ties God's people together in unity, and we are scripturally commanded to strive for it.

### (2) Loyalty Requires That One Remain Steadfast to Those He Serves

All people have those around them whom they are serving in the name of Jesus Christ. Nearly all have people that they are "being Jesus to." Loyalty means that when you make a commitment to serve someone in the name of Jesus, you keep it. Here at New Friends Bible Church we believe that God has given us a vision to reach God's lost people and with them grow up in Christ. We are called to serve this community and those individuals who are perishing unless they hear the good news of the Kingdom of God and the saving power of Jesus Christ. What would happen if we gave up because we became tired or bored? What would happen if our loyalty began to fade? What would God

think if we decided we were too busy? I think we know the answer to that. Serving the lost is vital, but so is serving each other as the body of Christ. I get tired of hearing of individuals who are too busy and too preoccupied with other things to come to church on Sunday mornings. Other commitments come before being with the body of Christ, and in a sense what has happened is that their loyalty has become diluted. My friends, you can't have it both ways! Remember the words of the writer of Hebrews, "Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching." (Heb. 10:25.)

### (3) Loyalty Demands Trust and Speaks the Truth

As we think about Peter and Jesus' discourse with him in John 21:15-19, loyalty is being "demanded" from Peter by the Master. Over and over again, Jesus  
*(Continued on page 30)*

# "YE EDITOR" "RETIRES" AGAIN

**Y**OUR EDITOR IS RETIRING with this issue. I praise God for the many good scholars and faithful writers who have contributed to the pages of THE HERALD the last three years. Your many hours of work have enlightened, inspired, and encouraged many. I'm especially thankful to the Conference for the opportunity and privilege to serve as interim editor of THE HERALD. It has been a rich, satisfying, and rewarding experience. Feedback has been very positive.

Articles which I have on file scheduled for future issues will be forwarded to the next editor. KEEP READING THE HERALD!

After serving for 30 years as a full-time pastor (in three churches), three years as Editor of THE HERALD, and teaching Systematic Theology at the Bible college for 2 1/2 years, I'm going to slow down a bit.

However, I'm still available for pulpit supply, special meetings, prophetic conferences, seminars, etc. PH

Hollis Partlowe  
605 Webster  
Oregon, IL 610  
815-732-3725

---

# Just for the Record

by Hollis Partlowe

**P**ERHAPS NO SUBJECT of eschatology is more debatable than the great tribulation which Jesus spoke of in His Olivet discourse. Who is in that time period and who escapes it? Is this time period future or has it already been fulfilled? When we come to this issue, good students of the Word go off in all directions. It is not my purpose here to continue the debate, but to share with you some misinformation that continues to come across my desk concerning the pretribulational viewpoint which I prefer to call the two-phase coming of Christ.

It is alleged that Margaret MacDonald of Port Glasgow, Scotland, had a vision of believers being caught away. It is further alleged that she communicated this dream to Pastor Edward Irving and his congregation of the Catholic Apostolic Church in London around 1830. This information is said to have been transmitted to Mr. James Nelson Darby and through him to Dr. C. I. Scofield. In due course, it flooded the Christian community. It is assumed by some without investigating the facts that the pretribulational return of Christ originated in this way. Solid documentation refutes that claim.

First, it is inappropriate to use the voice of history to build or blast a doctrine. What really counts is what the Word of God teaches. Careful students would not follow the voice of Margaret MacDonald any more than they would the voice of Joseph Smith. No one can stand in a court of justice and convince the judge and jury that Margaret MacDonald influenced Darby or Scofield. Yet after nearly 165 years, the attempt is being waged to discredit the credibility of these men of God who are not here to defend themselves.

"It is unthinkable that Mr. Darby, who was so adamantly opposed to women teaching men, would follow the dream of a woman. It is equally inconsonant with reason to believe that a brilliant, godly man like Dr. Scofield, with his mind drilled in logic and skilled in weighing evidence as a former lawyer, and with his constant exhortation to rightly divide the Word of truth, would be influenced by a lone woman's visionary report, especially when he never so much as met her."<sup>1</sup>

"She [Margaret MacDonald] declares that the church will go through 'fiery trials' from the 'wicked' one who shall be revealed 'with all power and signs and lying wonders.' Then, even more clearly, she declares 'the trials of the church is from antichrist'—which to say the least is hardly a pretribulational concept."<sup>2</sup>

There is nothing in the Margaret MacDonald quotations to indicate that she was a pretribulationist. She did not distinguish between the rapture and Christ coming with the church, but rather divided the rapture itself into two or more parts based on spiritual readiness. "Margaret saw a series of raptures. . . . Indeed, she seemed to believe that the church had already entered the tribulation, a possibility strengthened by a statement published by Edward Irving, December, 1831, in *The Morning Watch*: 'We have, blessed be God, lived to see the commencement of the seventh vial, DURING THE OUTPOURING OF WHICH THE LORD WILL COME'" (R. A. Huebner, emphasis his. This is certainly not pretribulationism).<sup>3</sup>

The misinformation about Margaret MacDonald and Edward Irving has been built up by Dave MacPherson in his book *The Incredible Cover Up*. He was a newsman who made charges

against pretribulationism and AFTERWARD went to great lengths to find historic verification.

Walvoord makes at least five criticisms against MacPherson's arguments.<sup>4</sup> A reading of them is certainly recommended. It is significant that all the information MacPherson offers comes from ardent posttribs which is obviously one sided. He quotes P. T. Tregelles that the pretrib view originated in the year 1832 in Edward Irving's church. R. A. Huebner, carefully analyzing the various documents coming from Irving and MacDonald, demonstrates by long quotations that nine years before 1864 Tregelles had attributed the pretrib idea to Judaizers in an attempt to defame it and at that time apparently had not heard the idea that Irving was credited with originating a secret rapture. The more one delves into this period of church history, the more confusion one finds. It is significant that MacPherson made his charges long before he did his research. In MacPherson's quotations one searches in vain for any clear pretrib teaching. There is no proof that MacDonald or Irving originated the pretrib rapture teaching. "Under the circumstances," says Walvoord, "it would seem that common honesty would call for Dave MacPherson to write another book confessing that his entire point of view has no basis in fact as far as MacDonald and Irving are concerned."<sup>5</sup>

It appears evident that the pretrib concept arose as a refinement of the premillennial system. "During these past nineteen centuries there has been a progressive refinement of the details of Christian theology, but not until the last one hundred years has Eschatology come to the front to receive the major attention and scrutiny of foremost Bible scholars. It is not that the doctrine of Christ's coming or any of its special features is new or novel, but that the doctrine has finally come into the place of prominence it rightly deserves. With that prominence there has come a greater discernment of prophetic detail."<sup>6</sup>

Certainly the New Testament emphasizes the imminent return of Christ, but eschatology was not an issue until after

the reformation. Therefore it seems strange for anyone to claim that his view of the tribulation is newer or older than anyone else's. It seems evident that pretrib men in recent years started a major movement of prophetic study and the posttrib concept is a reaction to that movement. The obvious purpose, it seems, is to suggest that the pretrib view has a tendency to heresy and to try and smear what cannot be refuted with evidence.

"It is one thing to recognize that the Irvingites were vitally interested in prophecy; it is another thing to claim that they taught a pretribulation rapture; and it is quite a different thing to imply that Darby was influenced by them. . . ."

"The Irvingites obviously did not teach

"The misinformation concerning this whole issue becomes more evident when we learn that all of the Irvingites were historicists."

imminency, nor that the seventieth week of Daniel would intervene between the rapture and the Second Advent, doctrines that Darby clearly taught in the Powerscourt Conference of 1833. . . . There is no connection between Darby's pretribulationism and the Irvingite teaching."<sup>7</sup>

The misinformation concerning this whole issue becomes more evident when we learn that all of the Irvingites were historicists.

"As for the very young (15) and chronically ill Margaret MacDonald, we can only truthfully label her as a 'confused rapturist, with elements of partial rapturism, posttribulationism, perhaps midtribulationism, but never pretribulation-

ism. . . . These are the essential facts concerning the history of pretribulationism. Actually both systematic pre- and posttribulationism are recent developments, since the church did not study the field of eschatology until after the Reformation."<sup>8</sup>

I feel burdened to share this information with our readers to try and clear up the misconceptions that have been so widely distributed to the Christian community. I would highly recommend reading any or all of the books listed at the end of this article. These four authors have researched and documented their claims thoroughly. I have only scratched the surface of their research in this article.

Certainly all views should be represented fairly. Nothing is gained for one's viewpoint by inaccuracies and misinformation. To do so knowingly is dishonest and unbecoming a scholar. To speak without adequate research leads to nothing but confusion. ❧

<sup>1</sup>Logston, Franklin, *The Church Will Not Go Through the Tribulation*, pp. 14, 15, Regular Baptist Press, Box 95500, Schaumburg, IL 60195.

<sup>2</sup>Stanton, Gerald, *Kept From the Hour*, p. 328, Schoettle Publishing Co., Inc., P. O. Box 954, Miami Springs, FL 33166.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 329.

<sup>4</sup>Walvoord, John F., *The Blessed Hope and the Tribulation*, pp. 43-48, Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, MI 49506.

<sup>5</sup>Stanton, p. 330.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 223.

<sup>7</sup>Ryrie, Charles, *What You Should Know About the Rapture*, pp. 69, 70, Moody Press, Chicago.

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 72.



## "SYNOPTIC HISTORY"

Editorial by Jan Stilson

Recently Brian Atra, an Oregon Bible College graduate, told us about a wonderful course he had recently finished in seminary on the Synoptic Gospels—Matthew, Mark, and Luke. He was very appreciative of the similarities of the three parallel accounts of Christ's activities and Christ's words. Each Gospel writer offered a slightly unique slant or editorial bias to his record of Jesus' ministry, yet the selection of stories is basically the same.

This issue of the *History Newsletter* features two fine authors writing their memoirs covering a similar subject—Oregon Bible College and its influence in the 1940's and beyond. They have not conferred with each other, yet the reader will see parallelisms of subject matter, acquaintances, ministries, and memories. This gives the reader a unique insight into the happenings at OBC—Marge stressing life at college and Willis (Dad) stressing life outside the college walls, and the influence the students had upon him and the community which eventually led him to Christ.

We suggest you read these two short articles as one would read another's diary. They are like oral history in

journal form. They are primary historical writings, and perhaps historians in years to come may browse them to pick out names, dates, and events to document a research article bearing upon the major changes which developed within the General Conference during this time period. (It shifted to promotion of foreign missions around 1948, which has continued to this day.)

Oh, yes, the Blackhawk Statue by Lorado Taft has recently been renovated and looks good with a "face lift." The night Maxson's Manor burned, many Church of God members and Oregon residents—young and old—stood on the bluff across the river at Blackhawk's feet and watched a landmark crumble into cinders. Memories and mourning merged in that hour. Taft's other sculpture which Marge referred to is known officially as "The Funeral Procession." It is six hooded figures bearing a casket aloft their shoulders. That night, an era died and was carried off to be laid to rest. Don't mourn, however. The Church of God is alive and vigorous and Maxson's Manor is to be rebuilt!

Next Issue: Letters and photos only.

## Memories of OBC

By Marjorie Bolhous

It was the summer of 1943, and I had graduated from high school in May. I wanted to go to college. But where and how?

During July of that summer, I substituted for the Brown County Farm Bureau secretary in Mt. Sterling. That was exciting. It was fun to spend two whole weeks rooming in town.

So my thoughts turned to secretarial training. Or should I accept the scholarship to Western Illinois Teacher's College in Macomb? Nurse's training would be paid by the government as nurses were badly needed because of the war. Having persuaded the school authorities to let me take Latin during my last two years of school instead of earlier, I was ready!

The first part of August, I traveled with other members of the Ripley Church of God to Oregon and attended our church conference. My oldest brother Francis still lived in Oregon after finishing Bible College in June.

Other young people were there from churches throughout the country. Many of these I knew from having attended the six weeks' Summer Training School in 1942. Ed, Bob, Ellen, and Harold were planning to attend Oregon Bible College that fall.

Returning home, Mom, Dad, and I talked and talked. Oregon was a long way from my home and family. My brother Francis, his wife Iris, and their baby daughter Martha had moved into evangelism.

Finally, Dad decided it would be okay for me to go to

the Bible College in Oregon since Brother Kirkpatrick would be teaching shorthand for that year. (I had taken typing in high school.)

Of course, my parents wanted me to have the Bible instruction, too. They knew most of the people in charge of the Bible College. It was a question of how I would get enough money for the schooling. Also under consideration was the distance from home. There would be no way I would get back home before Christmas.

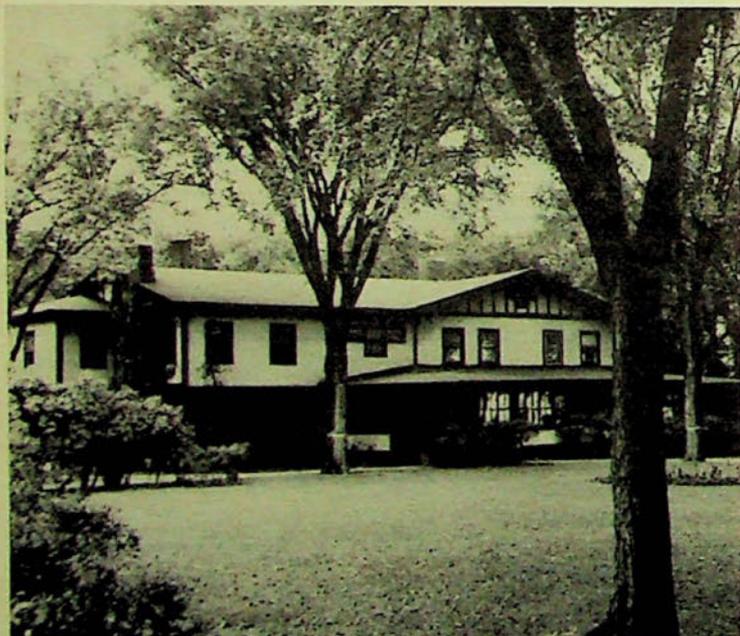
We got up early one morning around 4:00 o'clock early in September. Dad took me to catch the bus in Mt. Sterling at 5:00. I traveled from there to Peoria and after many hours of riding, waiting, and changes of buses, I arrived in Dixon. Another bus change took place there! I arrived in Oregon around 6:00 p.m. It was quite an adventure for a shy 18-year-old.

From the Oregon bus stop, Sinnissippi Hotel, I called the house at 403 South Third Street, which was being used as a dormitory. Even though it was the supper hour, Harold Doan came to pick me up. I'd met him in 1942 at Summer School. I really felt awkward arriving in their midst during a meal.

As I look back on this time, especially when my daughter Paula was grown, married at almost 19, and left home, how did my mother feel? I know she disliked my going so far away and was apprehensive about my leaving home. True, it was only two hundred miles, but it took the better part of a day to drive. This was war time and gas was rationed. Besides, Mom and Dad had neither the time nor the money to come visit me. They were hard-working farmers.

I suppose Mom just made herself accept the fact that she would not see me until Christmas. I did receive a letter each week and wrote in return. My sister Helen, 11, was still home, of course. Also, my brother Lozelle worked as a farm hand and still lived at home. My middle brother Harold was stationed overseas with the U.S. Army Air Force in Burma. Mom had great concern for his welfare.

College was a great experience for me. Yes, I learned



Maxson Manor, site of Oregon Bible College during the mid-1940's. —J. W. McLain photo.

shorthand and improved my Bible knowledge. Being with other Christian young people was the best. Friendships formed are still flourishing. My roommate Ellen lives in Virginia. We see each other at conferences. She is now a widow also: Her son, Dale Ramsey, is Music Director of the college. While in Oregon, their family was an important part of the Oregon Church.

In late October, 1943, the college moved one mile north of town into the mansion there. This was sold a few years later and is now Maxson Manor.\*

My Shorthand and English Instructor, Vivian Kirkpatrick, became a good friend. (He also became my daughter's father-in-law. Her mother-in-law Walcie and I talk on the phone almost every day, sharing about our mutual children and grandchildren.)

My roommates at the college were Ellen Ramsey from Grand Rapids, Michigan, and Vivian Johnson from Hector, Minnesota. (My daughter and her husband now pastor the church in Hector.) The Johnson sisters from Minneapolis were occupants of the other girls' room; also in the room was Lucille Krause from around Toledo, Ohio.

The boys were quartered in the east wing and used the big front stairway. We girls were relegated to the back stairs. The connecting door between the hallways was kept locked.

"Mom" Brewer, Dorm Mother, lived in the Master Bedroom, which was also between the girls and boys. A married couple had a room in the boys' section. Emory Macy was a student and his wife Mildred attended some classes. She helped "Mom" in whatever way she was needed. Their five-year-old daughter Joyce also lived there.

Two downstairs rooms at the college were converted into classrooms. The huge living room was our gathering place for devotional and social times. There was an unheated enclosed porch on the south side of the house. The big veranda on the east overlooked Rock River.

Alice Carpenter, Art Teacher, was such a dear lady. She took us along the banks of the river one day for sketching God's great outdoors. Her classes were interesting for all, even though most of us were not artistic. I remember I did present a chalk talk (with another student's help) to the Oregon Church of God Sunday School.

We had a great time at that beautiful old house. "Mom" Brewer was a wonderful Dorm Mother and a great cook. Students took turns doing dishes in the "butler's pantry." Gary France used to say, "You aren't a good dish dryer if you can't get off what the dish washer missed."

The big dining room held two huge tables. I enjoyed helping set the tables. We used real linen tablecloths and cloth napkins, all well-starched and ironed. Each person's napkin was marked with a spring clothespin with his or her name on it. Thus the napkins could be used for a week.

"Mom" made sure we used our manners. There was no rushing through a cafeteria line. Sunday dinner was served at 1 p.m. after everyone had returned from church. Of course, we all wore our "Sunday best."

"Sunny South," formally known as Ernest Barnum, hailed from Louisiana. He was music director and a great baritone singer.

\*Editor's Note: Tragically, Maxson Manor, former site of Oregon Bible College in the 1940's, burned to the ground in a fire of undetermined cause March 27, 1993.

One snowstorm, we had fun playing in the snow. I cherish pictures of the beautiful snow-laden trees and of students clowning around. Some students braved the cold and skated the ice on Rock River. One night three of us walked across the river on the ice and explored the Art Colony.

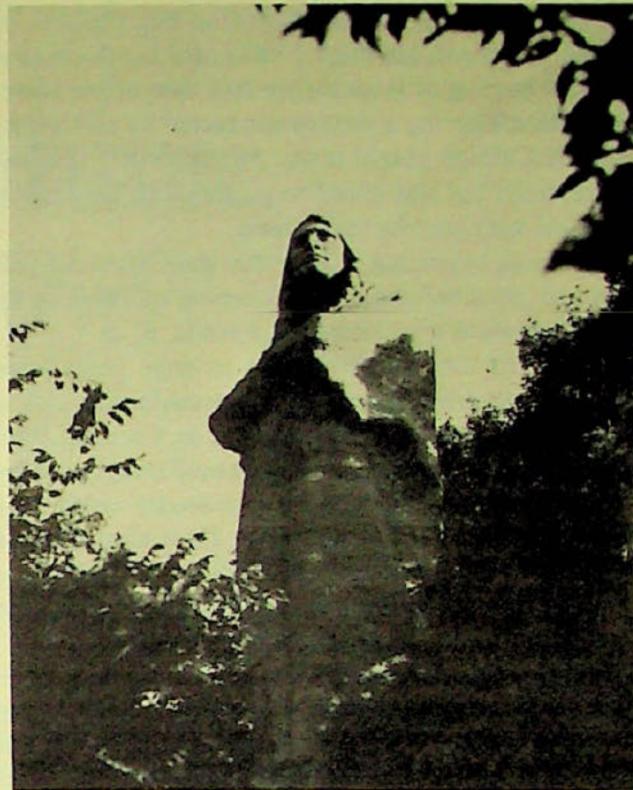
Springtime found some of us out in boats on the river. A friend, Tim, rowed me across the river one Sunday afternoon. We walked around the area of Blackhawk and the Art Colony. Tim took my picture seated on a statue called "The Muses." This statue still stands on the Lorado Taft Field Campus.

To earn money, I baby-sat for the Fearer children and cleaned house for Mrs. Weyrauch as well as other odd jobs.

I started working at Kable News in Mt. Morris in November. This was war time and help was hard to get. So the company sent a car down to the college to pick up three other girls and me to work during the afternoon.

Sometime in December, 1943, a young man started work at Kable News. He also was assigned the job of being our chauffeur. The other girls made me sit in the front seat. This young man later became my husband. But that's another story.

Close to fifty years have passed. Memories are even more precious than ever now that the Bible College has moved away from Oregon.



—J. W. McLain photo.

## How God Led Me to the Church of God

By Willis Turner

On September 25, 1939, having been a resident of Oregon, Illinois, for only a year and a half, I married Ida Mae Friemuth. Ida had lived in the Oregon area all her life. We moved into an apartment two houses south of the Oregon Church of God parsonage on North Third Street. After about a month we moved into a little house on North Sixth Street owned by the S. J. Lindsays while they went to Arizona for the winter. The little converted house was the former *Restitution* print shop. It had a cement block in the middle of the living room floor where a printing press had stood. It had no plumbing.

God was already setting a series of incidents to lead us into a long, happy, and fruitful time with God's people.

Early on I met Muriel Randall Hass, who was going to the Oregon Training School (later OBC) and was an employee in the organization in which I was also working. During this time, I worked part time at the Farm Bureau gasoline station. I met Otto Dick and Sidney Magaw, washed their windshields, and filled their cars with gas. There was something about these men that was different. I watched them carefully and with interest.

On August 1, 1941, I was hired by the County Farm

Bureau as manager of the county farm supply warehouse in Oregon. It was at that time I became aware of the young men who were attending the Bible College in Oregon. I learned that it was a part of the Church of God.

The Second World War was going on at this time, and it was commonly thought and expressed that some of these fellows were conscientious objectors, evading the army. I watched these young fellows closely.

On June 20, 1941, our daughter Janet (Stilson) was born to Ida and me. I had not been drafted yet. I was later drafted and rejected.

Since our warehouse handled large tonnages of feeds, fertilizers, and petroleum products, I often needed part-time help to unload trucks and box cars. The Bible College was a source of strong young men looking for part-time work. E. Milton Hall (who later became my pastor), Francis Burnett, E. Richard Smith, Gary France, and I'm sure others were now entering my life. Although they were young men then, there was an attitude of sobriety and purpose in their lives. I watched them and contemplated what was really happening in their lives.

I was raised a Methodist and my wife was raised

Lutheran. Neither of us was attending any church. We were not Christians, although I had heard the doctrine of the second coming of Jesus for the first time at age 16 at a Baptist Church during a service conducted by an Oglesby (IL) Bible College gospel team. At that time I accepted Jesus secretly, but was afraid to go forward. This failure haunted me with guilt for many years.

Now I was beginning to hear that the Church of God taught and preached the second coming of Jesus to the earth. So I listened with increasing interest.

During this time (possibly two to three years later) Myrle Claussen asked Ida and me if she could stop, pick up Janet, our little daughter, and take her to Vacation Bible School. God was still leading. Janet would bring home her handwork which Myrle had so ingeniously created for teaching her students. We would ask Janet what this was and with all the excitement of a little child, she would tell us these little Bible stories. From a little child we were learning Bible truths taught by the Church of God!

After the VBS was over, we thought it was important for our daughter to be in Sunday School because both of us had been in Sunday School every Sunday morning when we were at home as kids, but didn't think it important for us to go as adults. So each Sunday morning I'd take Janet to Sunday School and leave her, then go down to Doeden's until Sunday School was over. Then after a time I began to stay myself, but sat in the back pew.

Sister Leila Whitehead was the teacher, and what a woman of God she was! Ida didn't go yet, but after a while we began to attend as a family. We now had two children, Janet Ann and Gary. Gary is now pastor at Family Bible Fellowship in Rockford, IL, and Janet Stilson has been Minister of Music there the past two years."

Back to late 1940's or early 50's, Bro. Sidney Magaw was pastor at the Oregon Church of God, but his untimely death brought Bro. F. L. Austin as interim pastor. He was preaching when we first began to attend. I believe he was also an instructor at OBC. Soon after this Bro. J. R. LeCrone became the pastor. Bro. William Wachtel was a student at OBC. These two men came to our home to talk to us about the need to make a commitment to God by accepting His Son Jesus Christ.

On October 14, 1951, Ida and I made a decision to believe God and accepted His Son as our Savior. We were baptized that afternoon in the Rock River. This was 18 years after I first heard and believed!

Almost immediately I found myself fascinated with the concept of congregational church government—the idea that each Church of God chooses its own leadership, its own pastor. Other ideas intrigued us as well: a Conference of Churches doing things together that each one was not effective in doing alone; a Bible College training pastors and teachers; and a missions program reaching around the world.

I was first elected as a trustee in the Oregon Church and

with Bro. Paul Johnson's hand on my shoulder, I learned the discipline needed to attend to the duties set before me. He had a way of pointing a person in the right direction, it seemed.

At a later year, 1962, my company transferred me to Macomb, Illinois. We transferred our membership to the Macomb Church of God. While there we helped build the new church building. God blessed us during this experience. Three and a half years later we moved to Rockford, Illinois, in the spring of 1966. We attended Blessed Hope Bible Church and in the last two years have been attending the new Church of Loves Park/Rockford called Family Bible Fellowship.

I have been asked to write down the process that caused me to become committed from the beginning of my conversion, why I have been steadfast for these many (42) years, and involved at an early date. I have seen my entire family—my daughter and her husband and three children, our son, his wife and their four children, all accept Christ. Several are serving God diligently now.

The next year after my conversion I attended the General Conference that was then held at Oregon, Illinois, in connection with the Illinois State Conference. I was elected that year, I believe, to the then National Sunday School Board of the Church of God. Harold Doan was the Chairman of the Association. He also pastored a church in South Bend, Indiana, and broadcast a sermon each Sunday morning over a radio station in Chicago (WAIT). We listened to his messages regularly.

God blessed me during these years to have a job that gave me much freedom to be active in so many responsibilities in my church and conference. I served as Sunday School superintendent at the Oregon Church, as well as other offices, and was president of the Illinois State Conference following Bro. Johnson's many years of service.

At the first conference held away from Oregon, about 1954 or '55, at Quaker Haven Camp Grounds in Indiana, I was nominated, along with Bro. Clyde Randall, to be President of the General Conference. The responsibility fell to me and so for three years I worked on the Conference board. This was a spiritual mountain-top experience. I served with many of God's people: men and women who have been and still are wonderful friends to this day. Sr. Verna Thayer, Bro. Walter Wiggins, Sr. Leota Hanson, Bro. Jim Watkins, Bros. Otto Dick, Vernis Wolfe, Harvey Krogh, Jr., Srs. Leila Whitehead, Evelyn Austin, Bros. Ben Carpenter, Stanley Ross, Harold Doan—on and on; like the writer of the Hebrew letter, space and time defy my listing all the faithful witnesses I've been blessed to know. I expect to see all of them in the glorious Kingdom of God! What a day that will be!

To God be the glory, great things He has and is doing. How great it is to still be able, to some extent, serve God with so many beautiful people even to this day.

Even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly!

# Back to the Future: "This Generation"

by Michael P. Brown  
Columbia Station, OH

How moving is the thought that Jesus could very well appear in our generation!

**A**FTER LISTENING TO A COUPLE of sermons on the second coming of Christ recently, I began playing around with some numbers and came up with an intriguing discovery. I have always been curious about the meaning of Jesus' words in Matthew 24:34 where He predicted, "Verily I say unto you, *This generation* shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled." But sermons on Christ's return stimulated me to ask again: "Could this provide a mathematical clue to the time of Christ's return, perhaps even in my own lifetime?"

Indeed, Israel is a sign-nation or God's barometer concerning His plan for the Kingdom Age to come (Zech. 9:16; Isa. 11:10-12). Jesus uses the fig tree as a metaphor for Israel and the sign of His coming (Matt. 24:32-36; Mark 13:28; Luke 21:29), just as it's also frequently used in the Old Testament (Jer. 24; Joel 1:6, 7; Hos. 9:10). All the signs indicating Jesus' return (Matt. 24:3-31) are to be fulfilled when the fig tree puts forth its leaves—that is, during the generation when Israel is revitalized once again. Could that be the same generation which saw Israel's re-gathering as a nation in May, 1948?

Although it can be argued that "generation" (Greek, *genea*) is intended to mean nation or race, let's suppose it is specifically referring to a period of time (Deut. 32:7; Ex. 3:15; Psa. 102:24; Matt. 1:1, 17; Acts 13:36; Col. 1:26). My understanding of a Biblical generation of time is 20 to 40 years. If this is accurate, then consider how "generation" fits into the historical dates of Israel's rebirth from the time of the Zionist movement since 1897 to the present. Take a look at the following list of events in Israel's early modern

beginnings and see if a pattern can be found:

First Zionist Congress, Basel	1897
Balfour Declaration	1917
U.N. Partitions Palestine into Jewish/Arab States	1947
Jerusalem becomes Israel's possession (6-Day War)	1967

Although there are many important dates in modern Israel, the preceding list marks the milestones of Israel's prophetic role in the Scriptures as a sign of the times. The concept (Conception leading to birth pangs? See 1 Thes. 5:1-3) that formally established the aim of making Israel an independent state began in 1897. This encouraged fundraising organizations to finance the purchase of land in Palestine and underwrite the immigration of Jews. By the outbreak of World War I, thousands of Jews immigrated to the land, which led to the Balfour Declaration of November 2, 1917, when Britain announced its support and pledge to help establish a Jewish homeland. This significantly perpetuated Jewish population to rise by leaps and bounds (Movement within the mother's womb?), yet various restrictions closed much of the ancient homeland to the Jews. Finally, after World War II, the next major milestone occurred on November 29, 1947, when the United Nations voted to partition Palestine into a Jewish and an Arab state. This included the birth of Israel within six months.

Note, however, that Israel's birth was only beginning when it became an independent state in May, 1948. It started to emerge but certain territories were not yet inhabited, namely Jerusalem's Western Wall, the only remnant of the Second Temple, and the burial place of the

patriarchs in Hebron. And so, an integral portion of prophecy relating to Jerusalem was not fulfilled. (See Josh. 21:43-45; Obadiah 17-21; Dan. 11:31; Matt. 24:14, 15; 2 Thes. 2:3, 4.)

Then, the Six-Day War of June, 1967, culminated in the reunification of Jerusalem and the occupation by Israeli forces of the West Bank, Golan Heights, Gaza Strip, and Sinai Peninsula. But the key to prophecy, Jerusalem, helps unlock the mystery of "this generation" according to Scripture. (See Zech. 2.)

Jesus' lamentation over Jerusalem (Matt. 23:31-39) and discussion of the temple and His second coming in the very next chapter of Matthew (24:1-3) including "this generation" (v. 34) is intriguing in view of the fact that Jerusalem has been in Israel's possession since 1967. With this in mind, there appears to be some connection between that date and the generation Jesus was referring to in Matthew.

Now we come to a fascinating pattern revealed by the four dates: 1897, 1917, 1947, and 1967. First, each one ends in seven, understood as God's number. Second, simple arithmetic shows that between 1897 and 1967 there is a time

span of 70 years, a prophetically significant number such as the 70 Weeks in Daniel 9:24-27. Third, and most important in regard to "this generation," is the partitioning of Palestine into a Jewish homeland leading to Israel's birth and restoration.

Jesus said, "When ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors" (Matt. 24:33). Israel continues to be at the core of prophecy when "all these things" happen and this couldn't be any more true since its beginning birth in 1947. That year must have something to do with "this generation." If, for example, "this generation" is 20 to 40 years, then it's no coincidence that what took place between 1947 and 1967 amounts to 20 years!

There is just one problem, however, if we add 40 years to 1947. Jesus didn't come in 1987, did he? So, when Jesus said "this generation," did He really mean He would come by that period? Obviously not, if we believe in His literal, physical return (Matt. 24:30). But, what if Jesus wasn't really saying He would come *within* the 40 years of a generation but was actually predicting this would be the generation *born* during that pe-

riod from 1947 to 1987? This would make 1967, the year Israel took over complete possession of Jerusalem, as the focal point of the generation period.

Let's go a step further with this idea. Suppose we add the scriptural number, 40, to 1967, which comes to the year 2007. My reason for doing this is not because I assert, as some do, that "this generation" should begin at 1967, because I believe it really applies to 1947, as I've stated. My purpose for adding 40 to 1967 simply shows that those born 20 years before and after that important year will still be around, many in our prime, if Jesus were to come by 2007! Notice, there's that number seven again!

Am I setting the date of Jesus' return? Definitely not, for "of that day and hour no one knows" (Matt. 24:36). But when we go to the Scriptures we go back to the future prophecies which point us closer to the season of Christ's return. Jesus tells us to learn from the parable of the fig tree, Israel, by observing that summer is as close as the doors. How moving is the thought that Jesus could very well appear in our generation! R.H.

---

# Adorning the Doctrine

by Pastor William Wachtel, Wenatchee, WA

**D**OCTRINE—the teaching of Scripture—is vitally important! No Christian should ever underestimate its importance in any way. But it is not the only thing that is important, or the only thing that is crucial to salvation! The Apostle Paul calls upon believers to also "adorn the doctrine" (Titus 2:10). To adorn is to decorate, to make attractive, to make something look pleasing or desirable.

The doctrines of the gospel, as essential as they are, will not attract unbelievers if people who profess to follow those doctrines are living in a way that brings discredit on their church, on Christianity, or on themselves as individual believers. The attitudes we reveal, the words we

speak, and the actions we demonstrate all send a message to people around us. That message is one that portrays either Christlikeness or else typical human carnality, self-centeredness, impatience, and pride.

People are quick to read and judge what kind of "Christians" we are by what they see in the way we react to them and to others. They recognize whether we are "going out of our way" to be kind and generous to others, beyond the call of "duty," or whether we are grudging and closed-hearted in our dealings and human relationships. They can tell whether we are quick to gossip and tear down other people or whether we seem anxious always to evaluate others in the best light

possible. All these factors of personal conduct will certainly influence their decision whether to accept the claims we make for Christianity, or whether to reject them!

Some strongly doctrinal Christians, who pride themselves on their orthodoxy, present a tasteless and unpalatable kind of religion. They are not "seasoned with salt" (Col. 4:6; Luke 14:34, 35). They do not "adorn the doctrine" as they should with godly spirituality and lovingkindness. This can only bring reproach on the name of Christ and a bad reputation on the church that puts up with such members without seeking to correct and discipline them in accord with Scripture. R.H.

# Self-Esteem: Being the Person God Intended

by Aaron Wells  
Atlanta Bible College Student

**T**HE NEED FOR the development of a good self-image and of positive self-esteem has become an almost universally accepted truth among mental health professionals in the present age. It is believed that positive self-esteem is needed to stimulate us into healthy actions and achievements. In light of this belief it is interesting to note that one estimate suggests that 95 percent of the population tend to compare themselves unfavorably to others. (3, 313.) If this is the case, what impact should our Christian beliefs have on our self-esteem? Should our belief in the truth of God's Word give us a better self-image, or should our knowledge of our sinful nature leave us feeling worthless? This paper will take a look at some of the causes of low self-esteem and will try to put forth a biblical model of self-esteem in light of God's truth.

James Dobson, in his book entitled *"Hide or Seek,"* proposes that two of the main causes of low self-esteem in children are an overemphasis on beauty and intelligence. From the time we are born we are constantly being judged on these two criteria. It is not uncommon for a mother to be depressed shortly after the birth of her first child because a newborn baby tends to be homely. "She had secretly hoped to give birth to a grinning, winking, blinking, six-week-old Gerber baby, having four front teeth and rosy, pink cheeks." (5, 15.) A cute baby or child gets much more attention than one who is below average in looks or is deformed. When parents pray for a baby that is soon to be born they pray "that the baby will be normal—that is, 'average.' But from that moment on, average will not be good enough. Their child must excel." (5, 37.)

When children who are homely or are slow learners enter school, they are immediately ridiculed or laughed at by other children who are cruelly insensitive to their misfortunes. And because of our worship of beauty and intelligence, even those who are above average will often feel inadequate compared to an unrealistic ideal that is impossible to reach. We as parents must constantly be building our children up and showing them how special they are regardless of what the world thinks. Unfortunately many children grow up in dysfunctional families where they are unloved and abandoned. Because of this lack of love, they have no defense against a cold cruel world that wants to tear them down. John Powell states that "we are very largely shaped by others, who, in an almost frightening way, hold our destiny in their hands. We are, each of us, the product of those who have loved us . . . or refused to love us." (8, 29.)

Let's now take a closer look at the meaning of self-esteem. Several different words are sometimes used interchangeably with the word "self-esteem." They include "self-image," "self-concept," and "self-acceptance." However, technically there is usually a distinction made between the term "self-esteem" and the terms "self-concept" and "self-image." "Self-esteem" refers to an *evaluation* one makes of him- or herself in terms of worth, competence, and significance. "Self-concept" and "self-image" involve a description of oneself instead of an *evaluation*. (3, 314.)

Ellis and Grieger, in their book *Handbook of Rational-Emotive Therapy*, include a lengthy discussion on this distinction, and they conclude that the self-evaluation which self-esteem infers is harmful. They posit that "value is a meaningless

term when applied to man's being" and that it is "invalid to call him either 'good' or 'bad.'" (6, 101.) They much prefer the term "self-acceptance," which they describe as a individual who "fully and unconditionally accepts himself whether or not he behaves intelligently, correctly, or competently and whether or not other people approve, respect, or love him." (6, 101.) I would tend to agree that there are several negative aspects in regard to self-evaluation, especially if the evaluation involves comparing oneself to another, but I believe that we can have a sense of value that comes to us when we have been restored to a relationship with God as the Heavenly Father, and we have the assurance that we are worth a lot to Him. (3, 315.)

The best biblical description of self-esteem that I found comes from Collins. He states that it includes "(1) accepting myself as a child of God who is loveable, valuable, capable; (2) being willing to give up considering myself the center of the world; (3) recognizing my need of God's forgiveness and redemption. . . . I am what I am, a person made in God's image, a sinner redeemed by God's grace, and a significant part in the body of Christ." (3, 315.)

The Christian emphasis should not be high self-esteem as much as it should be high "Christ-esteem." (2, 200.) Through the blood of Jesus Christ our sins are washed away and forgotten. We become new creations. "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!" (2 Cor. 5:17, NIV.) Many Christians do not have the self-esteem they should have because "we have been writing our constant sinfulness in capital letters and our newness in Christ in small letters." (2, 200.)

Jay Adams, a well-known Christian counselor, is an example of someone who emphasizes our sinfulness. He states that the "love of self is not a biblically legitimate end." (1, 147.) He emphasizes scriptures like Matthew 10:39 and 16:25 that talk about losing our life for Christ's sake in order to find life. (1, 147.) He also states that "The Bible is not intended to 'make us satisfied with ourselves as we are, but to destroy any satisfaction that may exist.'"

(3, 314.) What Adams says is not wrong; it just has the wrong emphasis. I agree with James Graham that the emphasis of man's sin above God's grace is spiritual abuse. I find it interesting that Robert Schuller has stated that one reason "many Christians have behaved so badly in the past two thousand years is because we have been taught from infancy to adulthood 'how sinful' and 'how worthless' we are." (10, 117.) I would also like to add the point that if we focus on our sinfulness so much that we start to despise ourselves, then we become egotists just like those who love themselves too much because they are focused only on themselves either way. (9, 15.)

I think Collins beautifully describes the proper balance between sin and grace by stating that "self-worth must not be considered the same as self-worship, that self-love is not the same as selfishness, that self-affirmation is different from self-conceit, that we can be aware of ourselves without being absorbed in ourselves, that self-denial is not the same as self-denigration, that putting off the sinful nature is not the same as putting yourself down, that humility is not the same as humiliation, and that being unworthy is not the same as being worthless."

Learning to love and accept yourself is closely entwined with learning to love others and learning to love God. In order to love ourselves we need to feel the love from others in addition to God's love. "We need to see in the mirror of another's eyes our own goodness and beauty" in Christ. (8, 49.) But much of the time it is hard for others to love us if we don't love them first. And in order to truly love others we have to see the worth and love that God has bestowed upon us before we can see the worth and love that He has given to those around us.

If as children we have not been loved by those around us, we may find it hard to show love. But "all of us have some capacity to love, some ability to move the focus of our minds out from ourselves to the needs, happiness, and fulfillment of others." (8, 112.) In the beginning we may be able to only love a little, but then we will be loved a little, which in turn will empower us to love some more. "To the

extent that we are willing to make the effort and dedication that is involved, we will be nourished and strengthened by the love that we shall receive in return." (8, 112.)

In connection to what was said above, it can be seen that our self-esteem will grow in proportion to the time we involve ourselves in the lives of others. In Ephesians 4, Paul talks about the body of Christ and how important it is for each part to function properly. "From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work." (Eph. 4:16, NIV.) God has gifted everyone with a talent that will edify the body of Christ. Crabb states, "In Christ, God has provided every person with significance, a meaningful purpose for living" and that "God has designed the local church as the primary vehicle through which people are to exercise their significance-providing gifts." (4, 59.) If pastors are doing all the work in our local churches, then they are "robbing their people of an opportunity to meet their needs as God intended." (4, 60.) When we as the body

#### Bibliography

1. Adams, Jay E. *The Christian Counselor's Manual*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1973.
2. Aycock, David W., and Noaker, Susan. "A Comparison of Self-Esteem Levels in Evangelical Christians and General Populations." *Journal of Psychology and Theology*, V13, No. 3, Fall, 1985.
3. Collins, Gary R., *Christian Counseling: A Comprehensive Guide*. Dallas: Word Publishing, 1988.
4. Crabb, Lawrence J. *Basic Principles of Biblical Counseling*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1975.
5. Dobson, James. *Hide or Seek*. Old Tappan, New Jersey: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1971.
6. Ellis, Albert, and Grieger, Russell. *Handbook of Rational-Emotive Therapy*. New York: Springer Publishing Company, 1977.
7. Myers, Ruth. "God's Intensely Personal Love." *Discipleship Journal*, V11, No. 1, Jan./Feb., 1991.
8. Powell, John. *Why Am I Afraid to Love?* Niles, Illinois: Argus Communications Co., 1972.
9. Trobisch, Walter. *Love Yourself*. Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1976.
10. Watson, Paul J., et al. "Religiosity, Sin, and Self-Esteem." *Journal of Psychology and Theology*, V13, No. 2, Summer, 1985.

(Continued on page 30)



# Tears in a Bottle

by Paula Kirkpatrick

The Hebrew people saved their tears because the tears were precious; they were evidence of their deep devotion and love.

**I**T HAD JUST BEEN ONE of those days. Pounding rain on the roof awakened me as dark clouds hovered outside my window. My backache announced that it hadn't disappeared during my night's sleep. As the hands of the kitchen clock furtively moved faster and faster, I frantically tried to finish extra cleaning before company arrived the next day. However, constant phone calls and interruptions peppered the morning hours.

Then came the "topper." I had just enough time to run some errands before my children arrived home from school. But as I turned the key in the ignition, silence greeted me. The battery was dead. That's when the dam broke.

A flood of tears burst forth, streaming down my face, splashing onto the steering wheel. The steady drops from my eyes matched the "plop, plop" of rain that resounded on the windshield. Time seemed suspended as my emotional wounds were cleansed with saltwater. When I was finished, a refreshing sense of peace and hope enveloped me. Though the battery was still dead, I was revitalized. My tears were a tonic to my soul.

When we face the troubles of this life, tears bring healing and renewal. Truthfully, it's healthy to cry. Crying can remove chemicals that build up during emotional stress. According to Gregg Levoy in a *Psychology Today* article, the amount of manganese stored in the body affects our moods, and the body stores thirty times as much manganese in tears as in blood serum. Biochemist William Frey says the lacrimal gland, which determines the flow of tears, concentrates and removes manganese from the body. Frey has also identified three other chemicals stored up by stress and released by crying.

Praise God that we are fearfully and wonderfully made. God created tears as a release valve for us. For as the Psalmist says, "Those who sow

in tears will reap with songs of joy" (Psalm 126:5, NIV).

Contrary to popular opinion, tears are actually a sign of strength; they testify to our love, caring, and affection. The Hebrew people believed this. In fact, they often saved their tears in tiny ceramic cups—"tear cups." (These sacramental vessels can be found in the National Museum in Jerusalem.) When something affected them—good or bad—they picked up their tear cups and wept into them. When they were done, they capped the tear cups and put them away. The Hebrew people saved their tears because the tears were precious; they were evidence of their deep devotion and love.

Perhaps that is why David penned the words found in Psalm 56:8: "Thou hast taken account of my wanderings; put my tears in Thy bottle; are they not in Thy book?" (NASB.)

Donald M. Williams, in *The Communicator's Commentary*, tells us that the word "wanderings" comes from a Hebrew word that means "to show grief." He comments that David would have been experiencing grief because he was wandering in rejection. This psalm was written by David when the Philistines seized him in Gath.

Yet David said to God, "Put my tears in Thy bottle," or, "Put my tears in your tear cup." Even in his despair, David was assured that his tears were precious to God. His heavenly Father not only knew of David's sorrow, He was saving and remembering each moment of heartache. They were gathered in God's tear cup; they were written in God's book.

As pastors' wives, the stresses in our lives are sometimes enormous. We share, with our husbands, in the problems and concerns of our congregations. But who is there to listen to our struggles and disappointments? Hidden hurts ache within us; loneliness sometimes threatens to engulf us.

(Continued on page 30)

# Jeremiah, The Weeping Prophet

by Pastor David W. Cheatwood  
Rockford, IL

**J**EREMIAH WAS ONE of the greatest Hebrew prophets. He was born into a priestly family of Anathoth, a Benjamite town two and a half miles northeast of Jerusalem. His father was Hilkiah (1:1), not to be confused with the high priest Hilkiah mentioned in 2 Kings 22; 23. Because of the autobiographical nature of his book, it is possible to understand his life, character, and times better than those of any other Hebrew prophet.<sup>1</sup>

Jeremiah's faithfulness to his call under the most difficult circumstances makes him a prime example of devotion to God at the greatest personal sacrifice.<sup>2</sup>

Jeremiah was called to be a prophet at a most unhappy time. With the failure of Josiah's revival, the final decline of the nation was under way. When he was called, it was intimated to Jeremiah that his message would be one of condemnation rather than salvation (1:10, 18, 19). Yet he was also given a message of hope (30:1-3, 18-22; 31:1-14, 23-40). Throughout his long ministry of more than 40 years his preaching reflected this theme of judgment. God has risen early and sent His servants, the prophets, but Israel would not hear (7:27; 44:4, 5). Now the fate predicted for an apostate nation in Deuteronomy 28-30 was inevitable. Babylon would capture Judah, and it would be better for the

people to surrender and so to save their lives.<sup>3</sup>

This message, coming to men whose desperate nationalism was all they had to cling to, was completely rejected, and the bearer was rejected with his message. Jeremiah was regarded as a meddler and a traitor, and people, nobles, and kings alternately tried to do him to death. Although he needed the love, sympathy, and encouragement of a wife, he was not permitted to marry, and in this prohibition he became a sign that life as usual was soon to cease for Jerusalem

(16:1-4).<sup>4</sup>

Come with me as we consider several events in Jeremiah's life and what those events might mean to us in the church today. Can we learn from this faithful man of God? Will we learn from him?

## Jeremiah 26

The Lord gives Jeremiah a message to share with the people of Judah. They are to repent or else.

As soon as he delivered the message they decided that Jeremiah should die. His ministry was not well accepted. They thought everything was okay the way it was, but God had something else in mind. Jeremiah stood his ground and even invited them to kill him if they so desired, but that they would be shedding innocent blood.

Does this happen in this day and age? I have heard rumors during my entire ministry of those who want to reject the messenger because they don't like the message. It is a shame that people

You will notice in these verses that the shepherds of the flock were the problem.

are so quick to place judgment without getting the facts. Is the message in harmony with God and the Book? If so, why do we refuse the messenger? It has been noted that it takes two to four years for a pastor to reach a time of respect in his ministry.

By then most of the congregation can and will trust him. However, at this point in time troubles often arise in the church from a power group to put him out on his ear. Often, those who call themselves the people of God continue to reject the messenger and his message if it doesn't fit into their way of thinking. Perhaps we can learn from Jeremiah and his message that your pastor has something important to share that needs some time to consider. Just because you are not in accord with him doesn't mean he is wrong and you are right. Listen up! Several churches have missed God's blessing because they refused to hear the message or the messenger.

#### Jeremiah 11:18-23

As you can see, this is not the first time Jeremiah was threatened. Those who wish to maintain their power and rulership over the people don't like to hear from anyone who might hold them accountable for their actions.

Why have so many men left the ministry? Most of the time it is very simple. They get tired of fighting the system and getting beat over the head. The people don't want to change the way they are living and don't care about the future of the church. All they are interested in is the present moment and what all this change is going to mean for them. If they don't like the message, the messenger had better watch out.

Maybe we pastors should hang in there longer, but after a while we begin to believe that we are not worthy of our position and should step down. How thankful I am for elders and congregations that encouraged me rather than refusing to hear my message.

Unless we as God's people are willing to humble ourselves and come under the leadership God places among us, we will not see success. God cannot and will not

bless a congregation or nation that is going off in several directions, especially when those ways are against God and His principles.

#### Jeremiah 23:1-8

Not everything that Jeremiah had to say was negative. He also shared some good news with the people. It was often the religious leadership in Judah that was the problem.

Let me share this before you get too upset. I believe that many of our healthy churches are under good leadership and moving in the right direction. If Christ is truly the head of the church and the leadership in the church is sold out to the Christ, we have nothing to fear. It is only when the leadership is more concerned with their own programs and priorities and don't give Christ authority in their lives that the church is in trouble.

---

Perhaps we can learn from Jeremiah and his message that your pastor has something important to share that needs some time to consider.

---

You will notice in these verses that the shepherds of the flock were the problem. There is a danger, when leading God's people, to become self-satisfied and too comfortable. When we are the cause of the flock breaking up, we must answer to God for our mistakes.

When a pastor or a church shows a continuing pattern of disagreements and trouble, it is time to take a closer look at the problem. You will always find those who defend the wrong or justify it in some way. This does not build the church but, instead, undermines it.

#### Jeremiah 36:20-26

Some of you would probably like to burn this article and you may if you want to, but where does that leave you? If the shoe fits, wear it. Right? We don't get right with God by burning the message. Jeremiah was thrown into prison, then into a cistern; but those who refused his message soon learned they had not won the battle. When Jerusalem fell Jeremiah was set free. The messenger was saved by his God and many of those who opposed him either died or were taken captive.

So, what does this mean? Maybe we should give more thought to the message God gives to the messenger. Perhaps we should start to fear God again and not get to thinking we can do as we please and go our own way.

I have a high regard for Jeremiah. What God asked him to do he did. God rescued him time and again as He promised. Jeremiah was faithful with the message and willing to suffer the cost. He chose to fear God rather than man. We would do well to do the same. When God is lifted up and exalted, and we seek righteousness and truth in our lives, He can do a great work among us. When we set out to accomplish our own goals and set our own agenda, we might find ourselves on the wrong side of the fence. Where do you stand today? Are you encouraging the messenger, or fighting him tooth and nail? Are you in harmony with God, or running down the broad way that leads to eternal death?

Jeremiah made the decision to follow God at whatever the cost. We need more Jeremiahs who desire to please God and warn God's people of the error of their way. Will you answer that call? R41

---

<sup>1</sup>Tenney, Merrill C. *The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1968), p. 410.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 411.

<sup>4</sup>*Ibid.*

# “The Courage to Change”

... A Brief Look at the Life of Paul

by Thomas R. Schmitt  
Twinsburg, OH

Change is not easy, but without change from worldliness to Christianity, we have no hope for eternity.

**Y**OU PROBABLY HEARD the words “change” and “hope” enough during the past presidential election to last you a lifetime. And now you turn in the pages of your RESTITUTION HERALD and here they are again! Let us examine these two words under the premise that Saul of Tarsus/Paul—the Jewish leader/Christian Apostle—was an important change agent in history. A brief look at Paul’s life illustrates the tremendous changes he underwent in lifestyle, thinking, and position. Paul’s courage to undergo real change has given real eternal hope to millions of Christians.

The first and fundamental change for Saul was his conversion. In Acts 9:1 Saul was threatening the believers with “murderous” threats and sought to use the authority of the Jewish Establishment to arrest those belonging to the Way (of Christ). Saul was a firm believer in the Judaic faith and lived his life accordingly. On his way to arrest Christians in Damascus, Saul was confronted by the Lord. He was blinded and was asked why he persecuted the Lord. Saul asked, “Who are you, Lord?” (Acts 9:5.) Saul was convinced that he had been serving the Lord Jehovah of the Old Testament and did not understand the charge of persecuting Him. The now-blind Saul was changed enough at this moment that he obeyed the instructions from Jesus to be led into Damascus and wait for direction.

In Damascus, Ananias, who is later called an impeccable witness to the reality of Paul’s conversion (Acts 22:10-16), had to trust the Lord concerning Saul and his change. Ananias knew that Saul was a persecuter of the faithful and had come to Damascus to arrest people—people like Ananias. He was justifiably apprehensive of voluntarily seeking out Saul. Fortunately, Ananias was obedient and went to Saul and laid hands on him. During this experience Ananias witnessed to Saul and even called him “brother.” Saul was filled with the Holy Spirit and was baptized. In

Acts 9:20, Saul is recorded as “at once” preaching in the synagogues that Jesus is the Son of God. Saul’s conversion, his change from Judaism to Christianity, was impressive in its suddenness and totality.

The believers around Saul were “astonished” by his conversion (Acts 9:21). Yet, Saul seemed to take this life-changing event in stride and only mentioned it a few times in his own writings. Of his conversion he wrote that it was to fulfill God’s purposes (Gal. 1:15), was sudden (1 Cor. 15:8; Phil. 3:12), was in reality a new creation of God (2 Cor. 5:17), was merciful (1 Tim. 1:13), and that he actually saw the Lord during the Damascus Road experience and was therefore as qualified as the other apostles (1 Cor. 9:1). Paul’s courage to change his religious beliefs and orientation had far-reaching consequences that are only hinted at in Acts 9:15. There, Jesus tells Ananias that Saul is the chosen instrument to the Gentiles.

Saul not only changed his religious beliefs, but also the name by which he was called. In Acts 13:9 we read, “Saul, (who also is called Paul.)” After that small sidenote he is always called Paul in the New Testament. Paul is the Roman version of his name and from this point on he chose to go by Paul in the Gentile environment in which he lived and ministered. This name change serves to illustrate the radical transition that is needed when one becomes a Christian. In Philippians 3:1-7, Paul speaks of the need for a total shift from Judaism and its legalism to Christianity. The dispensational nature of God’s salvation plan for man finds a prime example in Paul.

Paul lists many of the attributes that made him a “Jew of Jews” in verses 4-6 of Philippians 3. He was born of the “right” tribe, circumcised on the “right” day, of the “right” religious group (Pharisees), was zealous to the point of persecuting the church, and faultless in legalistic righteousness. These attributes gave Paul status and comfort in the old way of Judaism, but he considered it all

"loss" for the sake of Christ. Paul changed his most basic tenets to become the Apostle to the Gentiles.

Paul speaks of his role as Apostle to the Gentiles in Romans 11. Paul must have felt like Elijah in 1 Kings 19:10-18, when Elijah speaks to the Lord concerning the waywardness of the nation of Israel. The Lord had Elijah go into the Desert of Damascus to anoint kings who would destroy the followers of Baal and lead to a purified Israel. Paul saw his role of bringing salvation to the Gentiles as good news for the Gentiles, but also as something that would cause the nation of Israel to come back to the Lord. Paul shows that the promises made to the nation of Israel were not set aside or given to a "Spiritual Israel" (the church), but that God created the Church Age to bring favor upon the rest of the people of His creation.

Paul took up his new religious ministry as Apostle to the Gentiles with even greater zeal than when he was a Pharisee. In 1 Corinthians 9:19-23, he tells of his zeal and new-found openness to all peoples. As a Pharisee he had been narrow in his worldview and arrogant in the belief that his group was the group and no one else need apply. As a Christian, he became "all things to all men" so that he might win them to the way of Christ. Paul's Christian message, though, did not change. In 1 Corinthians 15:3, 4 he outlines the basics of the gospel message he brought to the people and calls it "of first importance." What he did change was the approach or method and some of the examples to make the message more realistic and "close to home" for his listeners. An excellent modern example of this is Dr. Clarence Jordan's *The Cotton Patch Version of the Bible*. Jordan, in his words, embarks on "a colloquial modern translation with a Southern accent," to bring the Bible to life for his readers in Sumter County, Georgia. As Paul used the altar with the inscription "TO AN UNKNOWN GOD" in Athens to relate to the Athenians, so Jordan uses Atlanta and the Georgia Convention. Through it all the message remains the same; only the method or approach has changed.

The Apostle Paul's life was one of change. He probably would not be viewed

as great "pastor material" by most. He changed his beliefs, he changed his name, he changed where he lived—and often he changed his position and status in the world, and the list goes on. While we may want stability, it was because of his changes that you and I are enabled to live our lives as Christians. We must go through the first and fundamental change just like Saul. We must turn from our world as we know it and become a believer in Christ. Unless we become "born again" we will not have eternal hope. Our conversion to Christianity might not appear to be as dramatic as Paul's, but we must make that real change in our hearts and minds.

We must also change from one-upmanship and condescending "super spiritualism" to humble service like Paul. The Pharisees were great at boasting of their faith and knowledge and goodness, and Paul tells us that he was one of the best. We must make sure that we do not look down upon those who do not believe the truth or seek to exclude them from fellowship, through which they could come to understanding. Our service to others must be done in humility. The attributes that we might consider "profitable" must be considered as loss for Christ. Paul set the example for us in humble service through his "lowered" position in the world's eyes, terms in prison, and working as a "tent-making" minister. We must approach our world in humility and in Christ's love.

Paul also showed the change from closed-fistedness to open-handed sharing. He made himself a "slave" (1 Cor. 9:19) to the people and gave endlessly of himself in order to win them to Christ. He imparted the message of the gospel to the Gentile world and not just the closed society of Pharisees. We must strive to offer the gospel to all the people around us. In 2 Corinthians 8, Paul spoke of the grace of the Macedonian churches in giving financially and set that up as an example for others. Paul's example of giving to those around him is fortified by James' teaching on faith in action and Jesus' words on helping those in need in Matthew 25. We must strive to make our legacy the same as Paul's—changing our lifestyle to one of giving to others for the

sake of the gospel.

Paul makes it abundantly clear in 1 Corinthians 9 that he did not go through tremendous changes just for change's sake. He underwent alterations for the reasons that we must: change for our sake in eternity, change for those around us, change for our children's sake, and change for the sake of the Kingdom of God. Christian transition is not capricious but is engineered by the Lord God for His people and their blessed hope (Titus 2:13).

If the Apostle Paul were to address us as a church, I believe he would challenge us to have the courage to change. Our lifestyle must metamorphose to show true conversion, real concern for the lost, and real hope in the future reign of Christ. Change is not easy, but without change from worldliness to Christianity we have no hope for eternity.

Paul would also tell us to allow and even encourage the church to change. Our message does not and cannot change, for we preach the conservative, literal gospel of the Bible. Our methods and approach to those around us must change to face the realities of our day. The "Committee of Ten" that worked in 1920 and 1921 to assemble our fellowship of churches exchanged many letters (preserved in the General Conference Archives) concerning using "modern" business tools to communicate the message. They finally decided in favor of using technology to be as efficient as possible. They realized, as Paul did on Mars' hill, that the gospel of hope in the resurrection of the saints is the eternal, and that one must use the temporal to point to the eternal.

In the last election we were challenged to change, to hope for a better future. We know that the hope spoken of was fleeting and the changes were not important. The real message of change was given and lived by the Apostle Paul. Real change for all people that would give real hope for all eternity is Paul's legacy and message. May you and I live our lives in such a way that we afford others the opportunity to change and hope in the risen Lord for the sake of the eternal Kingdom. RH

# Tell Me Again

by Susan Lapp  
Hudson, WI

**T**HE RAIN PELTED AGAINST the windowpanes as a clap of thunder sent a shudder throughout the house. A pajamaed little girl scuffed her fuzzy pink slippers across the hallway floor toward her father's armchair and poked her tousled head up under the open newspaper. "It's storming, Daddy," announced the child.

"So I've noticed," said Father, smiling down at her.

"Can I sit with you?" she asked in a tiny voice.

"Sure, come on up," he replied, scooting to one side of the big soft chair, opening the newspaper door to admit his little one. "Are you scared?" he asked, stroking her blond hair.

"No, not very," she answered with a hug. "I was just wondering . . . could we go see Grandpa today? I haven't seen him for a long, long time."

"Well, Brianna, it's not a very nice day for going to the cemetery today, but maybe we could go tomorrow afternoon," said Father.

"No, I want to see Grandpa, not just go to the cemetery!" Brianna said emphatically.

The father looked down at his daughter thoughtfully and tenderly. "We won't see Grandpa again until Jesus comes back to earth. Remember how we talked about that before?"

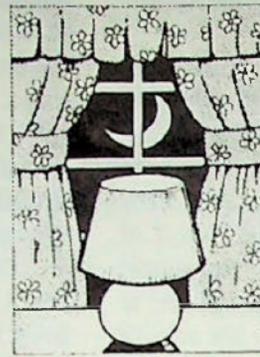
Brianna's frown remained. She was quiet for a moment, then said, "Tell me again, Daddy. Tell me how it's going to be."

"Well when Jesus comes back to earth from heaven, all the people who believed in Jesus and have died will come back to life again."

"Will Grandpa be alive again? Will I be able to see him and hug him, and read stories with him again?" she asked intently.

"Yes, honey, and Grandpa won't be sick anymore, either. He will have a healthy new body. In the Kingdom *no one* will ever get sick or die. Just think, no more earaches or fevers."

"And no more throwing up!" added Brianna dramatically.



An amused smile crossed her father's face. "That's right. And the poor people won't be hungry ever again. All the animals will be safe to pet. The big fierce lion and the little baby lamb will snuggle up together for a nap."

"Mrs. Murphey's cat won't kill the birds anymore," Brianna added seriously, nodding her head.

"There won't be any more killing, or wars, or guns. There will be a brand new heaven and a brand new earth. No more pollution! There will be a new city, called the New Jerusalem, which will come down to earth from heaven. It'll be ever so beautiful—it will shine and sparkle with gold, pearls, and a rainbow of colored stones.

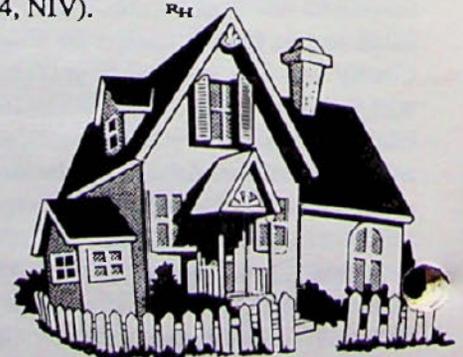
"Like a fairy-tale castle?" interrupted Brianna.

"Even better than we can dream. God and His Son Jesus will be there. We'll never cry, or be sad or afraid again, because we'll all be together with Jesus and God forever," Father paused thoughtfully.

Brianna sighed, "I wish Jesus would come back today."

"Me, too," Father said with a peaceful smile.

"Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away" (Rev. 21:3, 4, NIV).



# • Israeli Population Figures

**I**SRAEL'S POPULATION totals 5,165,000, up 2.5% from a year ago. Jews from the former Soviet Union make up the country's largest ethnic group with 617,000 people, surpassing the Moroccan community's 500,000. —From *The Wall Street Journal*.

Certainly ones who are tuned into world events in light of the prophetic Scriptures are not surprised at the return of the Jews to their ancient homeland. God said to Israel: "Fear not: for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west; I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back:

bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth. . . . And it shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish. . . . Ye shall be gathered one by one, O ye children of Israel" (Isa. 43:5, 6; 27:13, 12). Certainly these prophecies (and dozens of others) are in the process of fulfillment, but many believe that an even greater restoration of the sons of Jacob to the Holy Land will take place after Christ returns. Perhaps that is when Isaiah's trumpet is sounded. Jesus, it appears, is speaking of the same trumpet in Matthew 24:31, the trumpet to regather the Jews

from the ends of the earth. "And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." Compare Mark 13:27. It is certainly reasonable to conclude that Isaiah and Jesus are speaking of the same trumpet, inasmuch as Jesus follows up His announcement about the trumpet with His parable of the fig tree in both Matthew and Mark. Most students understand that the fig tree represents Israel throughout Scripture. See Matthew 21:18-20; Joel 1:6, 7; Hosea 9:10; Jeremiah 24:1-5; Luke 13:6-9. ✠

—Hollis Partlowe

# • From Macomb Bulletin

*Pastor Rex Cain, Pastor*

## Personal Testimony

**T**HE FOLLOWING testimony is from Bob Knebl, a dear friend of mine I met in Dayton, Ohio, over 20 years ago when he was near death. He conquered alcohol and, later, cigarettes. He wrote, "I hope the following helps someone who is having trouble with cigarettes and wants to stop!"

"God, I Wish I Coult Quit!"

"Over the past 35 years, I remember saying this many times, especially after a real effort to quit and failing one more time.

"Cigarettes, once we learn how to smoke, become enjoyable. But they soon

turn into an expensive habit which is almost impossible to shake. I tried many times because I had *many* good reasons to stop smoking: I have heart disease and over the years, doctors have strongly advised me to quit (even gave me tapes and pills to help curb the urge), but all to no avail. All the time I would pray in earnest for God to help me.

"Then one day I came to realize that all my praying was in vain—God seemed to ignore my plea and I was doomed to smoke for my lifetime. But at the same time, a new idea seemed to come to me. I didn't realize it at the time, but this was God's help. The key seemed to be willingness on my part to make a contribution. Christ will not knock the cigarette out of my mouth; it's my responsibility not to put it into my mouth! So with this idea I put them down and prayed for

strength to be able to withstand the discomfort, the withdrawals, the torment. I was willing to go through whatever it took to not smoke again.

"To my wonderful surprise, there was no torment, a little discomfort, but the strength was there and I was able to overcome the desire to smoke.

"I really expected torment beyond belief as it always came when I tried to quit on my own. But once again a simple idea produced great results. Thank God for His love and being aware of our needs and helping us when we ask and are willing to contribute."

(Bob Knebl, Carrollton, TX.)

"It is right not to . . . drink wine or do anything that makes your brother stumble." (Romans 14:21.) ✠

## The Last Will and Testament of Jesus Christ

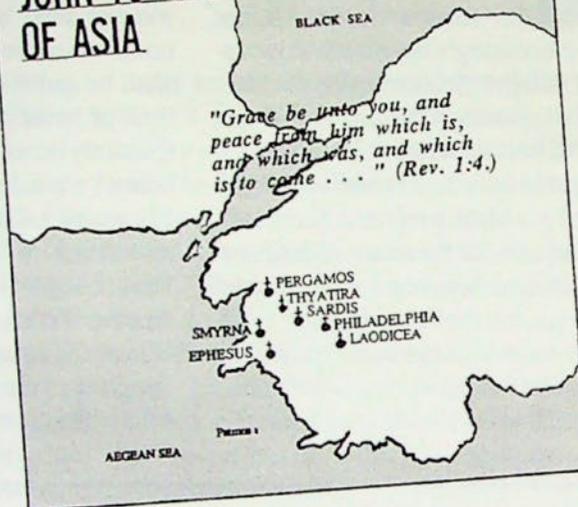
By Pastor Hollis Parlowe



"For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead; otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth" (Heb. 9:16, 17).

## Christ Speaks To the Church Today

### JOHN TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF ASIA



By Seven Pastors in the Church of God General Conference

# TWO NEW BOOKLETS AVAILABLE

*Christ Speaks to the Church Today*, written by seven pastors in our conference, would be appropriate for midweek Bible study, an elective Sunday school class, home Bible study, etc.

This booklet expounds on the seven letters to the seven churches in Asia Minor recorded in Revelation 2 and 3 with an introduction to the whole book. Cost \$1.95.

*The Last Will and Testament of Jesus Christ*. The focus of this booklet is on salvation and would be helpful in sharing your faith with your friends. It reveals how the new covenant is in the form of a will and how it came into force when Jesus died.

"For where a covenant is, there must of necessity be the death of the one who made it. For a covenant is valid only when men

are dead, for it is never in force while the one who made it lives" (Heb. 9:16, 17, NASB). Use this booklet to point your unchurched friends to Calvary and help Christians gain reassurance that their sins are gone and of their position in the body of Christ. Cost 75¢.

Order both booklets from:

Church of God General Conference  
Box 100,000  
Morrow, GA 30260



# They Will Say That You Are Mad

by Allon Maxwell  
Heathmont, Victoria, Australia

**I**N THE CHURCH AT CORINTH, a situation had arisen in which some "uninformed" members of the church (1 Cor. 12:1) had introduced disorder and confusion into their meetings. There was immaturity and a lack of understanding about gifts of the Holy Spirit. Some of them had allowed themselves to be deceived by outward appearance, and had received another Jesus, a different gospel, and a DIFFERENT SPIRIT. (2 Cor. 11:3, 4.) They had been deceived by false apostles DISGUISED as servants of righteousness. (2 Cor. 11:15.)

Paul seems to suggest that some former heathens needed to learn the important differences between real gifts of the Holy Spirit and their former "spiritual" experiences resulting from the worship of idols. Some of them were so ignorant of reality that they were actually giving themselves over to spirits which inspired them to curse Jesus! (1 Cor. 12:2, 3.)

Speaking in tongues had been elevated out of all proportion to its usefulness and, worse still, was being practiced in a most unintelligent and unhelpful way. Some were speaking in tongues without interpretation, communicating nothing at all to their hearers. (1 Cor. 14:6-11.) Others were speaking in tongues all at once, creating an unholy confusion which left them open to well-deserved accusations of madness! (1 Cor. 14:23.)

Paul's point is that all of this confusion could not possibly be from the God of peace. God IS NOT the author of such confusion. (1 Cor. 14:33.) It follows, by inference, that if God is not the

author of it, then neither are these disorderly "gifts" inspired by the Holy Spirit.

This same Corinthian disorder and confusion is found amongst Pentecostals today. It is common to encounter "times of worship" where all are encouraged to "worship in the Spirit," all speaking aloud in tongues at the same time.

**THIS IS NOT WORSHIP!** It is not the Holy Spirit. It is not from God. Rather, this is the very thing which Paul was trying to eliminate from the Corinthian church. It is to be rejected as confusion. Two, or at the most three, each in turn, and then only if interpreted, is the Biblical limit for order and peace.

It is also common to hear what they call "Singing in the Spirit," where the whole assembly *sings* in tongues together. It should be obvious to honest hearts that the addition of a little music to a practice condemned by Paul does not make it any more from God than the same thing without music. God is not the author of "musical confusion" any more than of any other confusion!

Sometimes this "singing in the Spirit" is justified by the claim that it sounds so beautiful that it must be from God. However, Paul also told the Corinthians that "beauty" could be deceptive. We must be careful not to make the mistake of judging "gifts" merely on outward appearance.

I am led to the inescapable conclusion that those who justify these disorderly practices are at best "uninformed," and at worst, possibly deceived by the same false spirit which led to the disorder and confusion at Corinth. ❧

---

# Who Me? "The Path Peter Took"

(Continued from page 14)

is making sure that Peter understands what the meaning of complete loyalty is. Christ likewise demands our love for Him today. We must be in the business of feeding His sheep. If a shepherd is worth his salt, he'll go the extra mile for his sheep. Jesus lays it all out for us when He clearly states that one must even be ready, willing, and able to "lay down his own life for his friends." True love demands a special kind of loyalty to each other. Oftentimes we are too busy working behind each other's back in distrust and dishonesty that only gets us into trouble. Speak the truth in love, and let your brother or sister know that you can be trusted and that you expect them to be trustworthy for you. Jesus requires nothing less.

#### (4) Finally, Loyalty Requires a Strong Sense of Responsibility

The words rang out from the Master's lips, "FOLLOW ME!" You know, at that point, I doubt that it occurred to the disciples *not* to follow Jesus. I believe that the disciples knew and felt the power of Jesus and were compelled to follow Him. Dietrich Bonhoeffer says that the disciples "burned their boats." In other words, they were so sold out to the Man from Galilee that they left their livelihood in the background. It wouldn't have mattered if they had set fire to their boats because they really didn't have any use for them anymore. I find it a breath of fresh air when I hear of individuals leaving previous lifestyles to serve God with all their hearts. Many come to the Bible, and they are in God's hands. Many I have the privilege of working with have "burned their boats," and I praise God for them. You can burn your own boat right where you are; simply give God your loyalty and He will use you!

I'm reminded of a story that I read not too long ago about a fire that occurred in Chicago in 1984. Firemen were called to the scene on a cold December night. At first it seemed like a routine call, but then the firefighters discovered the bodies of a

mother and five children huddled in the kitchen of an apartment. The firefighters came to the conclusion that the mother could have escaped with two or three children, but couldn't decide who to choose. Instead, she decided to wait for the firefighters. All of them died of smoke inhalation. The point is, there are times when you just don't leave the ones you love. There are times when loyalty takes over and "boats get burned." My friends, that's the kind of loyalty Jesus Christ deserves! It's time to get in tune with what God wants of us and radically give Him our loyalty.

Tradition tells us that Peter was crucified upside down because he didn't feel worthy to be crucified in the same way our Savior was. In any case, Peter displays two sides of loyalty that we must be aware of. First, be aware that it's easy to deny our Lord and slip into a state of disloyalty. It's easy to deny him when we are talking to

our friends. It's easy to hang onto our boats. Second, Peter gives us an example of supreme loyalty—a loyalty we must have in order to serve our God the way He demands. Each of us fails and falls short of what God requires of us, but be assured, my friends, that just as Jesus reinstated Peter, so He can reinstate you. If you feel like there's no hope because you haven't been loyal to Jesus Christ, do not be disheartened. Now is the time to renew your loyalty to Him. Renew your devotion to your Savior. Renew your allegiance to yourself, your family, your church, and the people around you who are counting on you. Peter was a failure in many areas, but realized there was still hope for him. In the words of Jesus the Savior and in the actions of Peter the apostle, "Follow me, burn your boats, and give to me your loyalty." "Who, me?" Yes, He's talking to you! RH

---

## Self-Esteem: Being the Person God Intended

(Continued from page 20)

get involved in the church and the lives of others we will inevitably have some failures, but the only real failure is to quit and give up. (8,100.)

I would like to end with the note that God's love (and Jesus') is intensely personal. "God created human beings for his

glory, for fellowship with him and for his pleasure." (7, 28.) He rejoices with each one of us as we see the truth and He grieves for each of us as we experience the pain that is brought on by our sin. What tremendous value He has lavished upon us through His infinite grace and love. RH

---

## Tears in a Bottle

(Continued from page 21)

But Paul tells us our God is called the Father of mercies, the God of all comfort. (2 Cor. 1:3.) He is there to listen and console. He is there to gather each tear. He is there to remember each heartache.

So, when the cares—or the joys—of life next affect you, let the tears flow. They declare your love and devotion. They bring you hope and healing. And be assured, God is counting each one. RH

# Index of THE RESTITUTION HERALD Vol. 82

October, 1992 - September, 1993

- |  |                     |  |  |
|--|---------------------|--|--|
| 6 Adorning the Doctrine                              | William Wachtel     | 5 Messiah in the Major Prophets                  | Ed Goit  |
| 6 Back to the Future                                 | Michael P. Brown    | 5 Messiah in the Minor Prophets                  | Rex F. Cain                                      |
| 6 Bad Rap  | Chuck Colson        | 5 Messiah in the New Testament                   | Hollis Partlowe                                  |
| 3 Beyond the Vanity of Earthly Greatness             |                     | 5 Messiah in the Psalms                          | James Mattison                                   |
|  | Michael P. Brown    | 2 Midnight and Morning                           | Janet Stilson                                    |
| 1 Changing Challenges                                | Michael Hoffman     | 2 Ministry, Commitment, Sacrifice, Joy           | Paula Kirkpatrick                                |
| 2 Constructive Criticism                             | Ruby McCaslin       | 3 More Blessed                                   | Susan Lapp                                       |
| 6 Courage to Change                                  | Thomas R. Schmitt   | 4 Most Important Women in My Life                | Jeffrey Fletcher                                 |
| 3 Dangerous Focus                                    | David Richert       | 4 Of First Importance                            | Michael Mattison                                 |
| 3 Days of Reckoning                                  | J. Arlen Marsh      | 2 Opportunity                                    | Janice Hart                                      |
| 5 Do All Speak in Tongues?                           | Allon Maxwell       | 4 Parade Fit for a King                          | Steve Taylor                                     |
| 1 Doctrine of the Holy Trinity: Is It True or False? |                     | 2 Pastor's Dilemma                               | Eunice Pearson                                   |
|  | Brenda J. Swartz    | 2 Patching Potholes for the King                 | Stephen Bolhous                                  |
| 6 Drying up of the Euphrates                         | James Mattison      | 4 Planting Time                                  | E. Richard Smith                                 |
| 5 "Fathers . . . Children Are Unique"                | John Hearp          | 2 Prayer Has What Power?                         | J. Arlen Marsh                                   |
| 1 Forgive and Forget                                 | John Railton        | 3 Prerequisite to Teaching - A Proper Attitude   | Dick Eldred                                      |
| 3 Forgiven   | F. L. Austin        |  | Allon Maxwell                                    |
| 4 Four Marks of False Religion                       | Kent Ross           | 4 Promise of the Holy Spirit                     |  |
| 3 Gift of Languages                                  | Sid Hatch           | 5 Promised Healing                               | Darrell Rankin, Delbert Rankin, & Russell Rankin |
| 2 Giving Credit to the Master Designer               |                     |  | John Carr  |
|  | Diana Morrison Vice | 5 Rethinking Our Heritage                        |  |
| 1 God Keep our Land                                  | Stephen Bolhous     | 6 Self-Esteem: Being the Person God Intended     | Aaron Wells                                      |
| 4 God Manifestation: An Introduction                 | Duncan Heaster      |  | Nancy Rankin                                     |
| 5 God Manifestation in Moses                         | Duncan Heaster      | 3 Shipwreck                                      | S. O. Ross                                       |
| 4,5,6 God's People (Three Parts)                     | Francis Burnett     | 1 Stewardship                                    | E. Richard Smith                                 |
| 2 God Will Supply                                    | Susan Lapp          | 3 Success? Happiness?                            | Paula Kirkpatrick                                |
| 2 Greatest Promise                                   | Donald G. Nunemaker | 6 Tears in a Bottle                              | Susan Lapp                                       |
| 4 Growing Patience                                   | Susan Lapp          | 6 Tell Me Again                                  | William Wachtel                                  |
| 5 Hey! That's Ours!                                  | Kent Ross           | 3 Tempest in a Teapot?                           | Delbert Rankin                                   |
| 3 Israel and the Church - Two Seperate Groups        |                     | 3 Territorial Domain of the KOG                  | Allon Maxwell                                    |
|  | Hollis Partlowe     | 6 They Will Say That You Are Mad                 | Darcey Demmitt                                   |
| 6 Jeremiah, the Weeping Prophet                      |                     | 4 To Live with Christ                            | Hollis Partlowe                                  |
|  | David W. Cheatwood  | 4 Tomb of the Well-Known Soldier                 |  |
| 6 Just for the Record                                | Hollis Partlowe     | 3 "To the Top of the Hill and the Valley Below"  | Ed Goit  |
| 4 Lessons from a Miniature Mother                    | Paula Kirkpatrick   |  | Richard Alcumbrack                               |
| 1 Letter to the Church at Ephesus                    | David Cheatwood     | 4 Transformed . . . by the Renewing of Your Mind |  |
| 1 Letter to the Church at Laodicea                   | David Wilsterman    |  |  |
| 1 Letter to the Church at Pergamos                   | Gordon Landry       | 2 Virgin Birth, a Basic Teaching of Scripture    | Ray Hall   |
| 1 Letter to the Church at Philadelphia               | Hollis Partlowe     |  | S. O. Ross                                       |
| 1 Letter to the Church at Sardis                     | Jon Cheatwood       | 2 Walking in Grace                               | James Mattison                                   |
| 1 Letter to the Church at Smyrna                     | Jon T. Welch        | 3 We Must be Born Again                          | Sid Hatch  |
| 1 Letter to the Church at Thyatira                   | Alan Cain           | 5 What Does John 1:1 Really Say?                 | David Riley                                      |
| 3 Lord's Supper                                      | Rex Cain            | 6 Who Me? "The Path Peter Took"                  | Millie Laning                                    |
| 3 Man's Longing for Peace and Security               | Linford W. Moore    | 2 William Greenwell and the Ripley COG           | Rex F. Cain                                      |
| 5 Memorial Day                                       | Cheryl Norwood      |  |  |
| 5 Messiah in the Law                                 | Gary Burnham        | 4 Yes, I'm Homophobic                            |  |

# ABC

ATLANTA  
BIBLE  
COLLEGE

For more information call: 1-800-347-4261

#### Subscription Expirations

The three-digit number on the top right of your address label identifies the renewal date of your subscription. If the number is 93.0, it expires with the February/March issue, 1993. A 93.2 number means a June, July, expiration. This method will assist the subscriber in keeping tabs on his expiration date and serve as a reminder for renewal.

Church of God General Conference  
P.O. Box 100,000  
Morrow, GA 30260

**Address Correction Requested**

U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
PERMIT 21  
Oregon, Illinois  
Nonprofit Org.

Dear RESTITUTION HERALD,

I am writing for the following reason:

- My address label is incorrect, please note the changes.
- I am moving in the next six weeks; please send the magazine to my new address printed below.
- I wish to send a gift subscription to the person listed below. Enclosed is \$12 payment.
- Subscription renewal, payment enclosed—1 yr. \$12, 2 yr. \$21, 3 yr. \$30. [British subscribers send U. S. funds]. Thank you.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: THE RESTITUTION HERALD, P.O. Box 100,000, Morrow, GA 30260.

Please check the mailing label to the left for your RH expiration date and renew promptly to keep THE RESTITUTION HERALD coming to your home bimonthly.

*Thank you for subscribing to THE RESTITUTION HERALD.*

IS IT TIME TO RENEW?